

THE MORNING SUN



2024



FOOTBALL

PREVIEW



Football Preview

Welcome to Football Preview, part of the Morning Sun’s coverage for the 2024 high school football season.

Football Preview includes stories of 10 teams in Southeast Kansas and season schedules for the CNC League, Southeast Kansas League, Three Rivers League (11-man and 8-man) and independents Pittsburg and Parsons.

The season begins Sept. 5, and the playoffs will start on Nov. 1. Our coverage will include game previews, game stories, feature stories and weekly standings. Good luck to all teams this season.

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2024 Schedule

Independents

Sept. 6 -- Emporia at Pittsburg, Parsons at Labette County
 Sept. 13 -- Shawnee Mission South at Pittsburg, Fort Scott at Parsons
 Sept. 20 -- Labette County at Pittsburg, K.C. Christ Prep Academy at Parsons
 Sept. 27 -- Pittsburg at Fort Scott, Parsons at Baxter Springs
 Oct. 4 -- Pittsburg at Paola, Frontenac at Parsons
 Oct. 10 -- Parsons at Neodesha
 Oct. 11 -- Smithville (Mo.) at Pittsburg
 Oct. 18 -- Pittsburg at Chanute, Atchison at Parsons
 Oct. 25 -- Topeka at Pittsburg, Parsons at Columbus

CNC League

Sept. 5 -- Independence at Columbus
 Sept. 6 -- St. Mary's Colgan at Girard, Frontenac at Galena, Riverton at Baxter Springs
 Sept. 13 -- St. Mary's Colgan at Frontenac, Riverton at Girard, Galena at Columbus, Baxter Springs at Afton (Okla.)
 Sept. 19 -- Columbus at St. Mary's Colgan
 Sept. 20 -- Frontenac at Riverton, Girard at Baxter Springs, Galena at Afton (Okla.)
 Sept. 27 -- Pleasanton at St. Mary's Colgan, Girard at Frontenac, Parsons at Baxter Springs, Fredonia at Galena, Cherryvale at Riverton, Columbus at Neodesha
 Oct. 4 -- Uniontown at St. Mary's Colgan, Frontenac at Parsons, Girard at Iola, Galena at Riverton, Baxter Springs at Columbus
 Oct. 11 -- St. Mary's Colgan at Jayhawk-Linn, Frontenac at Baxter Springs, Burlington at Riverton, Columbus at Cherryvale,
 Oct. 18 -- Erie at St. Mary's Colgan, Columbus at Frontenac, Girard at Iola, Caney Valley at Prairie View, Caney Valley at Galena, Baxter Springs at Neodesha, Riverton at Fredonia
 Oct. 24 -- Baxter Springs at Galena

Oct. 25 -- St. Mary's Colgan at Southeast, Neodesha at Frontenac, Anderson County at Girard, Parsons at Columbus, Riverton at Caney Valley

Three Rivers League (11-Man)

Sept. 6 -- Southeast at Fredonia, Jayhawk-Linn at Central Heights, Uniontown at Leon-Bluestem, South Haven at Pleasanton
 Sept. 13 -- Diamond (Mo.) at Southeast, Jayhawk-Linn at Anderson County, Maranatha Christian Academy at Uniontown, Pleasanton at Central Heights
 Sept. 20 -- South Haven at Southeast, Olpe at Jayhawk-Linn, Central Heights at Uniontown, Pleasanton vs. Salina Sacred Heart (site TBA)
 Sept. 27 -- Uniontown at Southeast, Erie at Jayhawk-Linn, Pleasanton at St. Mary's Colgan
 Oct. 4 -- Southeast at Erie, Jayhawk-Linn at Pleasanton, Uniontown at St. Mary's Colgan
 Oct. 11 -- Pleasanton at Southeast, St. Mary's Colgan at Jayhawk-Linn, Erie at Uniontown
 Oct. 18 -- Southeast at Jayhawk-Linn, Uniontown at Pleasanton
 Oct. 25 -- St. Mary's Colgan at Southeast, Jayhawk-Linn at Uniontown, Pleasanton at Erie

(8-Man)

Sept. 6 -- Northeast at St. Paul, Marmaton Valley at Oswego, Crest at Yates Center
 Sept. 13 -- Crest at Northeast, Oswego at St. Paul, Yates Center at Marmaton Valley
 Sept. 20 -- Marmaton Valley at Northeast, St. Paul at Yates Center, Oswego at Crest
 Sept. 27 -- Northeast at Central Burden, St. Paul at Crest, West Elk at Oswego, Reno County Homeschool at Marmaton Valley, Yates Center at Madison
 Oct. 4 -- Sedan at Northeast, Hutchinson Central Christian at St. Paul, Oswego at Central Burden, Reno

County Homeschool at Crest, Marmaton Valley at Wheatland-Grinnell, Yates Center at Cottonwood Falls-Chase County
 Oct. 11 -- Northeast at Oswego, St. Paul at Axtell, Lost Springs-Centre at Crest, Marmaton Valley at Waverly, Northern Heights at Yates Center
 Oct. 18 -- West Elk at Northeast, St. Paul at Waverly, Cedar Vale/Dexter at Oswego, Crest at Marmaton Valley, Yates Center at Lyndon
 Oct. 24 -- Northeast at Cedar Vale/Dexter
 Oct. 25 -- Marmaton Valley at St. Paul, Oswego at Sedan, Waverly at Crest, Flinthills at Yates Center

Southeast Kansas League

Sept. 5 -- Independence at Columbus
 Sept. 6 -- Parsons at Labette County, Paola at Fort Scott, Chanute at Augusta, Coffeyville at Towanda Circle
 Sept. 13 -- Labette County at Winfield, Fort Scott at Parsons, Chanute at Coffeyville, Independence at Mulvane
 Sept. 20 -- Labette County at Pittsburg, Fort Scott at Independence, McPherson at Chanute, Coffeyville at Emporia
 Sept. 27 -- Wellington at Labette County, Pittsburg at Fort Scott, Nemaha Central at Chanute, Coffeyville at Independence
 Oct. 4 -- Labette County at Fort Scott, Chanute at Independence, K.C. Christ Prep Academy at Coffeyville
 Oct. 11 -- Coffeyville at Labette County, Fort Scott at Chanute, Eudora at Independence
 Oct. 18 -- Independence at Labette County, Towanda Circle at Fort Scott, Pittsburg at Chanute, Mulvane at Coffeyville
 Oct. 25 -- Labette County at Chanute, Fort Scott at Coffeyville, Independence at Rose Hill

2023 Final Standings

Independents

	W	L
Parsons	9	2
Pittsburg	5	4

CNC League

	W	L
St. Mary's Colgan	11	1
Frontenac	9	2
Riverton	6	4
Baxter Springs	4	5
Girard	3	6
Columbus	2	7
Galena	0	9

Note: Because of conflicting district schedules, CNC teams did not play a league schedule.

Three Rivers League (11-Man)

	Conf.	Overall		
	W	L	W	L
Jayhawk-Linn	4	0	8	2
Pleasanton	3	1	5	4
Uniontown	2	2	2	7
Northeast	1	3	2	7
Southeast	0	4	1	8

	Conf.	Overall		
	W	L	W	L
Marmaton Val.	4	0	6	3
St. Paul	3	1	5	4
Crest	2	2	4	5
Oswego	1	3	4	5
Yates Center	0	4	0	9

Southeast Kansas League

	Conf.	Overall		
	W	L	W	L
Chanute	4	0	8	2
Coffeyville	3	1	6	4
Fort Scott	2	2	3	6
Independence	1	3	3	6
Labette Co.	0	4	1	8

Class 5A East

	W	L	Pts.
De Soto	8	2	78
BV Southwest	10	2	75
Highland Park	7	3	50
Mill Valley	11	2	46
Spring Hill	7	3	29
Shawnee Heights	8	3	20
Pittsburg	5	4	27
KC Washington	5	4	24
Topeka Seaman	6	5	22

Lansing	5	5	5
KC Sumner	4	5	-4
Leavenworth	2	7	-38
Topeka West	1	8	-78
KC Harmon	1	8	-78
Emporia	0	9	-104
KC Turner	0	9	-110

Class 4A East

	W	L	Pts.
Atchison	10	1	97
Louisburg	9	1	93
Bishop Miege	8	2	72
Chanute	8	2	65
Tonganoxie	9	3	70
ST Aquinas	10	3	23
Basehor-Linwood	7	4	16
Eudora	5	5	21
KC Piper	4	5	-7
Paola	4	5	-11
Fort Scott	3	6	-9
Ottawa	3	6	-14
KC Schlagle	3	6	-26
St. James Acad.	2	7	-38
Labette Co.	1	8	-67
Bonner Springs	1	8	-74

Class 4A West

	W	L	Pts.
Wamego	9	3	61
Buhler	7	3	58
Abilene	7	3	52
Wellington	8	3	14
Coffeyville	6	4	44
Andover Central	9	4	21
McPherson	7	4	16
Winfield	4	5	0
Rose Hill	4	6	-22
Mulvane	3	6	-49
Independence	3	6	-31
Augusta	2	7	-37
Towanda Circle	2	7	-45
Arkansas City	1	8	-85
Ulysses	0	9	-103
El Dorado	0	9	-112

Class 3A District 1

	Dist.	Overall		
	W	L	W	L
Frontenac	4	0	9	2
Parsons	3	1	9	2
Columbus	2	2	2	7
Baxter Springs	1	3	4	5
Galena	0	4	0	9

Class 3A District 2

	Dist.	Overall		
	W	L	W	L
Prairie View	3	1	5	5

Iola	3	1	4	5
Burlington	3	1	6	4
Girard	1	3	3	6
Anderson Co.	0	4	2	7

Class 2A District 1

	Dist.	Overall		
	W	L	W	L
Riverton	4	0	6	4
Caney Valley	3	1	5	4
Cherryvale	2	2	4	5
Neodesha	1	3	3	6
Fredonia	0	4	4	5

Class 1A District 1

	Dist.	Overall		
	W	L	W	L
SM Colgan	4	0	11	1
Erie	3	1	4	5
Uniontown	2	2	2	7
Northeast	1	3	2	7
Southeast	0	4	1	8

Class 1A District 2

	Dist.	Overall		
	W	L	W	L
Olpe	4	0	8	3
Jayhawk-Linn	3	1	8	2
Central Hts.	2	2	5	5
Pleasanton	1	3	5	4
Northern Hts.	0	4	0	9

8-Man D-1 District 1

	Dist.	Overall		
	W	L	W	L
West Elk	5	0	9	2
Oswego	4	1	4	5
Sedan	3	2	4	5
CV/Dexter	2	3	2	7
Flinthills	1	4	2	7
Yates Center	0	5	0	9

8-Man D-2 District 1

	W	L	W	L
Lebo	5	0	6	4
Marmaton Val.	4	1	6	3
St. Paul	3	2	5	4
Crest	2	3	4	5
Hartford	1	4	1	8
MDC Valley	0	5	0	9

Dragons Capsule

Team Nuggets

2023 record: 5-4
 Coach: Josh Lattimer
 Total years in coaching: 20
 Years at Pittsburg: 4
 Record at Pittsburg: 12-8
 Assistants: Matt Vaughn, Anthony Chatman, Bob Kimzey, Tom Nickelson, Wes Slavens, Johnathon Stark, Kip Whiteley, Nate Woods, Duane Vaughn
 Base offense: Flexbone
 Base defense: 4-3 multiple coverages

2024 Schedule

Sept. 6 – Emporia
 Sept. 13 – Shawnee Mission South
 Sept. 20 – Labette County
 Sept. 27 – at Fort Scott
 Oct. 4 – at Paola
 Oct. 11 – Smithville (Mo.)
 Oct. 18 – at Chanute
 Oct. 25 – Topeka

2023 Results

Pittsburg 54, Emporia 28
 Chanute 27, Pittsburg 0
 Pittsburg 45, Labette County 6
 Pittsburg 32, Fort Scott 22
 Paola 19, Pittsburg 16
 Pittsburg 20, Independence 13
 Smithville (Mo.) 36, Pittsburg 18
 Pittsburg 52, Wichita North 0
State Playoffs
 Lansing 19, Pittsburg 14

Dragons bring back 16 starters

By Brock Sisney
 bsisney@morningsun.net

The Pittsburg Purple Dragons return 10 starters on defense and six on offense for the 2024 season under third-year head coach Josh Lattimer.

They will be led by a senior class who gets its chance to carry on a proud football tradition highlighted by four state championships (1954, 1983, 1987, 1990).

“All seniors will set the standard of excellence for our program,” Lattimer said. “We are counting on them to lead by example, vocal leadership and by all aspects

of the program. Several of them have started since their sophomore campaigns. This group of seniors has a chance to be special for us.

“Our team chemistry is a must from here on out. The tighter we are, the better we are. All levels must be on the same page. We will have more team events for better chemistry.

“Our goal is to give our best effort until the clock reads 00:00. Play for our teammates, families, community and make the past players of the program proud. Wearing the purple is an extremely high privilege.”

Pittsburg opens the season Sept. 6 against Class 5A East foe Emporia, and the Dragons’ schedule adds 6A opponents Shawnee Mission South and Topeka. Pittsburg also hosts Missouri Class 4 powerhouse Smithville, who finished 9-2 last season with a 29-13 loss in the district championship against eventual state champion Kearney.

Traditional opponents Labette County, Fort Scott, Chanute and Paola round out the eight-game slate.

The Dragons graduated leading rusher Wyatt Rink and most of their offensive line from

last season, including Kansas Shrine Bowl selection Ayden Davis and Pittsburg State redshirt freshman defensive lineman Noah Rogers.

Pittsburg rushed for more than 2,200 yards with 28 touchdowns and passed for 500 yards last season. The Dragons like to play an old school brand of football that Lattimer calls “D.A.T.” for Discipline, Accountability and Toughness.

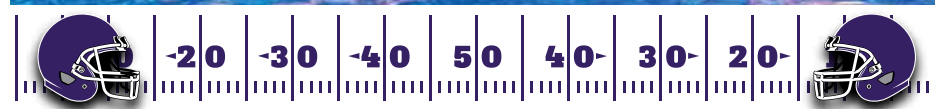
Returning starters include senior quarterback and cornerback Carsen Nickelson, senior athlete and cornerback Conner Proffitt, senior running back

SEE DRAGONS, 9C

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Pittsburg senior Carsen Nickelson hands off to fellow senior Stone Peery during the first day of practice on Aug. 19. BROCK SISNEY / THE MORNING SUN

Pittsburg Purple Dragons

No.	Name	Yr.	Pos.	No.	Name	Yr.	Pos.
1	Cooper Vaughn	Sr.	WR/DB	41	Logan Southard	So.	OL/LB
2	Courtland Jones	Jr.	RB/DB	42	Gabe Kimzey	Sr.	TE/LB
3	Conner Proffitt	Sr.	RB/DB	44	Tanner Ramage	Sr.	RB/DB
4	Carsen Nickelson	Sr.	QB/DB	45	Dawson Hall	Jr.	RB/LB
5	Jamarcus Davis	So.	RB/DB	48	Hunter Dawson	So.	TE/LB
6	Jett Burgess	Sr.	QB/DB	50	Hunter Kirsch	Jr.	OL/DL
7	Rashaad Green	Jr.	QB/DB	52	Nolan Turnbull	Sr.	OL/DL
8	Landyn Ross	Jr.	WR/DB	53	Kane See	Jr.	TE/LB
10	Danny Durden	Jr.	RB/DB	54	Beck Fern	Jr.	OL/DL
11	Kordae Hayes	So.	WR/DB	55	Bryan Martinez	Sr.	OL/DL
12	De'Marus Partee	Jr.	WR/LB	56	Alex Hinspeter	So.	OL/LB
13	Christian Krogen	So.	QB/DB	57	Miguel Torres	So.	OL/LB
14	Cole Hayden	Jr.	OL/DL	58	Landon Clarke	Jr.	OL/DL
15	Bobby Nelson	So.	QB/DE	59	Liam Mahan	Sr.	OL/DL
16	Chris Bishop	Jr.	WR/DB	60	Parker Pinamonti	Jr.	OL/DL
17	Mason Deringer	Jr.	RB/LB	62	Jaycee Patterson	Jr.	OL/DL
19	Colin Sullivan	Sr.	WR/DB	65	Jesse Patterson	So.	OL/DL
20	Max Busch	So.	RB/LB	66	Jason Owens	So.	OL/DL
21	Malakai Meadows	Jr.	WR/DB	67	James Graham	So.	OL/DL
22	Christian Patrick	Jr.	RB/DB	69	Logan Mantooth	Sr.	OL/DL
23	Barrett Rink	Sr.	RB/LB	70	Logan Sanders	Jr.	OL/DL
24	Stone Peery	Sr.	RB/LB	72	Mason Benson	Jr.	TE/LB
28	Malcolm Riley	Jr.	RB/DL	74	Lincoln Laverack	Sr.	OL/DL
29	Noah Coose	Jr.	WR/DB	75	T.J. Wesley	Sr.	OL/DL
31	Evan Antoni	So.	WR/DB	76	Jon Winzer	So.	OL/DL
32	Ashton Bauder	So.	RB/LB	77	J.T. Redd	So.	OL/DL
33	Garret Dillingham	So.	TE/DE	79	Luke Lowe	So.	OL/DL
34	Nate Mitchell	Sr.	FB/DE	81	Josh Campbell	So.	WR/DB
35	Joe Bailey	So.	RB/LB		Kyler Bowling	Sr.	WR/DB
					Armando Rueda	Jr.	K/P

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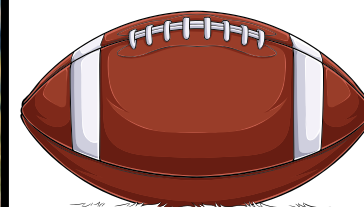
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Raiders Capsule**Team Nuggets**

2023 record: 9-2

Coach: Leon Miller

Years at Frontenac: 18

Record at Frontenac: 136-47

Assistants: John Palumbo, Bill Sullivan, Brady Hill, Garrett Wilson, Tyrone Armstrong

Base offense: Pro I

Base defense: 3-4

2024 Schedule

Sept. 6 — at Galena

Sept. 13 — St. Mary's Colgan

Sept. 20 — at Riverton

Sept. 27 — Girard

Oct. 4 — at Parsons

Oct. 11 — at Baxter Springs

Oct. 18 — Columbus

Oct. 25 — Neodesha

2023 Results

St. Mary's Colgan 27, Frontenac 20

Frontenac 21, Riverton 18

Frontenac 42, Kansas City Bishop Ward 26

District Playoffs

Frontenac 26, Girard 12

Frontenac 41, Columbus 7

Frontenac 62, Baxter Springs 7

Frontenac 10, Parsons 8

Frontenac 42, Galena 14

State Playoffs

Frontenac 42, Girard 20

Frontenac 15, Burlington 12

Holton 35, Frontenac 22

Miller returns as Frontenac coach

By Brock Sisney

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After a 27-20 loss in the season opener to Class 1A state semifinalist St. Mary's Colgan last season, the Frontenac Raiders went on a nine-game winning streak and reached the Class 3A state quarterfinals where they lost 35-22 to Holton, one of their regular postseason foes in recent seasons.

Last December, Mark Smith stepped down as Frontenac head coach to become the wide receivers coach and passing game coordinator at his alma mater Pittsburg State after the hiring of head coach Tom Antho-

ny.

Smith coached the Raiders for 12 seasons and they were 94-38 (.712 winning percentage) with a Class 4A-Division II state runner-up finish in 2017 and a 3A state runner-up finish in 2021. Frontenac teams reached the state quarterfinals eight times during his tenure.

The Raiders brought back a familiar name and face in February, hiring Leon Miller, a veteran football coach who coached the Raiders from 1989 to 2005. Frontenac won a Class 2-1A state championship in 1994 and finished state runner-up in 1992 and 2000; the Raiders won 74

percent of their games during his first tenure as head coach.

Miller also made head coaching stops at Girard, Parsons and Neosho, Mo.

"We'll play hard, tough, physical football offensively and defensively," Miller said. "We're going to run the ball, but we're going to throw the ball and we're going to do the things that the defense allows us to do. I can't give you percentages at this time, but we want to mix the pass with the run when it's opportune for us. We've got some nice weapons and I think we've got some guys that can deliver the ball. We'll

find out next few weeks, though, what we're capable of with our pads on and we'll have more of an idea."

Frontenac opens the 2024 season Sept. 6 on the road against Galena and the Raiders get in all six conference rivals on their schedule with St. Mary's Colgan (Sept. 13), Riverton (Sept. 20), Girard (Sept. 27), Baxter Springs (Oct. 11) and Columbus (Oct. 18) following Galena.

Girard, Baxter Springs and Columbus double as district opponents in Class 3A District 1. District foes Parsons (Oct. 4) and Neodesha (Oct. 25) round out the eight-

SEE RAIDERS, 11C



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Frontenac Raiders

No.	Name	Yr.	Pos.	No.	Name	Yr.	Pos.
0	Brogan Smith	So.	QB/LB	40	Kaden Long	Sr.	WR/DB
1	Payton Armstrong	Fr.	QB/LB	42	Camden Ishimura	So.	RB/LB
2	Grant Nickle	Jr.	WR/LB	45	Kelton Doherty	Fr.	RB/LB
3	Wyatt Frazier	Sr.	WR/DB	47	Ayden Miranda	Fr.	WR/DB
4	Kayson Houghton	Fr.	WR/LB	50	Aiden Lillich	Sr.	OL/LB
5	Brady Sloan	Jr.	RB/LB	51	Cooper Rakes	Jr.	OL/LB
6	Brock Wiemers	So.	QB/DB	52	Cooper Born	Sr.	OL/DL
7	Jacob Murphy	So.	RB/LB	55	Ethan Merrick	So.	OL/DL
8	Drake Clayton	Fr.	WR/DB	56	Duke Gariglietti	So.	OL/DL
9	Gavyn Witthuhn	Sr.	RB/LB	57	Mic Muller	Fr.	OL/DL
11	Lorenzo Burke	Sr.	TE/DL	58	Mose Beckham	Sr.	OL/DL
12	Kyle Sloan	Jr.	WR/DB	59	Tyler Holt	So.	OL/DL
13	Scott Sloan	Jr.	RB/LB	60	Dakota Leverich-Howe	Fr.	OL/LB
14	Kaden Merando	So.	WR/DB	62	Jacob Martinous	Fr.	OL/DL
15	Zane Aikin	So.	WR/DB	63	CJ Switz	Fr.	OL/DL
16	Kale Coomes	Fr.	WR/QB/DB	64	Alonzo Burke	Sr.	OL/DL
17	Blaze Johnson	Jr.	TE/LB	65	Jeremiah Reagan	So.	OL/DL
18	Gunner Horyna	Fr.	TE/DL	66	Garrett Henderson	Fr.	OL/DL
19	Baron Kunshek	So.	TE/LB	67	Ryder Hensley	Jr.	OLDL
20	Kayden Chance	Sr.	RB/DB	68	Maddox Allen	Jr.	OL/DL
21	Rylan Relph	So.	RB/LB	71	Rolando Moran	Sr.	OL/DL
22	Luke Sneed	So.	RB/LB	72	Wyatt Collins	Jr.	OL/DL
23	Jayden Houghton	Sr.	TE/DL	73	Chase Underwood	So.	OL/DL
25	Owen Welsh	So.	WR/DB	75	Bryce Hill	So.	OL/DL
26	Alec Douglas	Fr.	RB/LB	76	Landon Clemensen	Fr.	OL/DL
27	Drew Long	So.	RB/LB	78	Evan Mason	Sr.	OL/DL
28	Jaxson Varsolona	Fr.	WR/DB	79	Cooper Jordan	So.	OL/DL
29	Mark Stroud	So.	WR/DB	80	Julius Courtney	Sr.	WR/DB
30	Dominic Ricciardi	Sr.	RB/LB	81	Kle Stewart	Fr.	WR/DB
32	Kane Mjelde	Fr.	RB/LB	84	Ryker Tanner	Fr.	WR/LB
33	Kaiden Walden	Fr.	WR/DB	85	Gage James	Jr.	TE/LB
				87	Jack Spear	Fr.	WR/DB



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DRAGONS

CONTINUED FROM 4C

and linebacker Stone Peery, senior linebacker Gabe Kimzey, junior wide receiver and linebacker De'Marus Partee, senior interior lineman T.J. Wesley and senior defensive end Nate Mitchell.

Nickelson completed eight of nine passes for 104 yards in games last season against Wichita North and Lansing. He also rushed for 39 yards and one TD on 11 carries. Nickelson

was the third quarterback last season behind graduated seniors Webb Fern and Tucker Akins.

Proffitt rushed for 374 yards and one TD on 27 carries in seven games last season. He rushed for a season-high 114 yards on seven carries against Smithville and just missed a second 100-yard performance with 99 yards on six carries against Labette County.

On the defensive side, Proffitt made 25 tackles (14 solo, 11 assist) with seven stops against Lansing and

Smithville. His most memorable defensive performance last season was three interceptions returned for 130 yards and one TD against Labette County.

Nickelson made 42 tackles (22 solo, 20 assist) with three for loss, one interception, five pass deflections and one blocked punt.

Kimzey led the Dragons last season with 91 tackles (40 solo, 51 assist, 11 for loss) with five 10-tackle performances highlighted by a season-best 16 stops against Paola.

Kimzey also made 15 tackles against Smithville and 14 against Fort Scott.

Partee recorded 52 tackles (26 solo, 26 assist) last season with 11 against Paola and 10 against Wichita North. He made 12 tackles for loss and had three sacks, four hurries, one interception, one pass deflection, one fumble recovery and one forced fumble.

Peery finished with 47 tackles (24 solo, 23 assist) with six of them for loss, two sacks, three hurries and one interception

in seven games.

Mitchell had 40 tackles (19 solo, 21 assist) with six of them for loss, three sacks, a team-high nine hurries, two pass deflections, two fumble recoveries and one blocked field goal.

Wesley added eight tackles, two of them for loss, and one hurry.

Other returning starters are senior Liam Mahan and juniors Mason Benson, Beck Fern, Cole Hayden, Courtland Jones and Parker Pinamonti.

Returning players

are seniors Nolan Turnbull, Tanner Ramage and Cooper Vaughn; juniors Jaycee Patterson, Malcolm Riley and Malakai Meadows; sophomores Ja-Marcus Davis, Alex Hinspeter, Ashton Bauder and Christian Krogen.

Senior lineman Bryan Martinez and sophomore tight end and defensive end Garrett Dillingham transferred in from Oklahoma schools Wilburton and Fairland, respectively.

Lions coming off best season since 2017

Lions Capsule

Team Nuggets

2023 record: 4-5

Coach: Jeff McCoy

Total years in coaching: 7

Years as head coach at Baxter Springs: 2

Record: 4-5, 1-3 Class 3A District 1 (4th)

Assistants: Tim Parrish, Austin Williams, Tyler Cook, Bill Buck

2024 Schedule

Sept. 6 -- Riverton

Sept. 13 -- at Afton (Okla.)

Sept. 20 -- Girard

Sept. 27 -- Parsons

Oct. 4 -- at Columbus

Oct. 11 -- Frontenac

Oct. 18 -- at Neodesha

Oct. 24 -- at Galena

2023 Results

Baxter Springs 58, Southeast 0

Baxter Springs 48, Uniontown 0

Baxter Springs 27, Afton (Okla.) 12

Parsons 58, Baxter Springs 0

Baxter Springs 28, Galena 20

Frontenac 62, Baxter Springs 7

Columbus 42, Baxter Springs 36

Wichita Trinity 49, Baxter Springs 13

State Playoffs

Prairie View 48, Baxter Springs 13

By Jim Henry

jhenry@morningsun.net

Baxter Springs' football program took another step forward last season.

The Lions finished 4-5, matching their best record since 2017, and they advanced to the state playoffs for the first time in 17 years.

The four victories were one more than the Lions had in the previous four seasons combined.

"The best part of last season was being able to get to the playoffs for the first time in several years," coach Jeff McCoy said. "It was great for our school and our kids to be able to compete in the playoffs.

"Our kids faced a lot of adversity last season with several injuries to key players, but they overcame. And it gave a good portion of our young guys opportunities to step in

and play, which I believe will help those guys this season."

Underclassmen dominate the Lions' roster. There are only seven seniors and four juniors on the 42-man squad.

Jacob Grant, 6-foot-5, 180-pound senior, returns at wide receiver and free safety. He was an all-state kicker and received honorable mention all-state as a receiver.

Two more senior returning starters are wide receiver-defensive back Zak Price and two-way lineman Kyler Sharlow. Sam Weaver, a junior running back-linebacker, and Brooks Walker, a sophomore lineman, also return to the lineup.

Other lettermen include seniors Tyler Frazier (WR-DB) and Cohen Hodges (OL-DL) and sophomores Isaiah Main (QB-DB), Logan Abbott

SEE LIONS, 23C

2024 District Assignments

Class 5A

East -- Pittsburg, Basehor-Linwood, De Soto, K.C. Harmon, K.C. Turner, K.C. Washington, Leavenworth, St. James Academy, Blue Valley, Blue Valley North, Blue Valley Southwest, St. Thomas Aquinas, Mill Valley, Spring Hill, Shawnee Heights, Topeka Highland Park

Class 4A

East -- Labette County, Fort Scott, Chanute, Coffeyville, Atchison, Bonner Springs, Eudora, K.C. Schlagle, K.C. Piper, K.C. Sumner Academy, Lansing, Louisburg, Ottawa, Paola, Shawnee Mission Bishop Miega, Tonganoxie
West -- Independence, Abilene, Andover Central, Arkansas City, Augusta, Buhler, El Dorado, McPherson, Mulvane, Rose Hill, Towanda Circle, Ullyses, Wamego, Wellington, Kapaun Mt. Carmel, Winfield

Class 3A

District 1 -- Frontenac, Baxter Springs, Columbus, Parsons, Neodesha
District 2 -- Girard, Burlington, Anderson County, Iola, Prairie View

Class 2A

District 1 -- Riverton, Galena, Caney Valley, Cherryvale, Fredonia

Class 1A

District 1 -- St. Mary's Colgan, Southeast, Erie, Jayhawk-Linn, Pleasanton, Uniontown

8-Man Division I

District 1 -- Northeast, Central Burden, Cedar Vale/Dexter, West Elk, Oswego, Sedan
District 2 -- Yates Center, Northern Heights, Cottonwood Falls-Chase County, Lyndon, Madison, Flinthills

8-Man Division II

District 1 -- St. Paul, Crest, Marmaton Valley, Waverly



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Frontenac players run through an offensive drill Aug. 21 at practice. BROCK

SISNEY / THE MORNING SUN

RAIDERS

CONTINUED FROM 6C

game regular season.

Last season, the Raiders gained nearly 2,000 yards on the ground with 28 touchdowns and the ground game will become the focal point this season with Miller as head coach. His teams are identified with traditional, smash mouth football

Senior running back Gavyn Witthuhn rushed for 1,107 yards and nine touchdowns on 142 carries and he averaged 7.8 yards per carry and 100.6 yards per game last season.

Graduated quarterback Kal Terlip provided the Raiders a balanced offensive attack, as he passed for 1,476 yards with 16 touchdowns and three interceptions on 85 of 158 accuracy.

Fullback and line-backer Peyton Mc-

Donald, a 2024 Kansas Shrine Bowl selection, also graduated and he rushed for 638 yards and 10 TDs on 100 carries. McDonald also finished with a team-high 101 tackles (50 solo, 51 assist).

Senior receiver Wyatt Frazier caught a team-high 26 passes for 578 yards and five TDs last season, averaging a team-high 22.2 yards per catch. He made 50 tackles (32 solo, 18 assist) and finished with seven interceptions.

Senior defensive back Kayden Chance made 94 tackles (47 solo, 47 assist) and Jayden Houghton proved a disruptive force on the defensive front with 58 tackles (31 solo, 27 assist), 9.5 tackles for loss, four sacks, two forced fumbles and two pass breakups.

Dominic Ricciardi, Jack Capehart, Witthuhn and Kaden Long all return hav-

ing made at least 40 tackles last season with Ricciardi 50 (27 solo, 23 assist), Capehart 42 (28 solo, 14 assist), Witthuhn 41 (23 solo, 18 assist) and Long 40 (24 solo, 16 assist).

The Raiders also return senior offensive lineman Alonzo Burke, senior defensive end Lorenzo Burke and senior defensive tackle Mose Beckham.

On special teams, Frontenac graduated punter Tyler Antle, kicker Aidan Hill and returner Jomar Pero. Antle averaged 35.2 yards on 27 punts and he signed with the Kansas Jayhawks as a punter last December; Hill made 36-42 extra points and kicked the game-winning 38-yard field goal against Parsons; Pero returned a kickoff 95 yards for touchdown in a Class 3A regional win last season against Burlington.

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Panthers Capsule

Team Nuggets

2023 record: 11-1, 4-0 CNC, 4-0 Class 1A District 1
 Coach: Shawn Seematter
 Total years in coaching: 12
 Years at Colgan: 8
 Record at Colgan: 57-21
 Assistants: Matt Karleskint, Carl Roth, Joey Caskey
 Base Offense: Spread
 Base Defense: 4-3

2024 Schedule

Sept. 6-- at Girard
 Sept. 13--at Frontenac
 Sept. 19--Columbus
 Sept. 27--Pleasanton
 Oct. 4--Uniontown
 Oct. 11--at Jayhawk Linn
 Oct. 18--Erie
 Oct. 25--at Southeast

2023 Results

Colgan 27, Frontenac 20
 Colgan 47, Girard 8
 Colgan 35, Riverton 0
 Colgan 53, Southeast 0
 Colgan 76, Northeast 0
 Colgan 59, Columbus 20
 Colgan 63, Erie 8
 Colgan 60, Uniontown 0
State Playoffs
 Colgan 68, Pleasanton 13
 Colgan 63, Jayhawk-Linn 6
 Colgan 33, St. Mary's 8
 Jefferson County North 20, Colgan 13

New-look Panthers seek state title

By Kalon Fullerton

kfullerton@morningsun.net



It will be a new look for the St. Mary's Colgan Panthers as they begin their quest for the eighth state title in program history and the first since 2017.

The Panthers could not have come much closer in 2023, racing out to an 11-0 start and reaching the Class 1A semifinal game before a heartbreaking 20-13 loss at home to Jefferson County North. Colgan did not trail at any point in the season until losing the lead late in the second half.

"I think the thing that bit us at the end of the season was turnovers,"

head coach Shawn Seematter said. "It just hit us at the worst time. We know we've got to be locked in every game and we can't take any snap for granted."

If Colgan is to reach the state title game, the Panthers will have to do it without last year's star senior class. Colgan will look to replace 14 seniors, including four players who move on to play at the collegiate

level. Quarterback/defensive back Tucker Harrell, running back/linebacker Cooper Simmons and offensive/defensive lineman Tristan Voss signed with Pittsburg State while offensive/defensive lineman Jade Tenry will play his college football at Ave Maria University in Ave Maria, Fla. The Panthers also lose Jack Schremmer, their top receiving threat a year ago.

"We lost a great group," Seematter said. "We lost nine starters on both sides of the ball. But I've been happy with the practices we've had and I've been very pleased with our attitude and

effort. I'm excited to be where we're at."

The Panthers return just four starters from 2023, two on each side of the ball. Junior wide receiver Klayton Adamson finished the year with 19 receptions for 398 yards and five touchdowns and fellow junior wideout Anthony Schremmer returns after 17 receptions for 237 yards and two touchdowns.

Defensively, junior Carston Simmons and senior Brady VanBecelaere return to the defensive backfield. Simmons will also be the starting quarterback after playing in nine games in a backup role

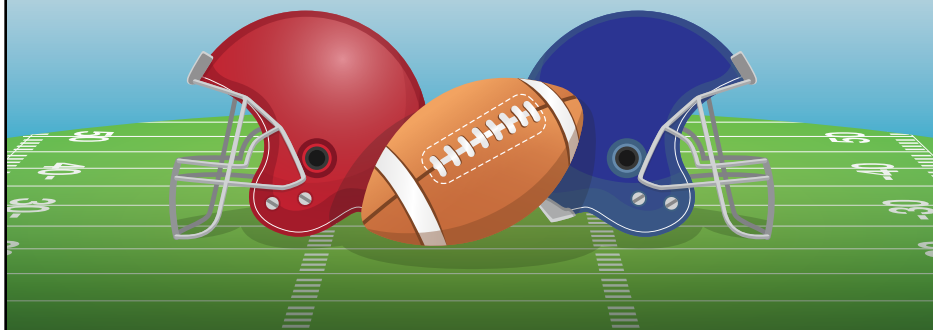
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St. Mary's Colgan Panthers

No.	Name	Yr.	Pos.	No.	Name	Yr.	Pos.
1	Quincy Biehl	Fr.	WR/DB	36	Noah Duncan	Sr.	RB/LB
2	Brady Crossland	Jr.	WR/LB	44	Jayden Brown	Jr.	WR/DB
3	Carston Simmons	Jr.	QB/DB	45	Hardy Baker	Fr.	WR/DB
4	Brady VanBecelaere	Sr.	WR/DB	50	Jace McCreedy	So.	OL/LB
5	Trevor Varone	Fr.	WR/DB	51	Alex Beasley	Jr.	OL/DL
6	Anthony Schremmer	Jr.	WR/DB	52	Jamie Hamilton	Jr.	OL/DL
8	Caleb Garner	Jr.	WR/LB	53	Charlie Gill	So.	OL/LB
9	Will Schremmer	So.	QB/TE/DL	54	Brock Radell	Jr.	OL/DL
10	Joe Lomshek	Jr.	WR/DB/K	55	Michael Westhoff	Jr.	OL/DL
11	Brady Bettiga	So.	WR/DB	56	Jax Renn	Fr.	OL/DL
12	Colton Simmons	Fr.	WR/DB	57	Kane George	Fr.	OL/DL
14	Remington Rhuems	So.	WR/DB	58	Weston Koenig	Fr.	OL/DL
15	Gabe Brown	Fr.	QB/LB	59	Kasch Eisenhauer	Fr.	OL/LB
16	Max Imhof	Fr.	WR/DB	61	Jaeden Beltran	So.	OL/DL
17	Grant Hite	Sr.	WR/DB	64	Devin Keck	So.	OL/DL
18	Brycen Farris	Fr.	WR/DB	65	Abram Son	Fr.	OL/DL
19	Brady Badart	Jr.	WR/DB	66	Gabe Stockard	Fr.	OL/LB
20	Pablo Carmona	So.	WR/DB	67	Colton Widmer	Fr.	OL/DL
21	Klayton Adamson	Jr.	WR/DB	70	Manuel Garcia	So.	OL/DL
22	Lane Stultz	So.	RB/LB	73	Christian Morris	Jr.	OL/DL
32	Jackson Carson	Fr.	RB/LB	75	Camden Deao	Fr.	OL/DL
33	Jack Krusich	Fr.	TE/DL	76	Sebastian Aita	So.	OL/DL
				78	Frank Stroud	Fr.	OL/DL



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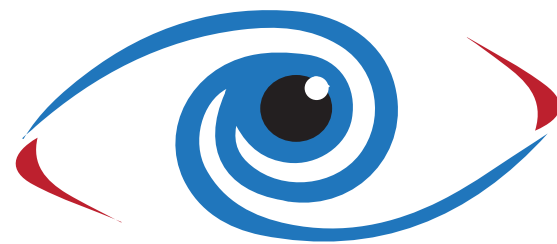
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Trojans Capsule

Team Nuggets

2023 record: 3-6, 2-2 CNC,
1-3 Class 3A District 2
Coach: Neal Philpot
Total years in coaching: 20
Years at Girard: 8
Record at Girard: 40-29
Assistants: Jeremiah Hudson, Jake Towrey, Evan Troike, Cade Simmons
Base offense: Flex
Base defense: 3-3

2024 Schedule

Sept. 6-St. Mary's Colgan
Sept. 13-Riverton
Sept. 20-at Baxter Springs
Sept. 27-at Frontenac
Oct. 4-at Iola
Oct. 11-Burlington
Oct. 18-at Prairie View
Oct. 25-Anderson County

2023 Results

Girard 32, Columbus 8
St. Mary's Colgan 47, Girard 8
Girard 38, Galena 0
Frontenac 26, Girard 12
Prairie View 21, Girard 0
Iola 29, Girard 15
Girard 48, Anderson County 20
Burlington 41, Girard 27
State Playoffs
Frontenac 42, Girard 20

Trojans look to bounce back

By Kalon Fullerton

kfullerton@morningsun.net

The Girard Trojans will hope the pains of 2023 will lead to success in 2024.

The Trojans lost 15 seniors and returned four starters from the 2022 squad that won 10 games. It led to a 3-6 season for the Trojans in 2023, the fewest wins for the Trojans since 2013. Girard lost four of the final five games and saw the season end with a 42-20 loss to Frontenac.

In 2024, Girard and head coach Neal Philpot will hope those lessons learned turn into victories. The Trojans

lost just five seniors to graduation and return 18 starters.

"There were some growing pains," Philpot said. "Our depth was not as good last year. We were forced to play some young guys early. That's usually not very effective to get wins. But this is a good group. They're athletic, they're tough. I think there's some good things we can take away from last season. We got down in some games and we fought. Each season is different but you can learn from your experiences. We will still be a little young, but we'll be battle tested."

Leading the pack for

Girard is first team All-CNC wide receiver Scott Moore, who led the Trojans with 589 yards and 10 touchdowns in 2023. The Trojans also return three more All-CNC players Aaron Doubrava and Zack Benson, who lead the lines. All-CNC running back Junior Love also returns as well as Sylar Sammons at wideout.

The Trojans will have to replace defensive starters Drake Kotzman and Anthony Pike, who will play at Bethany College this fall. Girard will also have to find a new starting quarterback to replace last year's senior Jake Towner.

"We have a lot of kids who played a lot last year for us," Philpot said. "Doubrava, Zack Benson, Sylar, Maison Gilmore who got hurt early in the year but is a good player for us. We've got some holes that we need to figure out right now. But so does everybody else. We've got nine seniors, I think those guys need to set the tone of how we practice and they do that pretty well. They're not the most vocal guys, but they lead by example."

Girard opens the season at home against St. Mary's Colgan. The Trojans play their first two

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Girard senior tight end Scott Moore catches a pass in a drill at practice Aug. 22 at Frank Jameson Field. BROCK SISNEY / THE MORNING SUN

TROJANS

CONTINUED FROM 14C
games at home.

“Our goal every year is to win our district and get in the playoffs and make a run,” Philpot said.

“Each team is a little bit different. We have to find our chemistry. We’ve talked about taking care of the little things. We want to make a run every year and that hasn’t changed.”

This sports reporting is made possible, in part, by the Support Local Journalism Project Fund. Learn more at: south-eastkansas.org/fund/support-local-journalism-project-fund/

Girard Trojans

No.	Name	Yr.	Pos.	No.	Name	Yr.	Pos.
1	Trent Ognibene	Jr.	QB/DB	35	Maisen Gilmore	Sr.	RB/LB
2	Gannon Clark	Jr.	WR/LB	40	Scott Moore	Sr.	TE/SS
3	Easton Clark	Fr.	RB/DB	42	Kord Kruczynski	Fr.	RB/LB
4	Adrian Newton	Jr.	WR/DB	50	Trenton Sodamann	Fr.	OL/DL
5	Bryor Schultz	Fr.	WR/DB	51	Jayden Killian	So.	RB/LB
6	Jaxton Smith	Fr.	QB/DB	53	Owen Murphy	Jr.	RB/DB
7	Robbie Bruning	So.	RB/DB	55	Blake Brokob	So.	OL/LB
8	Junior Love	Jr.	RB/DL	56	Lucas Kmiec	Fr.	OL/DL
9	Zachary Pinckney	Jr.	WR/SS	57	Frank Lloyd	Fr.	OL/DL
10	Korvin Bowin	So.	RB/DB	58	Brayden Reese	Fr.	OL/DL
11	Jenaro Garcia	Jr.	WR/DB	59	Liam Leadstrom	So.	OL/DL
12	Ben Cullen	So.	QB/SS	61	Aaron Bauer	Sr.	WR/SS
13	John Walker	Fr.	RB/SS	63	Jayden Kirkpatrick	Fr.	OL/DL
14	Caiden Gregory	Fr.	RB/DB	64	Brody Boatman	Fr.	OL/DL
15	August Amershek	So.	RB/SS	65	Crispin Owen	So.	OL/DL
16	Sylar Sammons	Sr.	QB/DB	66	Mason Crozier	So.	OL/DL
17	Keaton Huber	Fr.	WR/SS	67	Nathan Pope	So.	OL/DL
18	Aiden Ashbacher	Jr.	RB/DB	68	Andrew Trindal	Fr.	OL/DL
19	Gavin Huber	So.	RB/SS	70	Caleb Humble	So.	OL/DL
20	Levi Blair	Sr.	RB/SS	72	Levi Wydick	Fr.	OL/DL
21	Zeb Poland	So.	RB/LB	73	Aaron Doubrava	Sr.	OL/DL
22	Blaze Burks	Fr.	TE/SS	75	Zack Benso	Sr.	OL/DL
23	Robert Larson	Sr.	RB/LB	77	Vance Sandy	Fr.	OL/DL
				88	Alex Hangartner	Fr.	WR/SS



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Lancers Capsule

Team Nuggets

2023 record: 1-8, 0-6 Three Rivers League,
0-4 Class 1A District 1
Coach: Nick Cheney
Total years in coaching: 47
Years at Southeast: 5
Record at Southeast: 17-27
Assistants: Nick Cheney Jr, Thomas Sharbutt, Jerry Alexander
Base offense: Multi-formation
Base defense: Multi-formation

2024 Schedule

Sept. 6—at Fredonia
Sept. 13—Diamond
Sept. 20—South Haven
Sept. 27—Uniontown
Oct. 4—at Erie
Oct. 11—Pleasanton
Oct. 18—at Jayhawk-Linn
Oct. 25—St. Mary's Colgan

2023 Results

Baxter Springs 58, Southeast 0
Jayhawk-Linn 46, Southeast 0
Central Heights 29, Southeast 0
St. Mary's Colgan 53, Southeast 0
Pleasanton 42, Southeast 6
Erie 36, Southeast 20
Uniontown 14, Southeast 12
Northeast 12, Southeast 0
District Crossover
Southeast 26, Northern Heights 12

Improved Lancers look for more wins

By Kalon Fullerton

kfullerton@morningsun.net

The Southeast Lancers ended the season on a high note in 2023 and they'll hope to use that experience for more wins in 2024.

Southeast lost the first eight games of the season but scored 20 points in a week 6 defeat against Erie and played well enough to win in their final two regular season games, a 14-12 loss against Uniontown and a 12-0 loss to Northeast. In the district crossover game, Southeast ended the year with a win, defeating Northern Heights 26-12.

"The last game of the year we had 13 kids that suited up and they won a game," Southeast head coach Nick Cheney said. "I think they know they can win if they put the time and effort in. A lot of them put effort in over the summer. Our kids are bigger and stronger. Last year we started eight underclassmen, we'll probably start a couple freshmen but we'll have five juniors that will be starting. That's going to help."

Southeast returns several starters from last season.

"Jayden Keller is going to be back as a junior lineman. He started

last year," Cheney said. "Cayne Windsor will be back as a starting O-lineman. Jude Sullivan started last year at offensive guard. Braxton Hudson will probably be our fullback. Tyler Warner was an all-conference defensive back and honorable mention receiver, he'll be a sophomore. He's getting stronger and better and he knows the game.

"The kids have a good attitude. They believe in each other. They're working together. They go riding around together. They're doing all that good stuff and that's part of being a team, believing in each other."

This year features three new opponents for the Lancers. Southeast will no longer play rivals Northeast, who dropped to 8-man. The Lancers open the season at Fredonia on Sept. 6. Southeast welcomes Missouri Class 2 school Diamond in the first home game on Sept. 13, and the Lancers face South Haven to Cherokee on Sept. 20 before returning to league play.

"We know a little bit about Fredonia," Cheney said. "They know a little bit about us. They do a lot of the stuff we do. And we

SEE LANCERS, 17C

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Southeast linemen participate in a drill Aug. 26 at Southeast High School.

BROCK SISNEY / THE MORNING SUN

Southeast Lancers

No.	Name	Yr.	Pos.				
1	Chris Archey	Fr.	WR/DB	19	Kei'Antia Wilson	So.	WR/LB
2	Dayton Sims	So.	RB/DB	23	Carter Buzard	Fr.	RB/LB
3	Xavier Rimmer	So.	WR/DB	30	Braxton Hudson	Sr.	RB/LB
4	Kyler Brewer	Fr.	RB/DB	42	Hunter Jones	Fr.	RB/LB
5	Chase Collins	Fr.	RB/DB	53	Trevin Ford	So.	OL/DL
6	Matthew Swink	Sr.	WR/LB	55	Connor Allen	Fr.	OL/DL
7	Colton Lawrence	Jr.	QB/LB	59	Jude Sullivan	Sr.	OL/LB
8	Solomon Scott	So.	QB/LB	60	Jayden Johnson-Keller Jr.		OL/DL
9	Gannon Hobbs	Fr.	QB/LB	62	Kayden Allen	Fr.	OL/DL
10	Colton Jameson	Sr.	RB/LB	65	Izaak Dickinson	Fr.	OL/DL
12	Chaydon Mays	Fr.	RB/LB	70	Zane Grissom	Fr.	OL/DL
14	Tyler Warner	So.	WR/DB	71	Cayne Windsor	Jr.	OL/DL
15	Solomon Scott	Sr.	QB/DL	77	Braxtyn Renn	Fr.	OL/DL
				81	Nathan Guison	Sr.	WR/DB

LANCERS

CONTINUED FROM 16C

added Haven, which is up by Wichita. They were two 8-man schools that merged. They both went deep in the playoffs, even if it's 8-man they're pretty good."

Cheney, in his fifth year at the helm at Southeast and his 46th

year in coaching, will hope to give the Lancers their first winning season since 2021 when they went 5-4.

"We're going to have to run the ball and take time off the clock," Cheney said. "We're working on a lot of run plays, base stuff, nothing fancy, just fundamental football. The kids just

want to get better. They're a tight group of kids."

This sports reporting is made possible, in part, by the Support Local Journalism Project Fund. Learn more at: south-eastkansas.org/fund/support-local-journalism-project-fund/

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Vikings move to 8-man football

By Brock Sisney

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The Northeast Vikings make their official debut playing eight-man football Sept. 6 against Three Rivers League foe St. Paul, a storied program that won eight-man state titles in 2000 and 2002.

The Vikings finished 2-7 last season with late-season wins against Northern Heights (42-0) and Southeast (12-0), opponents they also defeated in 2022. Northeast also defeated Uniontown (8-6) in 2022. The Vikings played a JV schedule in 2021 because of a lack of

players; numbers also hampered Northeast at times last season, especially during a 44-8 loss in Week 6 against Uniontown.

Veteran coach Mark Manriquez enters his second season as Vikings head coach with his first-ever experience coaching eight-man.

“Unfortunately, we had an injury-plagued season that derailed some of our goals,” Manriquez said. “The best part of the season was our kids did not quit. We won our last two games of the season, giving us a berth in the playoffs.

“Our strength will

be athleticism and our weakness will be our youth. We need to improve on our all-around performance and our ability to tackle in space to be successful. Lack of participation from the student body and injuries were our biggest challenges last season. Our goal is to get better day-to-day, week-to-week and month-to-month.”

The Vikings’ longest road trips this season are Central-Burden (140 miles) in Week 4 and Cedar Vale/Dexter (130 miles) in Week 8. Sedan and West Elk both play in Arma this season.

Those are four of the Vikings’ five district opponents with fellow Three Rivers school Oswego completing the quintet of teams.

Northeast returns senior offensive and defensive lineman Rocky Young, junior wide receivers and defensive backs Justin Busse and Brayden Smith and sophomore offensive lineman and linebacker Timmy Stansbury, running back and linebacker Bruce DeBusk, lineman Hayden Baker and receiver and defensive back Tayven Willard with varsity experience.

SEE **VIKINGS, 20C**

Vikings Capsule

Team Nuggets

2023 record: 2-7

Coach: Mark Manriquez

Total years in coaching: 31

Years at Northeast: 2

Record at Northeast: 2-7

Assistants: Zach Vance, Danny Fleming

Base offense: I Pro, Spread

Base defense: 3-3-2

2024 Schedule

Sept. 6 — at St. Paul

Sept. 13 — Crest

Sept. 20 — Marmaton Valley

Sept. 27 — at Central-Burden

Oct. 4 — Sedan

Oct. 11 — at Oswego

Oct. 18 — West Elk

Oct. 24 — at Cedar Vale / Dexter

2023 Results

Jayhawk-Linn 52, Northeast 14

Pleasanton 34, Northeast 14

Quapaw (Okla.) 37, Northeast 20

District Playoffs

Erie 56, Northeast 22

Colgan 76, Northeast 0

Uniontown 44, Northeast 8

Non-District

Northeast 42, Northern Heights 0

District Playoffs

Northeast 12, Southeast 0

State Playoffs

Olpe 62, Northeast 0



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VIKINGS

CONTINUED FROM 19C

DeBusk especially came on strong for the Vikings during the offseason and can be expected to be at the center of what the Vikings will become in 2024.

“Last year, he played tight end at 160,” Manriquez said. “He hit the weights hard all year and brought his 40 time from 5.3 to 5-flat or 4.9 and he’s 190 pounds right now. He’s a sophomore. He’s a big, physical kid and he’s probably going to play our Mike linebacker. He’ll play running back or full-back when we go I.”

They will be tasked for replacing the graduated Braden Young, Tayshawn Gaynor, Dawson Troth and Indica Holloway, who each signed with a four-year school to continue their academic and athletic career (Young and Gaynor at Saint Mary for football, Troth to Saint Mary for track as a decathlete and Holloway to Central Christian for baseball).

Manriquez said that DeBusk and Stansbury have taken on leadership roles in terms of work ethic, loyalty, enthusiasm, discipline, structure and

being an example to the underclassmen.

Northeast found success near the end of last season by shifting to the Wildcat formation after the loss of starting quarterback Troth and relying heavily on ball carriers Young and Gaynor. The Vikings hope to have a similar combination of speed and power in the backfield this season, as they entered the season with quarterback being a competition between multiple players.

“We have a transfer,” Manriquez said. “His name is Jaden (Whetzell, from Pittsburg). He reminds me of Tayshawn (Gay-

Northeast Vikings

No.	Name	Yr.	Pos.		
1	Jaden Whetzell	Sr.	QB/LB/RB/DB	27	Justin Busse
2	Bradyn Smith	Jr.	RB/LB	32	Tanner O'Banion
5	Tayven Willard	So.	WR/DB	34	Stephen Asher
14	Conner Hill	Fr.	WR/DB	51	Jordan Simon
15	Ezra Chacon	Fr.	RB/LB	52	Andre Fleury
21	Tegan Mitchell	Fr.	WR/DB	56	Braxton Borghart
22	Camryn Stansbury	Fr.	RB/TE/LB	58	Trevor Bailey
23	Jaxson Payne	Fr.	QB/LB	59	Spencer Grosstephan
24	Bruce DeBusk	So.	RB/LB	72	Rocky Young
25	Timothy Stansbury	So.	OL/DL/LB	79	Hayden Baker
					Jr. RB/DB
					So. OL/DL
					So. WR/DB
					Fr. OL/DL
					So. OL/DL
					Fr. OL/DL
					Fr. OL/DL
					Fr. OL/DL
					Sr. OL/DL
					So. OL/DL

nor). He’s the same size as Tayshawn and he’s got 4.8 speed. We’ve got some speed now, in terms of him and Bruce, so when you look at them physically it reminds you of Braden (Young) and Tayshawn as a combination.”

Manriquez called Young and Gaynor “Thunder and Light-

ning.’ The Vikings also have a talented group of incoming freshmen who played on seventh and eighth grade teams with a combined 13-1 record during their two seasons.

Running backs and linebackers Camryn Stansbury and Jaxson Payne, wide re-

ceiver and defensive back Tegan Mitchell, tight end and linebacker Ezra Chacon and offensive and defensive lineman Braxton Burghart are the most notable freshmen players.

Camryn Stansbury and Payne have been in the mix at quarterback along with Whetzell and Willard.

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Northeast head coach Mark Manriquez talks with his offensive players before a play at practice Aug. 23. BROCK SISNEY / THE MORNING SUN



St. Mary's Colgan head coach Shawn Seematter instructs his players on the second day of practice on Aug. 20. BROCK SISNEY / THE MORNING SUN

PANTHERS

CONTINUED FROM 12C

behind Harrell.

Senior Noah Duncan will step into the starting halfback role vacated by Cooper Simmons. Duncan earned 44 carries for 437 yards and four touchdowns as a backup last season.

"This group earned their way on the field last year," Seematter said. "We've got a good core of guys that might be in new roles, but they had that valuable game experience. I'm very confident in their ability and I think

the guys around them have confidence in them as well."

Colgan will play the first two games of the season on the road against CNC League rivals, opening against Girard on Sept. 6 before traveling to Frontenac on Sept. 13. The Panthers play their home opener against Columbus on Sept. 19.

"We're going to get challenged," Seematter said. "Girard, Frontenac and Columbus, the first three games of the year. They're going to be well coached. In some regards, Girard and Frontenac are

in similar situations as we are. They have some new kids and new spots. I think those games are going to make us better.

"The goal is always to play deep into the playoffs and give yourself a chance to win a state championship. We just want to be the best team we can be at the end of the year and play as long as we can."

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Rams look to continue progress

By Jim Henry

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Riverton made big strides last season in Danny Weaver's second year as head coach.

After winning one game in 2022, the Rams went 6-4 a year ago, marched undefeated to the Class 2A District 1 championship and blanked West Franklin in the playoffs before falling to Humboldt.

"We had a little bit of a struggle two years ago with a new system on both sides of the ball," Weaver said. "But in Year 2, we were a very solid football team. We were able to add things both offensively and defensively to take advantage of our strengths. We were much better on both sides of the ball. We were able to platoon some guys, and it worked out really well."

Two of the Rams' seven returning starters received postseason recognition last season. Senior linebacker Kody Wagner was second team all-CNC League, honorable mention all-district and honorable mention all-state. Gavin Boyes, also a senior, was a second team all-conference offensive lineman.

More returning starters are linemen Nolan Buschman, Jayden McGuire and Brock Ross, running back-linebacker Landon Livingston and running back-defensive back Jesse Wagner.

Three more seniors -- Jacob Heeter, Jacob Fields and Grant Gilmore -- are experienced linemen.

Junior Cale Forbes and sophomore Tyler Reitz are two quarterbacks on the lettermen's list. Other veterans include senior Jason Clark (WR-DB), junior Levi Feldkamp (RB-LB) and sophomores Aydin Witherspoon (RB-DB), Noah Parker (WR-DB) and Grady Thomas (TE-LB).

Rams Capsule

Team Nuggets

2023 record: 6-4, 4-0 Class 2A District 1 (1st)

Coach: Danny Weaver

Total years in coaching: 25

Years as head coach at Riverton: 3

Record at Riverton: 7-12

Assistants: Steve Wells, Adam Babcock, Tyler Larison, Dalton Weaver

Base offense: One-back spread

Base defense: 3-4

2024 Schedule

Sept. 6 -- at Baxter Springs

Sept. 13 -- at Girard

Sept. 20 -- Frontenac

Sept. 27 -- Cherryvale

Oct. 4 -- Galena

Oct. 11 -- Columbus

Oct. 18 -- at Fredonia

Oct. 25 -- at Caney Valley

2023 Results

Riverton 35, Galena 8

Frontenac 21, Riverton 18

St. Mary's Colgan 35, Riverton 0

Riverton 57, Fredonia 6

Parsons 27, Riverton 0

Riverton 52, Cherryvale 0

Riverton 36, Neodesha 0

Riverton 30, Caney Valley 11

State Playoffs

Riverton 58, West Franklin 0

Humboldt 24, Riverton 14

"Even with the turnover due to graduation, we feel like our guys have a good grasp on what we want to do," Weaver said. "The success last season and the leadership we had will carry over to our new leaders this season.

"We always look to our upperclassmen to provide the leadership. They were a big part of our success last season, and it will be their job to lead our guys who are stepping in as first-year starters."

The Rams' schedule is a bit unique with two road games to start and finish the regular season. In between, they have four consecutive home games beginning on Sept. 20 against Frontenac.

Bulldogs Capsule**Team Nuggets**

2023 record: 0-9, 0-4 Class 3A District 1 (5th)

Coach: Jacoby Martin

Total years in coaching: 10

Years as head coach at Galena: 2

Record: 0-9

Assistants: J.C. Dawes, Cory Perry, Zach

Shockey, Randy Brooks, Josh Geisel

Base offense: Wing-T

Base defense: 4-4

2024 Schedule

Sept. 6 -- Frontenac

Sept. 13 -- at Columbus

Sept. 20 -- at Afton (Okla.)

Sept. 27 -- Fredonia

Oct. 4 -- at Riverton

Oct. 11 -- at Cherryvale

Oct. 18 -- Caney Valley

Oct. 24 -- Baxter Springs

2023 Results

Riverton 35, Galena 8

Quapaw (Okla.) 47, Galena 20

Girard 38, Galena 0

Columbus 12, Galena 8

Baxter Springs 28, Galena 20

Parsons 48, Galena 12

Saint Mary's Academy 22, Galena 6

Frontenac 42, Galena 14

District Crossover

Anderson County 56, Galena 28

Five seniors to lead Galena

By Jim Henry

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Galena battled adversity while struggling through a winless season in 2023.

"The biggest challenge last year was battling the injuries we had," coach Jacoby Martin said. "We were moving kids around to play different spots in order to be the best we could be for that week.

"The best part of last season was watching kids grow as players. Watching the kids compete and get better each week was great to see as a coach.

"Last year what our team took away was

don't take anything for granted and play hard every play. We have to do it week-by-week and just focus on that opponent for the week."

Martin begins his second season at the helm with four seniors among six returning starters -- quarterback-defensive back Jack Perry, running back-linebacker Caleb Burkhardt, tight end-linebacker Brodie McNemar and wide receiver-defensive back Thatcher Botkin.

Hayden Qualls, senior running back-defensive back, is back this year after being injured last season.

Brothers Brayden Buckaloo, a junior, and

Connor Buckaloo, a sophomore, return to the offensive and defensive lines.

"Our team strength is that we will have a little more depth on the offensive line and defensive line," Martin said. "Returning most of our backfield and receivers will be key for us as well.

"We will look to our seniors and upperclassmen to lead on and off the field. It is important that they accept that leadership role and to set the tone for young guys coming up.

"We need to improve on just what we do. Take each practice and film session and get the best out of it we can."

Martin has been pleased with the Bulldogs' offseason work.

"We have had good summer workouts and are excited for the opportunity that we have this season," he said. "Our expectations are to get better each week and compete for four quarters, keep our foot on the gas and play fast and physical. If we can do those things, we will have success."

The Bulldogs have dropped one classification to Class 2A for the next two years.

Their new district opponents are Riverton, Fredonia, Cherryvale and Caney Valley.

Titans Capsule**Team Nuggets**

2023 record: 2-7, 2-2 Class 3A District 1 (3rd)

Coach: Blake Burns

Total years in coaching: 22

Years as head coach at Columbus: 6

Record at Columbus: 27-21

Assistants: Matt Crain, Heath Perry, Taylor

Spear, Caleb Linn

Base offense: Spread

Base defense: Odd front

2024 Schedule

Sept. 5 -- Independence

Sept. 13 -- Galena

Sept. 20 -- at St. Mary's Colgan

Sept. 27 -- at Neodesha

Oct. 4 -- Baxter Springs

Oct. 11 -- at Riverton

Oct. 18 -- at Frontenac

Oct. 25 -- Parsons

2023 Results

Girard 32, Columbus 8

Afton (Okla.) 14, Columbus 12

Coffeyville 42, Columbus 12

Columbus 12, Galena 8

Frontenac 41, Columbus 7

St. Mary's Colgan 59, Columbus 20

Columbus 42, Baxter Springs 36

Parsons 48, Columbus 6

State Playoffs

Burlington 38, Columbus 14

5 all-CNC players lead Titans

By Jim Henry

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The numbers are growing for the Columbus Titans.

"We have 47 guys out," coach Blake Burns said. "That's the most we've had in the six years I've been head coach."

The Titans return 13 players who started at least half of their games last season, and five of them earned all-CNC League laurels.

Wide receiver Jace Midgett and offensive lineman Carter Henry were first team all-league, and Henry also made the second team as a defensive lineman.

Midgett caught 31 passes for 683 yards and 10 touchdowns, and he had 25 tackles and two

interceptions from the secondary.

Henry had a dozen pancake blocks plus two quarterback sacks among his 43 tackles.

Linebacker Jett Tanner was second team all-CNC after 69 tackles and three tackles for loss. He also caught 27 passes for 216 yards and two touchdowns and ran for 141 yards and a score.

Quarterback Jack Vilela and linebacker Syler Schuberger received honorable mention. Vilela completed 97-of-171 passes for 1,187 yards and 13 touchdowns with only four interceptions. Schuberger had 42 tackles and an interception.

Other returning starters are linemen Jonah Smith, Kyler Rahmeier,

Maddox Ochsner and Austin Glover, wide receiver-defensive back Jayden Rodriguez, linebacker Jansen Hale and the versatile Mason O'Banion, who saw action at running back, tight end and defensive line.

Rodriguez caught 21 passes for 253 yards and two TDs, and he had 37 tackles in the secondary. Hale and O'Banion collected 52 and 33 tackles, respectively.

"We return starters in several key positions and have a number of players with varsity experience," Burns said. "Our senior group works hard as a whole, and we have a group of younger players who will push for playing time.

"We will win or lose with the way our offensive and defensive lines perform. They will set the tone for us on both sides of the ball. We have to be able to limit turnovers offensively and create turnovers defensively."

The Titans are looking to rebound from a 2-7 season after averaging six victories in the previous four years.

"The biggest challenge was the majority of our team had never started or played significant time at the varsity level," Burns said. "That coupled with the self-inflicted wounds of penalties, turnovers, missed assignments and missed tackles contributed to a 2-7 season."

CNC League rosters

COLUMBUS TITANS

Returning Starters

Austin Glover, 280 sr. OL; Carter Henry, 280 sr. OL-DL; Jace Midgett, 170 sr. WR-DB; Maddox Och-sner, 280 sr. OL-DL; Kyler Rameier, 190 sr. OL-DL; Syler Schuberger, 165 sr. RB-WR-LB; Jonah Smith, 190 sr. OL-DL; Brandon Stice, 190 sr. WR-LB; Jack Vilela, 195 sr. QB; Jansen Hale, 140 jr. LB; Jayden Rodriguez, 160 jr. WR-DB; Jett Tanner, 180 jr. QB-RB-LB; Mason O'Banion, 190 so. RB-TE-DL.
Other Lettermen
Owen Roberts, 175 sr. WR; Kanyen Smith, 250 sr. OL-DL; Lemmie Stone, 145 jr. WR-DB; Trent La-

cen, 140 so. RB-LB; Kooper Saiz, 160 so. WR-DB; Shade Schuberger, 130 so. WR-LB; Braun Stone, 150 so. RB-LB.

Top Prospect

Josiah Palmer, 165 fr. WR-DB.

BAXTER SPRINGS LIONS

Returning Starters

Jacob Grant, 180 sr. WR-DB-K; Zak Price, 185 sr. WR-DB; Kyler Sharlow, 210 sr. OL-DL; Sam Weaver, 205 jr. RB-LB; Brooks Walker, 230 so. OL-DL.

Other Lettermen

Tyler Frazier, 155 sr. WR-DB; Cohen Hodges, 150 sr. OL-DL; Logan Abbott, 135 so. WR-DB; Riley

Daniel, 160 so. TE-FB-LB; Caleb Grant, 130 so. WR-DB; Isaiah Main, 145 so. QB-DB; Grady Roller, 140 so. TE-LB; Bradley Wade, 155 so. RB-LB; Braydon Wade, 160 so. WR-LB.

GALENA BULLDOGS

Returning Starters

Thatcher Botkin, 140 sr. WR-DB; Caleb Burkhardt, 185 sr. RB-LB; Brodie McNemar, 185 sr. TE-LB; Jack Perry, 160 sr. QB-DB; Brayden Buckaloo, 240 jr. OL-DL; Connor Buckaloo, 200 sr. OL-DL.

Top Prospects

Hayden Qualls, 160 sr. RB-DB.

RIVERTON RAMS

Returning Starters

Gavin Boyes, sr. OL-DL; Nolan Buschman, sr. OL-DL; Landon Livingston, sr. RB-LB; Jayden McGuire, sr. OL; Kody Wagner, sr. RB-LB; Brock Ross, jr. OL-DL; Jesse Wagner, jr. RB-DB.

Other Lettermen

Jason Clark, sr. WR-DB; Jacob Fields, sr. OL-DL; Grant Gilmore, sr. OL-DL; Jacob Heeter, sr. OL-DL; Levi Feldkamp, jr. RB-LB; Cale Forbes, jr. QB-DB; Noah Parker, so. WR-DB; Tyler Reitz, so. QB-DB; Grady Thomas, so. TE-LB; Aydin Witherspoon, so. RB-DB.

LIONS

CONTINUED FROM 9C

(WR-DB), Caleb Grant (WR-DB), Bradley Wade (RB-OLB), Braydon Wade (WR-OLB), Riley Daniel (TE-FB-LB) and Grady Roller (TE-LB).

"I will rely on team captains Jacob Grant, Kyler Sharlow and Tyler Frazier as well as leadership from some young players as well," McCoy said. "These are older guys who have been around the program, and they understand how I want things to be done.

"We will have to take care of the football better than we have. We will need to tackle better. We will need to eliminate explosive plays and be better in third-down situations on both sides of the ball. We have to be more disciplined and eliminate costly mistakes. If we do these things, we will have much success. I firmly believe that."



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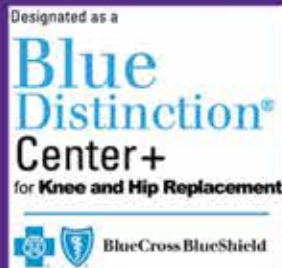


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