

2022 KATY AREA

Thursday, August 25, 2022

# FOOTBALL PREVIEW

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**Katy Times**





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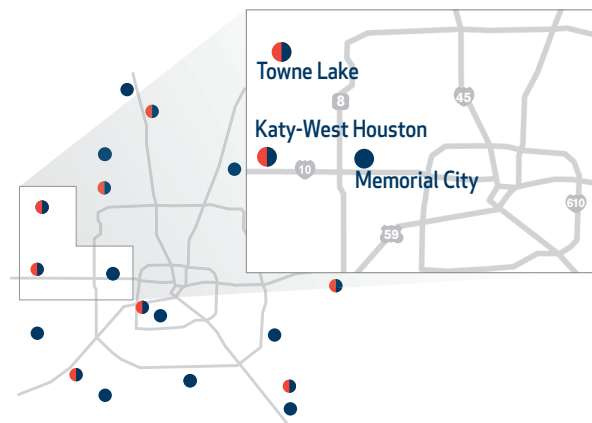
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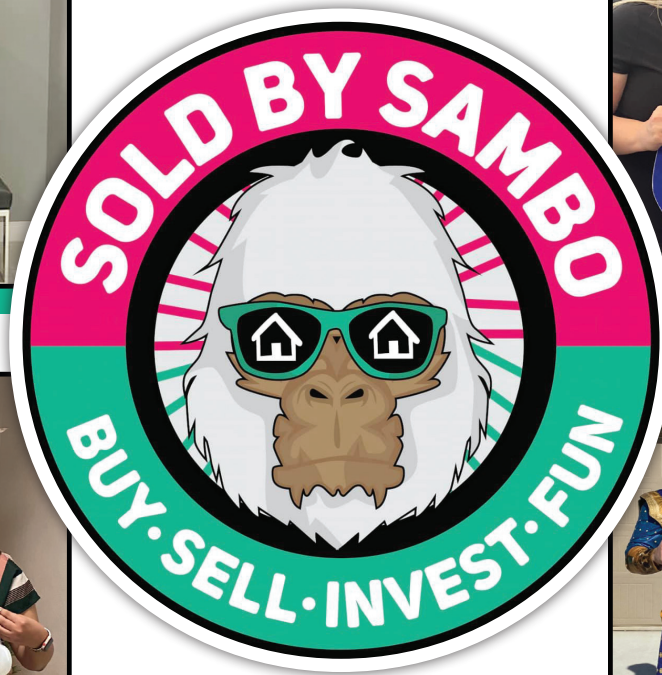
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**H**ere we go, it's the moment everyone has been waiting for.

The 2022 season is scheduled to start this week and with it comes an entire new era for Katy ISD.

The addition of Paetow and Jordan brings new, fresh faces to District 19-6A as Katy ISD continues to cement themselves as one of the most powerful school districts in the entire state.

You only have to look at last season to see how far the district has come with its success. In 2021, Katy ISD produced

a state champion in Paetow and a state semifinalist in Katy, it didn't stop there though, as both Tompkins and Cinco Ranch come off regional semifinal appearances.

Last year was a super exciting year in District 19-6A and this year it only looks like things will get crazier. Teams in Katy ISD averaged 7.8 wins per year last season — that's the most out of any district in the entire classification of 6A.

Katy are still the frontrunners and the favorites in the district every year, and they claimed back the district trophy last season after losing it for the first time in 12 years in 2020. The Tigers bring back key pieces all around the field and the newcomers are expected to be ready to contribute right away in what should be another very strong season for the Tigers.

But this is far from a one-team district. Tompkins brings back a very strong team that has talent at every position. The Falcons were the ones that took the district crown from Katy in 2020 and after four straight seasons in which they've made the regional semifinals, they think they have what it takes to compete for that district crown again.



**TYLER TYRE**  
SPORTS EDITOR

Then there's Cinco Ranch, who brings back what has a chance to be one of the most high-powered offenses in the state. The Cougars are explosive, and have played in big moments, having made it to last year's Class 6A-Division II Regional Semifinal.

And Paetow has one of the most talented defenses in the entire state. They have four players that are among the top 165 recruits in the state of Texas in the Class of 2023 and all of them play in the defenses front seven. And

that's just the first wave, as Paetow's secondary and offense boast plenty of talent that will give them a chance to compete with anyone in the district and state.

Morton Ranch brings back a strong team that includes an extremely talented running back and quarterback that will give the Mavericks a chance to compete for a playoff spot this year while Seven Lakes has no interest in letting its playoff streak end as they should boast a strong running game and defense.

Taylor brings back vastly more experience than last year as well and they are out to prove themselves, while Mayde Creek and Jordan are excited to show what they can do this season.

Overall, the talent level is as high as it has ever been throughout Katy ISD, and with all nine Katy ISD schools now in the same district, this could be one of the most exciting district seasons and one of the most exciting playoffs we have seen that could see multiple teams make deep runs in Class 6A.

Now, let's sit back and enjoy some football, I know I'm looking forward to it.



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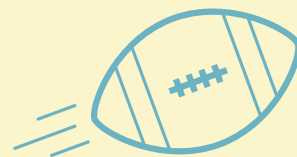
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# KATY DAVIS, KOGER LEAD TIGERS' STATE TITLE QUEST

Katy's #6 Arian Parish makes the stop on Tompkins #4 Matthew Ogunrin during a game between Katy Tigers and Tompkins Falcons at Legacy Stadium.



PHOTOS BY MARK GOODMAN | SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

**BY TYLER TYRE**  
SPORTS EDITOR

For another school, a state semifinal appearance might be a highlight or a historic accomplishment.

But for Katy, last year's finish has been the fuel that has the fire burning for every player within the Tigers' program.

Katy regained its district title after a streak of winning district for 12 straight years was broken in 2020 and made yet another deep run in the Class 6A-Division II playoffs.

The Tigers came away with the Region III crown out of Division II for the second straight year, but they fell in the state semifinals to eventual state champion Austin Westlake.

That isn't good enough for Katy, and this year

is all about being all in for the program's 10th straight state title.

"Maturity and leadership are the keys for us to be able to achieve our goals," said Katy head coach Gary Joseph. "Those are the two things you need to have and develop every year. The question always is — are you going to have leadership and are they going to be mature enough to handle the responsibilities they have. The expectations



## KATY AT A GLANCE

**COACH:** Gary Joseph (Career record at Katy: 240-23)  
**2021 RECORD:** 14-1, 6-0 in district, 6A-Division II State Semifinalist  
**LAST PLAYOFF APPEARANCE:** 2021  
**RETURNING OFFENSIVE/DEFENSIVE STARTERS:** 5/5  
**NUMBER OF RETURNING LETTERMAN:** 27  
**KEY RETURNERS:** Seth Davis, Sr. RB; Johnathan Hall, Sr. DB; J.R. Ceyanes, Sr. WR; Caleb Koger, Sr. QB; Jacob Egg, Sr. OL; Isaiah Ybarra, Sr. OL; Arian Parish, Sr. DB; Luke Carter Jr. TE; Brady Englett, Sr. DB; Damien Neveaux, Sr., LB; Chase Johnsey, Jr., FB  
**KEY NEWCOMERS:** Adam Carter, So. DL; Dallas-Patrick Alo-Suliafu, Jr. DL; Coen Echols, Jr. OL

## KATY SCHEDULE

- AUG. 26**  
Katy vs. Clear Springs, 7 p.m., Challenger-Columbia Stadium
- SEPT. 2**  
Katy vs. Atascocita, 6 p.m., Legacy Stadium
- SEPT. 10**  
Tompkins vs. Katy, 6 p.m., Legacy Stadium\*
- SEPT. 16**  
Katy vs. Morton Ranch, 6 p.m., Legacy Stadium\*
- SEPT. 22**  
Katy vs. Mayde Creek, 7 p.m., Rhodes Stadium\* (Homecoming)
- SEPT. 29**  
Katy vs. Jordan, 7 p.m., Rhodes Stadium\*
- OCT. 6**  
Paetow vs. Katy, 6 p.m., Legacy Stadium\*
- OCT. 21**  
Katy vs. Cinco Ranch, 7 p.m., Rhodes Stadium\*
- OCT. 27**  
Seven Lakes vs. Katy, 7 p.m., Rhodes Stadium\*
- NOV. 4**  
Katy vs. Taylor, 6 p.m., Legacy Stadium\*



are always going to be there, how you handle it is a big deal and you have to have great leadership from everyone. That responsibility and accountability is everything.”

The Tigers do lose some of last year’s star power, but they also return plenty of talent to try and repeat as district champions and attempt to make a run towards state.

In total, Katy returns 27 letterman overall and five starters on each side of the ball.

Seth Davis is the key to the offense, and the senior running back should be stronger than ever this year. He comes off a season in which he ran for 2,422 yards and 28 touchdowns. Davis averaged over 10 yards per carry and 173 yards per game, and he has plans to up that this year.

Joining Davis to lead the offense is Caleb Koger. The senior signal caller developed as a junior and is expected to do that again heading into his final year of high school, as he comes off a 1863 yard year in which he threw 21 touchdowns.

Katy returns key pieces all around on offense, JR Ceyanes will be a big presence at receiver, and others will have to step up at the position as well. While Katy has a strong backup running back in Dallas Glass, Chase Johnsey will step in at fullback after Isaiah Smith’s graduation.

“The seniors have stepped into their roles like they knew they would have to and it’s really been a good thing for them to exhibit that leadership so far,” Joseph said. “Those returners and those seniors have taken it on themselves to teach the younger ones what it takes and how to be serious in practice. They’re learning to take quality reps and really taking that step.”

The defense will have some strong players back and Johnathan Hall will help lead the unit. On the defensive line,



Katy's Seth Davis #23 rushes in for a TD during the first half of a game between Katy and Morton Ranch at Legacy Stadium.

Dallas-Patrick Alo-Suliafu and Adam Carter are two players to watch for while Damien Neveau will be the senior leader and anchor of the linebacker unit.

Last year’s Katy team was typically stingy on defense,

allowing barely over 12 points per game and holding seven opponents to under ten points in their matchups.

“We have some really good football players coming back and they know the expectation,” Joseph said. “Johnathan Hall, Arian Parish and the kids like that, they’ve been through it, they know what it’s like, they played against Westlake and in other big games. They just have to be more assertive in their leadership. We’ve seen a lot of improvement out of the guys on the defensive line — Broderick Johnson is one of those guys who is coming back and has gotten better. We just have to have them come through and step up now.”

The Tigers know as well as any program that it’s important to build a strong non-district schedule, and the Tigers will be tested early and often this year. They will start the season by facing Clear Springs, which made the playoffs last year, and then facing Atascocita in a battle between two of the state’s strongest teams. Katy then will face one of their toughest district opponents in the first week of district play when they play Tompkins.

But the Tigers wouldn’t have it any other way, and they want to go out and show how good they are early and often.

“We’ll know where we are at after those two weeks, that’s for sure,” Joseph said. “The tough thing is only having two non-district games now, so you don’t have the same amount of time to develop that depth in the games. Everything becomes real after those first two and so some of those kids are going to have to be ready even without as much experience, but everyone is in the same boat. They just have to mature in a hurry and that’s why we take practice so serious. But those first two games are so huge and are about depth. You can’t only do this with 22 players.”



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# PAETOW HAS BIG GOALS WITH JUMP TO 6A



## PAETOW AT A GLANCE

**COACH:** Lonnie Teagle (First year at Paetow)

**2021 RECORD:** 15-1, 7-1 in district, 5A-Division I State Champions

**LAST PLAYOFF APPEARANCE:** 2021 RETURNING OFFENSIVE/DEFENSIVE STARTERS: 3/4

**NUMBER OF RETURNING LETTERMAN:** 35

**KEY RETURNERS:** Alex Kilgore, Sr., LB; Daymion Sanford, Sr. LB, Danyrion Phillips, Sr. RB; Nicolas Lira, Sr. OL; Christian Hurd, Sr. DB; Justin Stevenson, Sr. WR; Jason Blue, Sr. WR; Loghan Thomas, Jr., DL; Koby Truehill, Sr., QB; CJ Johnson, Sr., DB;

**KEY NEWCOMERS:** David Hicks JR., Sr. DL; Deyjhon Pettaway, DB, So.; Jabari Bush, Jr. WR; Jarra Anderson, Sr., DL

## PAETOW SCHEDULE

### AUG. 26

Paetow vs. Conroe, 6 p.m., Legacy Stadium

### SEPT. 3

Paetow vs. Cypress Ranch, 6 p.m., Cy-Fair FCU Stadium

### SEPT. 9

Morton Ranch vs. Paetow, 7 p.m., Rhodes Stadium\*

### SEPT. 15

Paetow vs. Mayde Creek, 6 p.m., Legacy Stadium\* (Homecoming)

### SEPT. 23

Jordan vs. Paetow, 7 p.m., Rhodes Stadium\*

### OCT. 6

Paetow vs. Katy, 6 p.m., Legacy Stadium\*

### OCT. 14

Cinco Ranch vs. Paetow, 7 p.m., Rhodes Stadium\*

### OCT. 20

Paetow vs. Seven Lakes, 6 p.m., Legacy Stadium\*

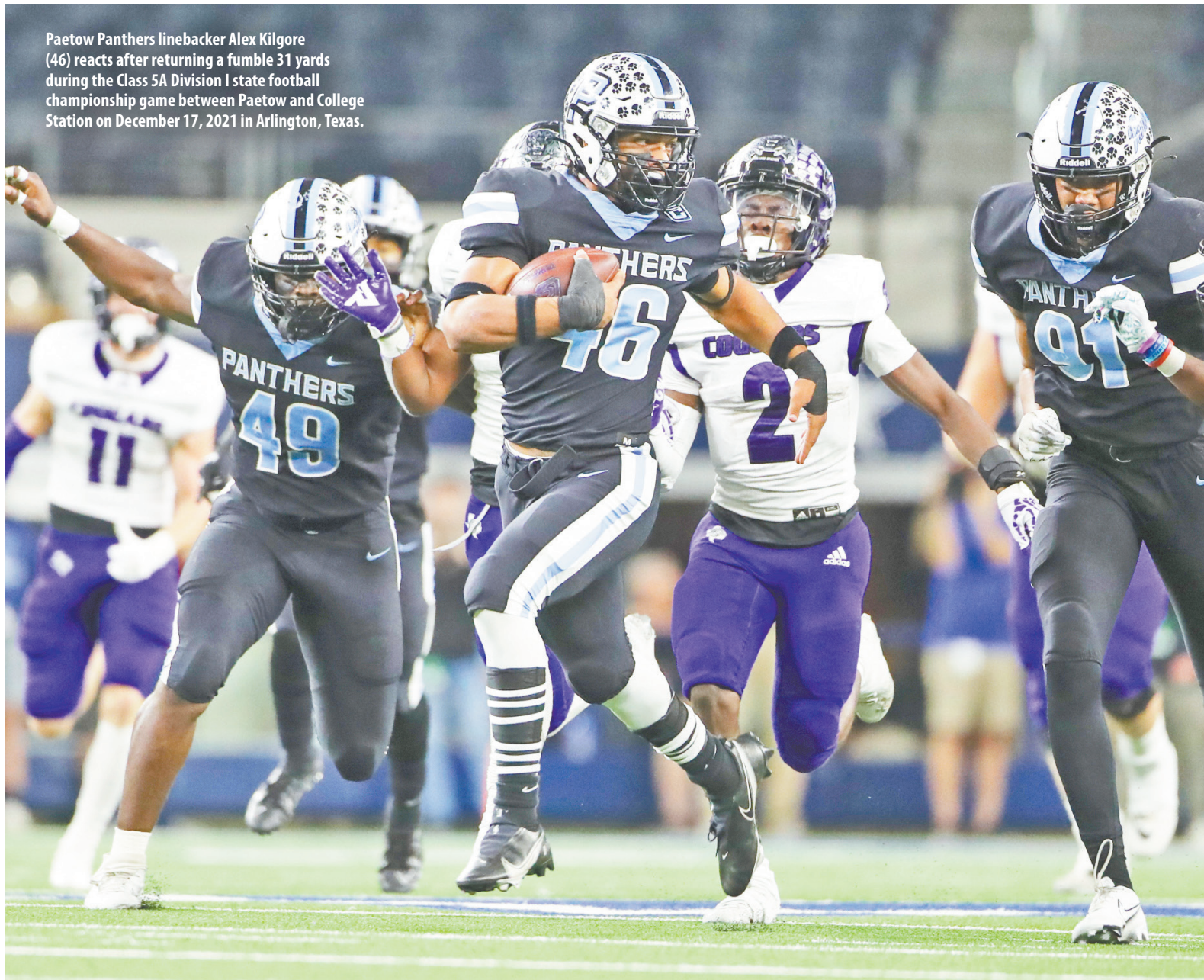
### OCT. 27

Taylor vs. Paetow, 6 p.m., Legacy Stadium\*

### NOV. 4

Paetow vs. Tompkins, 7 p.m., Rhodes Stadium\*

Paetow Panthers linebacker Alex Kilgore (46) reacts after returning a fumble 31 yards during the Class 5A Division I state football championship game between Paetow and College Station on December 17, 2021 in Arlington, Texas.



SCOTT W. COLEMAN

BY TYLER TYRE  
SPORTS EDITOR

It's a new era at Paetow.

This isn't the same team that won a state championship last season. It's a new team, with a new coach, a new classification and a new, tougher district to compete in. But that isn't a deterrent to anyone that is part of the Panthers' program — in fact, the team is embracing the change and the new challenge.

bracing the change and the new challenge.

"It was important for me and for all of the coaches coming in to build on what the old coaching staff had done here," said Paetow head coach Lonnie Teagle. "I didn't want to come in here and tear everything down — there was a lot of good things going on at Paetow, so we just came in and remodeled. We didn't just tear everything down and I think that's a big reason why the kids have

bought in to what we are doing. We talked to them about it and there was a lot of things that they had built here in the culture at Paetow that they wanted to keep. So we adapted a lot of that into our culture and then added some of our stuff and really it's just made it a good mix."

The Panthers are in a spot that they have never been in before. They come into this season as defending state champions, but





Paetow's Damyrion Phillips #22 carries the ball up the middle during a playoff game between Paetow and Galveston Ball at Legacy Stadium.

MARK GOODMAN |  
SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

also as an underdog and newcomer in Class 6A and facing a new district full of tough Katy ISD teams that Paetow will have to adjust to.

Gone are some of the big pieces from their championship core, including three-year starting quarterback CJ Dumas and a number of skill position players.

But, Paetow is in the unique situation where a second wave of talent that has followed their graduating 2022 class and there is still a core that could make lots of noise that the program brings back.

Defensively, the Panthers have the potential to have one of the very best units in the entire state.

Paetow brings back both of their leading tacklers and sack leaders from last season in Daymion Sanford and Alex Kilgore, and the defensive line is anchored by the top ranked player in the state of Texas in the 2023 class in David Hicks Jr. They add another huge presence in Jarra Anderson on the line, and bring back Loghan Thomas, who had 10 sacks and 16 tackles for loss last season as a sophomore.

In total, Sanford, Kilgore, Hicks and Thomas combined for 45 sacks and 88 tackles for loss last season, as Paetow has a front seven that is one of the most intimidating in the state. And the Panthers can back that up with a strong secondary as well. Christian Hurd is the leader of the back end and Paetow will have plenty of opportunities to force turnovers with their aggressive front seven.

"There's just so much talent on that defense and it's really exciting," Teagle said. "We're really challenging those guys to go out and prove it. We have all this talent, now we have to go out and perform and be able to execute.

We should be able to play and perform with the talent we have and we should be really good on defense, but that's the challenge, is for them to go out and execute. Not just to be good on paper."

On offense, Koby Truehill will step in at the quarterback position and will have plenty of talent around him to work with. Damyrion Phillips is back for his senior season and was a force last season when Jacob Brown was out injured, rushing for 1,358 yards and 21 touchdowns, including five performances where he went for over 100 yards rushing. The Panthers also bring back a strong receiving core with both Justin Stevenson and Jason Blue returning, while the Paetow offensive line is led by Nicolas Lira.

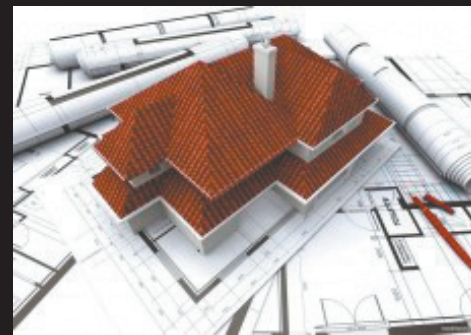
"They've adjusted really well," Teagle said. "There's been hiccups and a learning curve for sure, but they're adjusting well to it. They enjoy it and there's a chance for a lot of people to touch the football. It's kind of made it exciting for them and now we just have to keep building on it and working out the kinks."

It's an interesting time for Paetow, with a new but talented group of players coming through and a different system in place under Teagle. The entire team is excited for the year and most importantly, out to prove that they can have just as much success in 6A as they had at lower levels.

"These guys are really motivated," Teagle said. "They heard the things people said last year, how they said Paetow only won because they were in 5A. But we're not dwelling on that, the guys are really maintaining the strong championship culture and making into our tradition."



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# TALENTED TOMPKINS OUT TO MAKE RUN IN 2022



Caleb Komolafe rushes for a TD during the UIL area playoff game between Tompkins and Jersey Village at Pidgeon Stadium in Houston.

MARK GOODMAN | SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

BY TYLER TYRE  
SPORTS EDITOR

Tompkins has run into a sledgehammer each of the past two seasons.

Each of the last two years, the Falcons have made strong runs through district and the playoffs, before falling to the juggernaut of North Shore in the third round of the playoffs.

Last year's matchup was a one-score game against the eventual state champions, and that thought hasn't left the mind of this year's returners, as the Falcons feel like they are ready to take an even bigger step this year.

Overall, it's been four straight years that the Falcons have fallen in the third round of the playoffs, as they have proven their talent, but fallen

just short in those matchups.

But while the Falcons know how close they were last year to making what could have been a historic run, that's not their focus. They know that to be successful, you have to focus on the present, the day-to-day and not worry about the past or the future.

"That's our controllable, you have to focus on the present and the day to day because that's all you have and all you can control," said Tompkins head coach Todd McVey. "That's how we look at things. When you keep it basic, it keeps you grounded there in the present because if you start looking too far ahead, that's when you stumble."

The Falcons return some of the most key cogs to their offense. The offensive line is spearheaded by junior Ashton Funk and senior Pedro Da Silva,

while Caleb Blocker should take a big step in his junior season after running for 1,017 yards and 13 touchdowns as a sophomore. Wyatt Young will also be a key piece to the offense in his junior year after a huge sophomore season in which he carried the ball 58 times for 539 yards and 14 touchdowns while also catching 40 passes and scoring six times as a receiver. And Matthew Ogunrin provides a huge big play threat as an outside receiver, giving both Young and Chris Gilbert Jr. lots to work with as they compete at quarterback.

"The guys on offense last year really had a great trust in one another and that's really the key," McVey said. "These guys have to continue to jell and start to build their own chemistry together now. That's how you develop that trust



## TOMPKINS AT A GLANCE

**COACH:** Todd McVey (Career record at Tompkins: 42-17)  
**2021 RECORD:** 11-2, 5-1 in district 6A-Division I regional semifinalist.  
**LAST PLAYOFF APPEARANCE:** 2021  
**RETURNING OFFENSIVE/DEFENSIVE STARTERS:** 5/3  
**NUMBER OF RETURNING LETTERMAN:** 16  
**KEY RETURNERS:** Wyatt Young, Jr. RB/WR, Ashton Funk, Jr. OL, Caleb Komolafe, Sr. RB/DB; Matthew Ogunrin, Sr. WR; Caleb Blocker, Jr. RB; Pedro Da Silva, Sr., OL; Cody Chapman, Sr. DB; Jhase McMillan, Jr. RB/DB; Rhys Phillips, Sr., Evan Tyman, DB; Eduwa Okundaye, Jr., LB  
**KEY NEWCOMERS:** Chris Gilbert Jr., Sr. QB; Griffin Syonton, LB; Payton Isola, Sr. WR; Drew Horner, Sr. K; Urban Burkhoff, P

## TOMPKINS SCHEDULE

### AUG. 25

Tompkins vs. Cypress Ranch, 6:30 p.m., Cy-Fair FCU Stadium

### SEPT. 2

Tompkins vs. Bridgeland, 7 p.m., Rhodes Stadium

### SEPT. 10

Tompkins vs. Katy, 6 p.m., Legacy Stadium\*

### SEPT. 16

Cinco Ranch vs. Tompkins, 7 p.m., Rhodes Stadium\*

### SEPT. 23

Tompkins vs. Seven Lakes, 6 p.m., Legacy Stadium\* (Homecoming)

### SEPT. 29

Taylor vs. Tompkins, 6 p.m., Legacy Stadium\*

### OCT. 13

Tompkins vs. Morton Ranch, 7 p.m., Rhodes Stadium\*

### OCT. 20

Mayde Creek vs. Tompkins, 7 p.m., Rhodes Stadium\*

### OCT. 28

Tompkins vs. Jordan, 7 p.m., Rhodes Stadium\*

### NOV. 4

Paeow vs. Tompkins, 7 p.m., Rhodes Stadium\*



in one another and those guys are building to where they can have that success by trusting themselves, trusting each other and the coaches and the positions we are trying to put them in.”

On defense is where the team will need newcomers to step up the most.

The Falcons only return three starters, in senior defensive backs Caleb Komolafe and Cody Chapman and junior defensive lineman Eduwa Okundaye.

Komolafe and Chapman will be huge pieces at the back end of the defense and will bring experience to help other players along, but the team has shown some great promise with players stepping up at linebacker and defensive line.

“All of those guys have stepped up and that’s the key because all of them are going to have to step into bigger roles this year,” McVey said. “Chapman and Komolafe have stepped up back there in the secondary. Chapman did a good a job at the end of the year stepping in and he’s really grown especially as a leader and with his communication on the field, setting up his teammates and putting them in good spots. And Komolafe, he’s always been quieter, but he’s really started communicating with the guys in front of him as well. If other positions mess up, there’s someone behind them to clean it up. But there’s no one behind the secondary. So that’s big for the two of them to do that. They’ve had a great offseason.”

Tompkins will get tested early, playing two very strong teams in non-district play in Cy-Ranch and Bridgeland, and things won’t get easier once district starts. The Falcons will open District 19-6A play against Katy before taking on Cinco Ranch, two of the tougher opponents in the whole district.

“You want to prepare yourself to play the best and that’s exactly why we scheduled those guys. Those are two really good teams, they’re playoff teams,” McVey said. “We look forward to the challenge of both of those teams. They’re well coached and we’ll have our hands full. We just have to go out there and take care of business, execute and see what happens. You want to see those kids go through that adversity and get better, so those two games in non-district will be really key for us.”



PHOTO BY MARK GOODMAN | SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

Tompkins #21 Caleb Blocker rushes to the outside during the UIL area playoff game between Tompkins and Jersey Village at Pridgeon Stadium.



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# CINCO RANCH

## READY TO TAKE NEXT STEP



**BY TYLER TYRE**  
SPORTS EDITOR

Cinco Ranch learned to win last season.

After winning one game over the course of two years, the Cougars had a bounce back year, winning eight games and making to the regional semifinals in the Class 6A-Division II playoffs.

Now, with a strong returning cast, the Cougars are ready to take the next step and think they have what it takes to make a deep run in the playoffs and compete for a district title.

"It really advanced the program," Dudley said. "It wasn't just about the winning season or

winning record, it was about doing the things we did. We were proud to get to the playoffs, but we did what we knew we could do. That success has reinforced everything that we have been building in terms of our culture, coaching, execution on both sides of the ball, just everything. But the great part is, no one is satisfied."

The Cinco Ranch offense is one that will put up a lot of points this year. The Cougars bring back an explosive core, led by senior quarterback Gavin Rutherford who already holds the Cinco Ranch school record for career passing yards, completions and touchdowns heading into his final high school season.

But Rutherford is just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to Cinco's offense. Also back are each of Cinco's three leading receivers in Seth Salverino, Noah Abboud and Fischer Reed.

Salverino comes off a season in which he put up over 1,000 yards receiving and 12 touchdowns while Abboud had 482 yards receiving and nine touchdowns and Reed provides a steady presence as a third option.

On top of that, Cinco brings back both of its leading rushers from last season in Sam McKnight and Eric Eckstrom, and Dudley thinks that the offensive line is the most underrated group on the team.



### CINCO RANCH AT A GLANCE

**COACH:** Chris Dudley (Career record at Cinco Ranch: 9-22).

**2021 RECORD:** 8-5, 3-3 in district Class 6A-Division II Regional Semifinalist

**LAST PLAYOFF APPEARANCE:** 2021

**RETURNING OFFENSIVE/DEFENSIVE STARTERS:** 6/3

**NUMBER OF RETURNING LETTERMAN:** 24

**KEY RETURNERS:** Gavin Rutherford, Sr. QB; Seth Salverino, Sr., WR; Noah Abboud, Sr. WR; Sam McKnight, Sr. RB; Braden Williams, Sr. LB; Taytum Johnson, Jr. DB; Yetxiel Perez-Gilbes, Jr. DB; Fischer Reed, Sr. WR; Eric Eckstrom, Sr. RB; Riete Nesiama, Sr., DL; Oazi Jan, Sr., OL; Santiago Tabora, Sr. K

**KEY NEWCOMERS:** Kellen LeCronier, So. TE/DL; Superior Hill, So. DB; Robert Marbach, Sr. DL; Bryan Perez-Gilbes, Sr., DB; Walker White, Sr., DB; Luke Mathiasmeier, So., LB

### CINCO RANCH SCHEDULE

**AUG. 25**

Cinco Ranch vs. College Park, 7 p.m., Woodforest Bank Stadium

**SEPT. 3**

Cinco Ranch vs. Klein Oak, 6 p.m., Klein Memorial Stadium

**SEPT. 10**

Taylor vs. Cinco Ranch, 7 p.m., Rhodes Stadium\*

**SEPT. 16**

Cinco Ranch vs. Tompkins, 7 p.m., Rhodes Stadium\*

**SEPT. 22**

Morton Ranch vs. Cinco Ranch, 6 p.m., Legacy Stadium\*

**SEPT. 30**

Cinco Ranch vs. Mayde Creek, 6 p.m., Legacy Stadium\* (Homecoming)

**OCT. 6**

Jordan vs. Cinco Ranch, 7 p.m., Rhodes Stadium\*

**OCT. 14**

Cinco Ranch vs. Paetow, 7 p.m., Rhodes Stadium\*

**OCT. 21**

Katy vs. Cinco Ranch, 7 p.m., Rhodes Stadium\*

**NOV. 3**

Cinco Ranch vs. Seven Lakes, 6 p.m., Legacy Stadium\*



Overall, this Cinco team has 90% of its total yards from last year returning, as the group looks to take their game to the next level.

"We have those guys that have been in the fire and know those big moments," Dudley said. "They played in that regional semifinal at the University of Houston, that can only help you. We are really looking forward to it offensively. We averaged 31 points per game last season and we think we can build on that, and our offensive line is big and ready to step into those roles. The sky is the limit for what we can do on that side of the ball."

But there are question marks for the team as well. The offensive line does have holes to fill after the departure of multiple starters from last season and there will be newcomers that need to step up on the defensive side of the ball as well.

Braden Williams, Taytum Johnson and Riete Nesiana are the only returning starters on defense. Williams provides strong senior leadership and great play at the linebacker position while Johnson and Perez-Gilbes both are playmakers on the back end of the defense, but the team does have new faces when it comes to the starting lineup. Most of those though, were able to gain

varsity experience last year and Dudley is excited about the units potential.

"On paper there's only three starters back and that might be cause for concern for some teams," Dudley said. "But we don't view it that way. We have some guys who were really valuable backups last year back and I think it's a really underrated group. There's great athleticism at the back end and our corners are tremendous and we feel really good about the guys who are stepping into these roles in the front seven too."

The Cougars will have a chance to test themselves early in the season, as they open with games against College Park and Klein Oak, both of which made the playoffs and advanced to the area round last season. Cinco will then open district against Taylor. And Cinco can't wait for a chance to prove themselves once again.

"Our program is at that point now where we can schedule some of those really strong area teams and playoff teams in non-district so we really tried to go out and find some good competition," Dudley said. "Both of those teams are really talented and bring a lot back so that gives us a good barometer to see where we are. We're going to know a lot about ourselves by the time we head into district."



#### LEFT

Cinco Ranch's QB Gavin Rutherford #12 delivers a pass during a conference game between Cinco Ranch and Morton Ranch at Rhodes Stadium in Katy.

#### PREVIOUS PAGE

Cinco Ranch's Sam McKnight #26 carries the ball during a conference game between Cinco Ranch and Morton Ranch at Rhodes Stadium in Katy.

PHOTOS BY MARK GOODMAN |  
SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES



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# SEVEN LAKES

## AIMS TO KEEP PLAYOFF STREAK ALIVE



Seven Lakes Spartans running back Barrett Hudson (5) carries the ball during a high school football game between Mayde Creek and Seven Lakes on October 29, 2021. Seven Lakes won, 50-10.

SCOTT W. COLEMAN



### SEVEN LAKES AT A GLANCE

**COACH:** Jimmy Hamon (Career record at Seven Lakes: 20-21)

**2021 RECORD:** 7-4, 4-2 in district, bi-district finalist

**LAST PLAYOFF APPEARANCE:** 2021 RETURNING OFFENSIVE/DEFENSIVE STARTERS: 4/5

**NUMBER OF RETURNING LETTERMAN:** 20

**KEY RETURNERS:** Dakys Brinkley, Jr. LB; Barrett Hudson, Jr. RB; Landon Ross, Sr. TE; Ikechika Ezima, Sr. DL; Bryce Turner, Sr. DB; Marcel Davis, Sr., RB/WR; Josh Vetter, Sr. OL; Shane Rasfske, Sr., LB

**KEY NEWCOMERS:** Jake Farris, Jr. RB; Amani Hooks, So., LB

### SEVEN LAKES SCHEDULE

**AUG. 25**

Seven Lakes vs. Memorial, 6:30 p.m., Tully Stadium

**SEPT. 3**

Seven Lakes vs. Klein, 7 p.m., Rhodes Stadium

**SEPT. 17**

Seven Lakes vs. Taylor, 6 p.m., Legacy Stadium\*

**SEPT. 23**

Tompkins vs. Seven Lakes, 6 p.m., Legacy Stadium\*

**SEPT. 30**

Seven Lakes vs. Morton Ranch, 7 p.m., Rhodes Stadium\*

**OCT. 7**

Mayde Creek vs. Seven Lakes, 7 p.m., Rhodes Stadium\*

**OCT. 14**

Seven Lakes vs. Jordan, 6 p.m., Legacy Stadium\* (Homecoming)

**OCT. 20**

Paetow vs. Seven Lakes, 6 p.m., Legacy Stadium\*

**OCT. 27**

Seven Lakes vs. Katy, 7 p.m., Rhodes Stadium\*

**NOV. 3**

Cinco Ranch vs. Seven Lakes, 6 p.m., Legacy Stadium\*

**BY TYLER TYRE**  
SPORTS EDITOR

Seven Lakes has had improvements in district each of the past two seasons.

After not making the playoffs in 2019, the Spartans bounced back with a 2020 season in which they finished fourth in district to make the bi-district round.

The Spartans made another small improvement last season, upping their wins by four and going 4-2 in district to finish third overall.

The Spartans' goal for this year is to keep that streak of playoff appearances alive, and to find a way to break their streak of two straight seasons of losing in the bi-district round.

But things will get even tougher this year for

Seven Lakes. Katy remains one of the state's powers, while Tompkins and Cinco Ranch both bring back very strong teams that will make strong pushes for playoff runs. Pair that with Paetow's jump to Class 6A and Morton Ranch bringing back a strong squad that could push others in Katy ISD for a playoff spot and it makes for a hard path for Seven Lakes to get back to the playoffs.

But that hard journey is something that Seven Lakes is embracing, and the Spartans believe they have what it takes to be a top four team in District 19-6A.

"We're in a great spot right now because we've gotten to that point where no one on this campus is going to be just OK with making the playoffs anymore," said Seven Lakes head coach Jimmy Hamon. "We've taken that first step of making

the playoffs and knowing how to compete for that, but now, it's not OK just to make the playoffs anymore. This whole team is focused on finding a way through district, trying to make it to that top four but then once we get there, taking that next step and winning a playoff game."

Seven Lakes has some key players coming back on offense. Barrett Hudson is primed to be the lead back in the Spartans' offense this year after leading the team with 862 yards rushing last year to go with five touchdowns, while Landon Ross will lead the receiving unit.

Those players will provide lots of options for the offense throughout the year as Seven Lakes will be able to attack both on the ground and through the air as senior Tanner Perez steps in to take over at quarterback.



“It’s huge for us to bring all of those players back because it’s going to take pressure off the quarterback,” Hamon said. “Because of those guys, we aren’t going to have to count on our quarterback to make the kind of plays that we sometimes expected a guy like Grayson Medford to make last year. We have a very productive supporting cast around Perez, so he’s going to be able to distribute the ball both in the running and passing game. We have playmakers at tight end, at running back and receiver, so that’s always helpful.”

On the defensive side of the ball, the Spartans are led by Dakyus Brinkley, who will look to make a jump in his junior season. On the back end of the defense, Bryce Turner is a leader that will help bring along young players and Ikechika Ezima is a force on the line that will help carry the front seven along with Brinkley. The Seven Lakes defense had a strong season last year and they think this year’s will be no different.

“All of those guys really have just had a great summer,” Hamon said. “Dakyus (Brinkley) really has just poured into the weight room and our strength and conditioning program and so have the other players. But Dakyus is on people’s radar now, that is going to let guys like

Bryce (Turner) be able to step up. Guys like Preston Bozeman and Amani Hooks can play off that extra attention Dakyus is going to receive because people will gameplan for him. The whole defense and team have just been consistent and have had a great summer to get ready for this.”

A big part of Seven Lakes’ confidence this year comes from the fact that they have a strong returning cast, with four starters returning on offense and five returning on defense and many who saw playing time on varsity last year. Those returners are expected to lead the way for the team and the entire Spartans squad is excited to go out and prove that they are still a team to be reckoned within Katy ISD.

“We’ve been able to start at a different point this year because everyone knows what is expected,” Hamon said. “Not having to start from scratch is huge. They can handle things, and it’s great going into a year not worrying about if guys can handle the noise on Friday’s or if they can handle pressure situations. It lets us schematically do things that aren’t as simple or basic too. We can go into week one with a full playbook and adjustments. The continuity that these guys have has us starting in a great spot.”



SCOTT W. COLEMAN

Seven Lakes Spartans linebacker Dakyus Brinkley (9) and defensive back Panashe Mamvura (24) sack Mayde Creek Rams quarterback Cardell Beard (17) during a high school football game between Mayde Creek and Seven Lakes on October 29, 2021. Seven Lakes won, 50-10.

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# MORTON RANCH

## DYNAMIC DUO HOPE TO LEAD PLAYOFF PUSH



Morton Ranch's Joshua Johnson #9 celebrates a TD with teammate Kaden Sadler #23 during a conference game between Katy and Morton Ranch at Legacy Stadium.

PHOTOS BY MARK GOODMAN | SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

**BY TYLER TYRE**  
SPORTS EDITOR

Morton Ranch has been knocking on the door of the playoffs each of the past two seasons.

In 2020, the Mavericks were a point away from beating Seven Lakes in the two team's match-up, which would have put Morton Ranch in the playoffs. A year later, Morton Ranch again missed out by one game, this time finishing fifth behind Cinco Ranch.

For a school that hasn't made the playoffs

since 2016, it's been a frustrating time. But that has just made this year's Morton Ranch team more determined than ever to break the streak.

"This really is a senior-led team this year, and that's kind of unique for us," said Morton Ranch head coach Ron Counter. "Last year our senior class wasn't the biggest and we had a lot of young guys starting, but this year we really have a lot of seniors that are going to play key roles. But this year there's 14 or 15 seniors starting. We usually don't have that so it's a really cool thing."

The Mavericks believe this year is the year they

can break their six year playoff drought and the whole team has been focused on that since the end of last season. At the center of that push are the two keys to the engine of the Morton Ranch offense — senior running back Santana Scott and senior quarterback Josh Johnson.

The two combined for nearly 3,000 yards last season in total, with Scott rushing for 1,242 and 12 touchdowns while also leading the team receiving with 369 yards and four touchdowns. Meanwhile Johnson is a threat both through the air and on the ground. He passed for 1,080 yards



### MORTON RANCH AT A GLANCE

**COACH:** Ron Counter (Career record at Morton Ranch: 20-28).

**LAST PLAYOFF APPEARANCE:** 2016

**2021 RECORD:** 4-6, 2-4 in district

**RETURNING OFFENSIVE/DEFENSIVE**

**STARTERS:** 6/5

**NUMBER OF RETURNING LETTERMAN:** 20

**KEY RETURNERS:** Santana Scott, Sr. RB;

Josh Johnson, Sr. QB; Zach Session, Sr.

OL; Mike Gerald, Jr. WR; Ryan Hall, Jr.

RB; Jamill Lindsey, SL; Dean Ford, Jr.

LB; Carsen Luna, Sr. LB; Adrian Covarr-

bias, Sr. OL; Daniel Alequin, Sr. DL

**KEY NEWCOMERS:** Jerome Ryans, So.,

WR/DB

### MORTON RANCH SCHEDULE

**AUG. 27**

Morton Ranch vs. Eisenhower, 6 p.m.,  
Legacy Stadium

**SEPT. 3**

Morton Ranch vs. Kingwood Park, 6 p.m.,  
Legacy Stadium

**SEPT. 9**

Morton Ranch vs. Paetow, 7 p.m.,  
Rhodes Stadium\* (Homecoming)

**SEPT. 16**

Katy vs. Morton Ranch, 6 p.m.,  
Legacy Stadium\*

**SEPT. 22**

Morton Ranch vs. Cinco Ranch, 6 p.m.,  
Legacy Stadium\*

**SEPT. 30**

Seven Lakes vs. Morton Ranch, 7 p.m.,  
Rhodes Stadium\*

**OCT. 7**

Taylor vs. Morton Ranch, 6 p.m.,  
Legacy Stadium\*

**OCT. 13**

Tompkins vs. Morton Ranch, 7 p.m.,  
Rhodes Stadium\*

**OCT. 28**

Morton Ranch vs. Mayde Creek, 6 p.m.,  
Legacy Stadium\*

**NOV. 3**

Jordan vs. Morton Ranch, 7 p.m., Rhodes  
Stadium\*



and eight touchdowns a season ago while rushing for 280 yards and eight scores. They expect to be the leaders of the offense again this year, but they will be surrounded by a strong supporting cast, especially at the skill positions.

Mike Gerald brings size and explosiveness to the receiver position and will provide a strong option through the air, while Ryan Hall will take some of the load off of Scott and brings a good change of pace with his size at the running back position. Zach Session is back to lead the offensive line in what has a chance to be a strong group.

"It's the first time since I've been here that we've had a quarterback that has been on varsity and played the position on varsity since his sophomore year," Counter said. "That's huge for us, and then to pair that with Santana, another three-year varsity guy, Zach Session is another dude that's really talented and has that experience too. We've never been this experienced, especially on the offensive side of the football and it's exciting."

Defensively, there are a few more question marks, but the team does return five starters for last season. Jamill Lindsey is the leader of the unit after garnering all-district honors last season and Dean Ford brings a huge presence to the line-

backer unit, while Carsen Luna joins him as a strong contributor.

"We have some really good players on that side of the ball," Counter said. "Jamill is coming off a year where he made first team all-district, Dean Ford at linebacker has really grown and gotten better and we're looking for some big things from him. The biggest thing for us is depth. We don't have the same numbers as a lot of other Katy ISD schools, so we have to do everything we can to stay healthy."

The secondary will need to come along quickly, as they will face a gauntlet to start the district schedule, playing four straight teams that made the playoffs last year in Paetow, Katy, Cinco Ranch and Seven Lakes.

But Counter is sure his squad is up for the moment. And he and the Mavericks can't wait to get back on the field and show that they can make some noise in this district.

"We've had such a great offseason, such a great summer," Counter said. "There was such a great effort in the spring and the spring game was probably the best we've had since I've been here. It's just exciting. We're ready to get things rolling, have two really good non-district games and then get ready for the grind."



Morton Ranch's Santana Scott #3 makes the reception in the end zone for a TD during a conference game between Katy and Morton Ranch at Legacy Stadium.

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# TAYLOR IN SEARCH OF BOUNCE-BACK SEASON



PHOTOS BY MARK GOODMAN | SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

**BY TYLER TYRE**  
SPORTS EDITOR

Taylor's historic run had to slow at some point. The Mustangs reached the state semifinal and regional final in Class 6A-Division II in back-to-back years, some of the greatest success the program has had. But after a huge chunk of its varsity program graduated, they went through some growing pains last year.

The Mustangs had to adjust on the fly not only with all of the newcomers in the program, but also with a litany of injuries that made things tougher on the team, keeping them from building momentum as the season went on.

But there was a positive to all the adversity that Taylor went through last year. It gave the chance for many underclassmen to gain varsity experience, prove themselves and understand what it takes to succeed at a high level in high school football.

"Last year has really unified us," said Taylor head coach Chad Simmons. "You could see it through the offseason, spring and summer. The work ethic has been great and you can see that the kids don't want to have that sort of season again. At one point last year we were starting nine sophomores and a freshman and so I think them getting that experience is going to really help them. They know the game speed, they know

how this district is and they've experienced how different it is between sub varsity and varsity."

Simmons' squad brings back a number of starters, especially on defense, where eight of last year's starters return in what should be an improved unit. Ashton Coker and Jose Abreu are the leaders on a good front seven, with senior linebacker Jayden Williams helping to lead the linebacker unit.

On the back end, Cyrus Reyes and Ethan Jacobson are two big contributors as well.

Overall last year, the Mustangs gave up 46.1 points per game, as the Mustangs defense learned how to compete at such a high level, but Simmons has no doubt that there will be



## TAYLOR AT A GLANCE

**COACH:** Chad Simmons (Career record at Taylor: 26-23)

**2021 RECORD:** 2-8, 1-5 in district

**LAST PLAYOFF APPEARANCE:** 2020

**RETURNING OFFENSIVE/DEFENSIVE**

**STARTERS:** 5/8

**NUMBER OF RETURNING LETTERMAN:** 21

**KEY RETURNERS:** Ian Flynt, Jr. TE/DE; Ashton Coker, Jr. DL; Jose Abreu, Sr. DL; Joe Jefferson, Sr. DB; Dante Archie, Jr. RB; Cyrus Reyes, Jr. DB; Ethan Jacobson Jr. DB; Jayden Williams, Sr. LB Jamon Hines, Sr. WR/DB; Alei Sabek, Sr. WR/P/K; Alexandro Zobia, Sr., RB; Daniel Brauns, Jr., RB/WR; Jase Forester, Sr., LB; Josiah Rodriguez, Jr., DB; Landon Saurage, So., LB

**KEY NEWCOMERS:** Chase Cobbin, Jr., QB; Cherron Lewis, Sr., RB; Kameron Green, So., WR/DB; Jack Phillips, Sr., OL; Brady Downs, OL/deep snapper; Stieg Fairington, Sr., OL; Ryan Carey, Sr., OL; Victory Kalu-Uka, Jr., LB; Solomon Ross, So. LB; Joe Adeyemi, Jr., DB;

## TAYLOR SCHEDULE

### AUG. 26

Taylor vs. Cypress Woods, 7 p.m., Rhodes Stadium

### SEPT. 1

Taylor vs. George Ranch, 7 p.m., Traylor Stadium

### SEPT. 10

Taylor vs. Cinco Ranch, 7 p.m., Rhodes Stadium\*

### SEPT. 17

Seven Lakes vs. Taylor, 6 p.m., Legacy Stadium\*

### SEPT. 29

Taylor vs. Tompkins, 6 p.m., Legacy Stadium\*

### OCT. 7

Taylor vs. Morton Ranch, 6 p.m., Legacy Stadium\* (Homecoming)

### OCT. 13

Taylor vs. Mayde Creek, 6 p.m., Legacy Stadium\*

### OCT. 21

Jordan vs. Taylor, 6 p.m., Legacy Stadium\*

### OCT. 27

Taylor vs. Paetow, 6 p.m., Legacy Stadium\*

### NOV. 4

Katy vs. Taylor, 6 p.m., Legacy Stadium\*



improvements seen this year.

“We’ve adjusted some things in the spring to our scheme and we really think that’s going to help us,” Simmons said. “They’ve been working really hard and they’ve taken a step forward like they needed to. We haven’t seen it in a game, but even though it’s a different system now, we think we are going to be a whole lot better on defense.”

On offense, Taylor brings back five starters. Joe Jefferson and Chase Cobbin are both working at quarterback. Jefferson only was able to play in five games last year, but showed promise as a junior, throwing for 433 yards and three touchdowns while rushing for 157 yards and scoring two times on the ground. Cobbin filled in at quarterback after Jefferson went down to injury.

Dante Archie looks like he could have a breakout junior year as he takes over as the lead ballcarrier in the backfield. Last year in his first year on varsity, Archie ran for 245 yards and three touchdowns and also had over 100 yards receivers and really started to shine late in the year.

Ian Flynt, Jamon Hines and Alei Sabek are all huge pieces in the pass game while Sabek has a strong leg that is a weapon both as a kicking and punting game, and Taylor has continued to grow on the offensive line.

“It’s good to have those guys back, they’re a talented bunch,” Simmons said. “We think that we can do some things on offense with them and with a lot of them having that experience, it helps. I think it will be a really fun group.”

This year’s group of Taylor players is ready to write their own legacy. They see last year as a learning experience and now with knowing what to do, they believe they have what it takes to make some noise this year.

“For them, it’s about controlling what they can control,” Simmons said. “Each moment, every day, you have to make sure you are working with a purpose. It’s incremental and it’s a process but none of that’s going to happen very fast. They key is to gradually get there and improve every day as we go. The key is to focus on that and stay stay healthy. If we do that, we’re headed in the right direction.”

**RIGHT**

Katy Taylor’s Dante Archie #3 rushes for a first down during a conference game between Mayde Creek and Katy Taylor at Rhodes Stadium.

**PREVIOUS PAGE**

Katy Taylor’s Jase Forester #40 intercepts the pass intended for Mayde Creek’s Jordan Kelly #5 during a conference game between Mayde Creek and Katy Taylor at Rhodes Stadium.



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# MAYDE CREEK

## SEARCH FOR IMPROVEMENTS IN JENSEN'S SECOND YEAR AT HELM



Mayde Creek's Tay'Shawn Wilson #4 gets some blocking help as he rushes to the outside during a conference game between Mayde Creek and Katy Taylor at Rhodes Stadium.

MARK GOODMAN | SPECIAL TO THE KATY TIMES

BY TYLER TYRE  
SPORTS EDITOR

Mayde Creek is on a mission this season.

After going 2-8 last season to go with an 0-6 record in district, the Rams are out to prove themselves this year, and want to take a step towards competing in the ever-difficult District 19-6A.

The Rams took last season personally, especially the way in which they lost a couple

of games. But when the offseason hit, the team immediately hit the weight room and got to work.

Mayde Creek's players know what it takes now and they feel they are ready to prove it.

"Our guys responded," Mayde Creek head coach J Jensen said. "As soon as offseason hit, they attacked it. We lifted every day until February and then when spring hit, we took that same momentum onto the field. Our guys have a chip on their shoulder, they're motivated. We're out to

prove it and prove it to ourselves. There's talent in the room and talent in the school — we just have to get the most out of every kid."

The Rams have the pieces, especially at skill positions, to compete with others in the district this year. The team is led by Tay'Shawn Wilson, who is one of the best defensive backs in the state, and they also bring back Braden Turner to give Mayde Creek two terrific stoppers on the back end of their defense.



### MAYDE CREEK AT A GLANCE

COACH: J Jensen (Career record at Mayde Creek: 2-8)

2021 RECORD: 2-8, 0-6 in district

LAST PLAYOFF APPEARANCE: 2019

RETURNING OFFENSIVE/DEFENSIVE

STARTERS: 7/7

NUMBER OF RETURNING LETTERMAN: 28

KEY RETURNERS: Tay'Shawn Wilson, Sr.

DB; Caridell Beard, Sr. OB; Braden Turner,

Sr. DB; Donovan McKey, Sr. LB; Nicholas

Buena, Sr. DL; Nicholas Johnson, Sr., DL;

Trevin Lucius, Jr., LB; Chidi Adighide, Sr.,

OL; Marvin Bodden, Sr. RB/WR

KEY NEWCOMERS: Beau Bankston, Sr. WR;

Eric Nelson, So. RB; Ansel Carter, So. RB;

Reggie McNeal, So. OB; Zaylen Cormier,

So., DB/WR; Trey Williams, So., Ath.;

Jalen Alfred, Sr., DB; Johnaton Haywood,

So., LB; Kelvin Asamoah, Sr., OL

### MAYDE CREEK SCHEDULE

AUG. 25

Mayde Creek vs. Westside, 7 p.m.,  
Delmar Stadium

SEPT. 2

Mayde Creek vs. Waller, 7 p.m.,  
Bulldog Stadium

SEPT. 9

Mayde Creek vs. Jordan, 6 p.m.,  
Legacy Stadium\* (Homecoming)

SEPT. 15

Paetow vs. Mayde Creek, 6 p.m.,  
Legacy Stadium\*

SEPT. 22

Katy vs. Mayde Creek, 7 p.m.,  
Rhodes Stadium\*

SEPT. 30

Cinco Ranch vs. Mayde Creek, 6 p.m.,  
Legacy Stadium\*

OCT. 7

Mayde Creek vs. Seven Lakes, 7 p.m.,  
Rhodes Stadium\*

OCT. 13

Taylor vs. Mayde Creek, 6 p.m.,  
Legacy Stadium\*

OCT. 20

Mayde Creek vs. Tompkins, 7 p.m.,  
Rhodes Stadium\*

OCT. 28

Morton Ranch vs. Mayde Creek, 6 p.m.,  
Legacy Stadium\*





SCOTT W. COLEMAN

Mayde Creek Rams quarterback Carldell Beard (17) looks to pass during a high school football game between Mayde Creek and Seven Lakes on October 29, 2021. Seven Lakes won, 50-10.

To go with that, Nicholas Buena and Nicholas Johnson will anchor the defensive line while Donovan McKey brings strong experience and ability to the linebacker position.

Having returners at all three levels of the defense will be music to Jensen's ears, as he attempts to build up what will need to be a strong defense if this Rams team is to have a chance at competing for a playoff spot.

"All of those guys had such a great offseason and it was awesome to see them develop not only on the field, but off the field as leaders and as young men as well," Jensen said. "They led all of the younger guys in the program this offseason. Everything that's supposed to happen, those guys really took it on themselves to lead. Their improved leadership, their buy-in, it's one of the reasons things are going to be exponentially better. We're excited."

But it's not just the defense that has Jensen excited. Carldell Beard is back to lead the offense and the strong-armed quarterback has options to work with in the attack with wide receiver Beau Bankston transferring over from Paetow and Wilson expected to make an impact in both the offensive and return game as well.

It will need to be a stronger offensive attack than last year, after narrowly averaging over 200 yards per game last year and only averaging 48 yards on the ground per game to go with 13.6 points per game.

Those kind of numbers would lead to

struggles for the Rams this year, but with another year under the Rams system and with key returners, Jensen thinks that the team will show some big improvements.

"Carldell has taken such a big step and it's been huge," Jensen said. "From the fundamentals, to leadership to how strong he is, it's just a different level from last year," Jensen said. "Right now he's 6-foot-3 inches and 218 pounds. He's as strong as he's ever been and the entire offense has been getting after it in offseason. We just feel like all of them are going to be really good."

Mayde Creek will have a chance to prove itself early, as they open the season against Westside, which made the playoffs last year.

Jensen, who is in search of his first district win as a head coach, will have that chance early when Mayde Creek plays Jordan in the third week of the season. The Rams hope to carry their strong offseason and summer into non-district before they face the gauntlet of this year's all Katy ISD district.

"This whole program has grown exponentially," Jensen said. "As those players have grown, so have we as coaches and the program as a whole as well. They're all great teammates, they support each other and rally each other and they've just taken a step both on and off the field. There's a continuity now both with the players and on the coaching staff after being together for a year and it's been awesome. We're all on the same team and

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# JORDAN READY TO PROVE THEY BELONG



Jordan's Andrew Marsh makes a diving catch in the endzone during a state 7-on-7 game.

PHOTOS BY TYLER TYRE

**BY TYLER TYRE**  
SPORTS EDITOR

This is the moment every Jordan player and coach has been waiting for.

Two years after opening the school and starting its football program, the Warriors are finally ready for a full season of football, with competition in a district and a chance to prove themselves.

Jordan has been waiting with bated breath for

the opportunity and has prepared for this moment — spending all of last year playing any UIL program that they could and spending as much time as possible competing through the spring and summer, including making the State 7-on-7 tournament.

“The buy-in has been tremendous,” said Jordan head coach Mike Rabe. “We’ve had a really good summer and our spring practices were solid, along with our spring game. We got to see

a lot of things that we needed to. Now we’re just excited to get started and play somebody new.”

All of that has been building to this fall, when Jordan joins one of the toughest districts in the state in District 19-6A.

Despite being young, the Warriors boast an impressive arsenal on offense, and have a chance to be explosive this year.

Junior quarterback Colin Willetts has a cannon of an arm and the Warriors’ offense isn’t short on



## JORDAN AT A GLANCE

**COACH:** Mike Rabe (Career record at Mayde Creek: 3-6)  
**2021 RECORD:** 3-6  
**LAST PLAYOFF APPEARANCE:** N/A  
**RETURNING OFFENSIVE/DEFENSIVE STARTERS:** 11/11  
**NUMBER OF RETURNING LETTERMAN:** 50  
**KEY RETURNERS:** Andrew Marsh, So. WR; Colin Willetts, Jr. QB; Nathan Salz, Sr. WR; Chad Gasper, So. RB; Ifeanyi Monye, Jr. RB; Braden Franklin, Sr. DB; Zion Jones, So. DB; Jovanni Melchor, Jr. DL; Eli Fullerton, DL; Tosin Odulate, Sr. DL; Jake Kilander, Sr. K  
**KEY NEWCOMERS:** Zechariah Sample, Jr. WR/DB;

## JORDAN SCHEDULE

### AUG. 27

Jordan vs. Davis, 7 p.m., Rhodes Stadium

### SEPT. 3

Jordan vs. Kingwood, 6 p.m., Turner Stadium

### SEPT. 9

Mayde Creek vs. Jordan, 6 p.m., Legacy Stadium\*

### SEPT. 23

Jordan vs. Paetow, 7 p.m., Rhodes Stadium\*

### SEPT. 29

Katy vs. Jordan, 7 p.m., Rhodes Stadium\*

### OCT. 6

Jordan vs. Cinco Ranch, 7 p.m., Rhodes Stadium\*

### OCT. 14

Seven Lakes vs. Jordan, 6 p.m., Legacy Stadium\*

### OCT. 21

Jordan vs. Taylor, 6 p.m., Legacy Stadium\*

### OCT. 28

Tompkins vs. Jordan, 7 p.m., Rhodes Stadium\*

### NOV. 3

Jordan vs. Morton Ranch, 7 p.m., Rhodes Stadium\*



weapons. Sophomore receiver Andrew Marsh headlines the list, as he has already shown a proficiency for making huge plays in the pass game and has a great combo of speed and size, but he isn't alone as a weapon. Senior receiver Nathan Salz is a leader on the team and is one of the fastest players in the district. He will provide a huge deep threat that will keep defenses honest and allow other players to thrive as well. Zechariah Sample will be a huge threat in the slot while Connor Babin and Walker Roby both are good players that can make plays happen.

Chad Gasper and Ifeanyi Monye are both threats in the run game and are good complements to each other, but the big question mark for the Jordan offense is the offensive line, as this is the first year the program will have seniors. Overall the team is still very young, although Jovanni Melchor is a strong player on the line.

"It's a really fun group," Rabe said. "There's so many weapons out there to distribute the ball to and they all do a good job of playing together. There's a really good team mentality, they practice for each other and they play hard for each other so it's really exciting and I think they can do some really good things this year."

Defensively, the team is led by Braden Franklin at the back end, as he is the quarterback of the defense at safety, while Zion Jones and Sample both will be big keys in

the secondary. Eli Fullerton will anchor the defensive line while Josh Gulizia will be a key player at linebacker, but the entire unit will have to learn what it takes to compete with other teams in Katy ISD.

"Braden has done a tremendous job stepping up," Rabe said. "With his presence in the back end, everyone knows that we are going to get lined up right and that all the calls are going to be right. Everyone trusts him to put us in good situations and he's proven that he can do that. It's always comforting when you have a guy in the secondary that can do that for you."

While this will be a new experience for the players, it's far from it for head coach Mike Rabe, who had the head job at Mayde Creek for the 2016-2019 seasons. He's already had plenty of experience building up a program and competing within Katy ISD and he expects this team to do nothing less than put their best foot forward every week.

"This is a tough district, people in this district play extremely hard every single game," Rabe said. "The guys are going to have to get used to that really quick. You have to everything you have on the line for all four quarters if you want to win a football game in this district. They're going to have to learn how to do that quickly in those first two games, and that's why we scheduled high quality non-district opponents. We know how important it will be."



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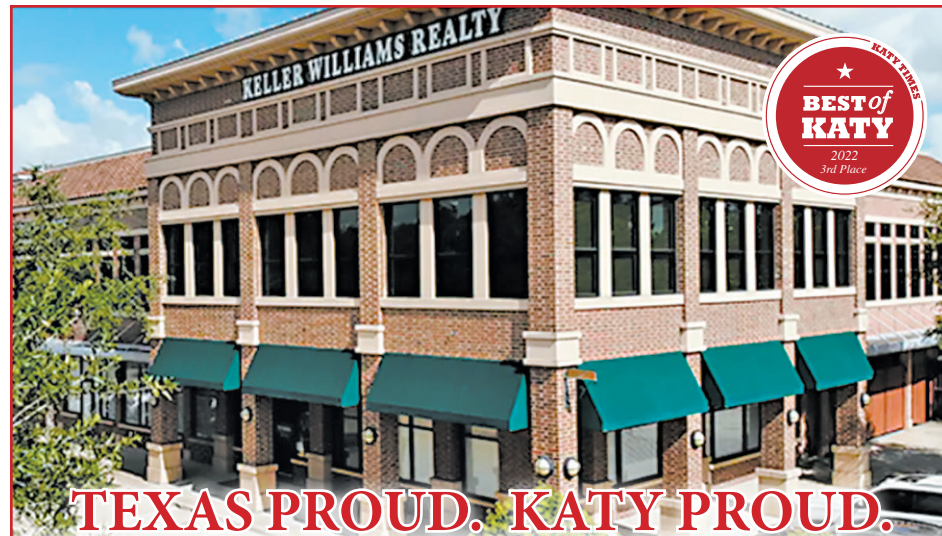
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# ROYAL

## LOOKING TO IMPROVE ON LAST YEAR'S 4-6 SEASON

BY GEORGE SLAUGHTER  
NEWS EDITOR

The Royal Falcons are hoping to soar to new heights as Coach Theadis Reagins enters his third season at the helm.

The Falcons finished 4-6 overall, 1-4 in District 2-4A, an improvement from a two-win campaign in 2021.

"I think this year is going to be a great improvement," Reagins said. "The kids understand what to expect. We're excited as a staff, excited as a team. We can't wait to get started."

The Falcons return seven starters on offense, including senior wide receivers Antonio Page and Dashawn Adams. Reagins said Adams is fast and was second in district in the high jump. Page is a strong runner with great hands.

"Both complement each other," Reagins said.

Of those seven returning offensive starters, four of them play on the offensive line. This will be key as the Falcons settle on their starting quarterback and running backs.

Reagins said the Falcons are young at quarterback, with sophomore Ashton Robinson and junior Derrick Noel competing for playing time. At running back, senior Luis Avitia and freshman Malik Hooker look to get carries.



THEADIS REAGINS

Royal football players take a break from summer workouts.

"That's the position we're trying to fill right now," Reagins said.

The defense returns six starters. Senior linebacker Justin Cryer is expected to be a leader there. Reagins said Cryer, who is committed to play college football at Northwestern, also had offers from Arizona State and Florida State.

"He's a great player," Reagins said. "He's a really great kid."

The core of the Falcons' defense is their defensive line. Reagins said one lineman expected to make a difference is senior Jeremiah Robinson, who has offers from Army, Navy and Utah. Zechariah Robinson is expected to contribute as well.

Robinson, Reagins said, has the most potential of the linemen.

"He's very impressive," Reagins said. "College coaches came by to watch him in spring drills."

Reagins said the Falcons must find both a punter and kicker for the season, which begins Aug. 26.



### ROYAL AT A GLANCE

**COACH:** Theadis Reagins  
**2021 RECORD:** 4-6, 1-4 in district  
**LAST PLAYOFF APPEARANCE:** 2017  
**RETURNING OFFENSIVE/DEFENSIVE STARTERS:** 9/8  
**NUMBER OF RETURNING LETTERMAN:** 26  
**KEY RETURNERS:** Justin Cryer, Sr. LB; DaShawn Adams, Sr., WR; Antonio Page, Sr., WR; Jeremiah Robinson, Sr., DL; Zechariah Robinson, Sr., OL/DL; Erick Robledo, Jr., OL; James Oviedo, Jr., OL; Gustavo Infante, Jr., DL  
**KEY NEWCOMERS:** Jalen Bray, So., DL

### ROYAL SCHEDULE

**AUG. 26**  
Royal vs. Worthing, 6 p.m.

**SEPT. 2**  
Royal at Furr, 7 p.m.

**SEPT. 9**  
Royal at Iowa Colony, 7 p.m.

**SEPT. 16**  
Royal vs. Fort Bend Willowridge, 7 p.m.

**SEPT. 30**  
Royal vs. Sealy, 7 p.m.\*

**OCT. 7**  
Royal at Bellville, 7 p.m.\*

**OCT. 14**  
Royal vs. Wharton, 7 p.m.\*

**OCT. 21**  
Royal at Sweeny, 7 p.m.\*

**OCT. 28**  
Royal vs. La Marque, 7 p.m.\*

**NOV. 4**  
Royal vs. Columbia, 7 p.m.\*

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



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# ST. JOHN XXIII

## LIONS LOOK TO RESTORE THE ROAR IN 2022

BY GEORGE SLAUGHTER  
NEWS EDITOR

St. John XXIII coach Clay Richardson is the first to admit things didn't go well last season as the Lions struggled to a 2-9 record.

"Last year we had a small roster and some tough breaks," Richardson said. "We had to play iron-man football against teams with two platoons. We had some tough losses last year. The scores don't indicate it, but we were in a lot of those games. I'm hoping we can turn that around this year."

Richardson, who has a 25-32 record at St. John XXIII, feels good about this year's team. The Lions play in TAPPS Division II District 4.

"We're going to be competitive," Richardson said. "We've got a great group of kids. They've got good character. We'll see how they pan out as football players."

The Lions expect to return to the flexbone offensive scheme this year after using the spread in previous seasons. While the Lions return five offensive starters, the skill positions must be decided. Richardson said he expects competition at running back following the graduation of last season's most valuable player, Jackson McGaha.

Richard expects sophomore wide receiver Parker Koons to make a difference this year.

"He had a great offseason," Richardson said. "We're kind of fired up to see what he can do."

On defense, the Lions return seven starters.

"We should be in pretty good shape on defense," Richardson said. "We still have our defensive coordinator, Scot Mills. He's been doing this for a few years, so the kids know it. We run an odd-man front. It's basically a four-man front with three linemen, and a linebacker just off the line."

Junior Raymond Walsh leads the defensive line. "He squats over 500 lbs.," Richardson said. "He's just a weight room guy. He's probably our best player right now."

Junior Charlie Sero will lead the linebackers. "He'll hit you pretty good," Richardson said.

Sophomore Sammy Khoury will lead the secondary. "He's just a baller," Richardson said. "He does everything right. He's a little bitty guy, but boy, he plays big."

The Lions open their season Aug. 26 against Concordia Lutheran.

### ST. JOHN XXIII AT A GLANCE

COACH: Clay Richardson  
2021 RECORD: 2-9, 1-5 in district  
LAST PLAYOFF APPEARANCE: 2019  
RETURNING OFFENSIVE/DEFENSIVE STARTERS: 4/7  
NUMBER OF RETURNING LETTERMAN: 19

### FAITH WEST AT A GLANCE

COACH: Travis Robinson  
2021 RECORD: N/A  
LAST PLAYOFF APPEARANCE: 2017



### FAITH WEST SCHEDULE

- AUG. 26**  
Faith West vs. Logos Prep, 7 p.m.
- SEPT. 2**  
Faith West at Bryan St. Joseph, 7 p.m.
- SEPT. 9**  
Faith West at Baytown Christian, 7 p.m.
- SEPT. 16**  
Faith West vs. Giddings State, 7 p.m.
- SEPT. 23**  
Faith West at Covenant Christian, 7 p.m.\*
- SEPT. 30**  
Faith West vs. Allen Academy, 7 p.m.\*
- OCT. 6**  
Faith West at Legacy Christian, 7 p.m.\*
- OCT. 14**  
Faith West at First Baptist Christian, 7 p.m.\*
- OCT. 21**  
Faith West vs. St. Francis Episcopal, 7 p.m.\*
- NOV. 4**  
Faith West vs. Westbury Christian, 7 p.m.\*



### ST. JOHN XXIII SCHEDULE

- AUG. 26**  
St. John vs. Concordia Lutheran, 7 p.m.
- SEPT. 2**  
St. John vs. Houston Village, 7 p.m.
- SEPT. 9**  
St. John at Houston Christian, 7 p.m.
- SEPT. 16**  
St. John vs. Van Vleet, 7 p.m.
- SEPT. 24**  
St. John vs. Resurrection Christian, 1 p.m.
- OCT. 7**  
St. John vs. Second Baptist, 7 p.m.\*
- OCT. 14**  
St. John at Woodlands Christian Academy, 7 p.m.\*
- OCT. 21**  
St. John at Kelly Catholic, 7 p.m.\*
- OCT. 28**  
St. John at Fort Bend Christian, 7 p.m.\*
- NOV. 4**  
St. John vs. Lutheran South, 7 p.m.\*

# FAITH WEST

## WELCOMES NEW COACH FOR 2022 SEASON

BY GEORGE SLAUGHTER  
NEWS EDITOR

The Faith West Eagles want to soar to new heights in 2022. They brought in a new coach, Travis Robinson, to lead them there.

Robinson joined the Eagles in February. This is his first head coaching job, and he knows much work is ahead. The Eagles, who compete in TAPPS Division I six-man football, did not field a team last year due to the pandemic. In 2020, the Eagles finished 0-6.

Robinson described six-man football as "basketball on grass" and very entertaining to watch.

"Go to a six-man game, and you'll never see the action stop," Robinson said. "An offensive drive can be less than five plays."

Robinson said if a team is leading by 45 points, either at halftime or in the second half, the game stops.

"It goes to show how high scoring the

game is," Robinson said, adding that a 120-lb. athlete, while considered small for 11-man football, is perfect for the six-man game. A roster for a six-man football team might have fewer than 15 athletes on it.

"You've got seven, eight kids as your main core and they'll play both ways," Robinson said.

One of the bigger players returning for the Eagles is senior fullback Angel Machado (5-11, 180). Robinson said Machado can play both noseguard and linebacker on defense.

Senior running back and defensive end Ethan Bailey will be another player to watch, along with sophomore quarterback and defensive back Joshua Turner.

"He's an incredible athlete," Robinson said of Turner. "As a freshman, he made second-team all-district in basketball and baseball."

The Eagles kick off their season Aug. 26 against Logos Prep Academy.

"We'll see how it goes," Robinson said. "I hope it turns out to be a good thing."

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