

OPINION

The coach is right, even if he's wrong

I wish I could talk about eyes this week, but with the recent happenings at Hewitt, I won't be.

Let me begin this column by saying I was not in favor of hiring Jim Sanderson as head coach of the Hewitt-Trussville basketball team. I have nothing against the guy, and from all accounts he's a fantastic basketball coach and man. I was in the camp for hiring Jeremiah Millington, the longtime Husky assistant and former standout player. That ship sailed, however, last April when the powers-that-be elected to go with Sanderson, an experienced winner who has won a national championship at the small college level.

Jim Sanderson's hiring was supposed to bring stability to a program that has seen a revolving door of head coaches since the end of the 2012 season.

If you remember, 2012 was the year Hewitt made its deepest run ever into the basketball playoffs. Tim Reeves and Jeremiah Millington took a very young group to the regional finals, knocking off Mountain Brook along the way. Yes, Mountain Brook, the team that has

won two of the last three state basketball titles. As a matter of fact, until Hoover knocked off the Spartans in the state finals last season, the last team to beat said Spartans in the postseason was Hewitt.

But Reeves was relieved of his duties following that season. Perhaps the powers-that-be wanted to go in a different direction. Perhaps they only wanted a coach that only coached basketball and didn't split time with football. But a chain of events was set off that has left Hewitt basketball in disarray ever since.

For the 2012-13 season, the Huskies turned to Zane Arnold. His coaching style was more "in your face" than Reeves and more up-tempo. The results on the floor were less than optimal, as the Huskies finished with a 13-18 record. Arnold's style was not suitable to the powers-that-be or to some of the parents of players. "Too brash" we heard.

Just like that, Arnold was out and the Huskies were in the market for a new coach.

Hewitt then turned to Mike Dutton, a longtime



Dr. Zack Steele, O.D.

area coach and all-around nice guy. Dutton's style was up-tempo, emphasizing getting off shots quickly on the fast break. A decent season in 2013-14 looked promising, but depth issues and personnel misfit for the style resulted in a 7-23 record in the 2014-15 season. The games were not even competitive, and changes had to be made.

At first, Hewitt flirted with the idea of hiring Jeremiah Millington as a co-head coach with Dutton, but elected to open the coaching search and eventually go with Sanderson.

It now appears Sanderson may never coach a game at Hewitt. Parents of a few players complained that his style is too harsh. Too much yelling and harsh discipline was his downfall, among other

things.

"At the end of the day, we didn't feel the team relationship portion fit the program and we decided to go in a different direction," Athletic Director Karen Johns said in a statement.

I titled this column based on a chapter in the book "The Matheny Manifesto" by major league manager Mike Matheny; it's a great read for anyone with a child in youth sports. The premise of the book is that parents are ruining sports for their children by screaming at them at games, meddling with coaches about discipline and playing time, and causing drama for their child's team.

Since 2012, depending on who you ask, Hewitt has fired two basketball coaches--if you believe the press release, technically Arnold "resigned" --because one or two sets of parents had a problem with that coach's style and philosophy. I translate that as "coach is too hard on my son, so I'll raise a big enough stink that a change occurs."

What does it say about our society when two or three sets of parents can

complain enough about Jim Sanderson that the powers-that-be decide to remove him before he's ever coached a game? Is the same policy in place for the chemistry or Spanish teacher who pushes the kids who make C's who could be making A's? Will the bus driver who speaks harshly to a child disrupting and potentially causing safety concerns on the bus lose their job if and when it happens?

I have had many coaches and teachers in my life that pushed me to be better. Several years ago I went back to my hometown and paid a visit to my old high school basketball coach at practice. He was an absolute tyrant. He's won more than 750 games. I remember being berated by him so badly that I often thought about hanging up my sneakers. When I walked into the gym that day, he stopped his pre-practice talk to introduce me. "I rode Zack harder than any player I've ever had here," the coach told his team. "But he was one of the tough ones and now they call him Dr. Steele."

My point is that kids need to be pushed. Kids need to

understand that nothing in this life comes easy. They don't learn that life lesson unless they experience it. It will make that player a better and more productive adult one day.

Parents do their children a disservice when they complain about a coach working a kid too hard. School administrators do those kids a disservice by firing a coach because parents complain.

The most perplexing thing to me is the powers-that-be had to know what they were getting when they hired Jim Sanderson, who, much like his father, was known for being a fiery guy who pushed and got the most out of his kids. Why hire a coach like that and then not back up his methods? Everything that I heard from current players and parents was that he pushed the kids very hard, but never did anything malicious. The message sent by his dismissal before ever coaching a game is a disturbing one: If you don't like the coach pushing your kid to be better, complain enough, and the powers-that-be will fire him and bring in someone new.

Who would relplace Shelby in Senate?

Many of you liked last week's column detailing our Senior Senator Richard Shelby's ascent to the U.S. Senate in 1986. Sen. Shelby has represented us in the U.S. Senate admirably for close to three decades now. He has no plans to retire any time soon. Shelby will tell you straight away that he is running for reelection to his 6th six year term in 2016. Shelby turned 80 last May but he looks 65 and is in good health. He loves being a U.S. Senator and will be easily reelected if indeed he runs again in 2016.

However, what if Shelby changed his mind and retired in 2016? The big question mark in Alabama politics is who all would run to succeed Shelby. The answer is everybody and their brother. United States Senate seats do not open up every day.

Therefore everybody who is in political office plus everybody who ever won a 4H speaking contest would enter the fray.

Who would be the favorite to follow Shelby and try to fill those big shoes? If history is any indication the usual route to an open senate seat over the years and throughout the country is to buy the seat. Those seats are bought by wealthy individuals. The U.S. Senate is often referred to as a millionaire's club. It costs a lot to run statewide for an open senate seat and lobbyists and special interests groups spend most of their campaign largesse on protecting a known quantity of proven friendly incumbents.

A cursory look around the senate will reveal the names of very wealthy individuals, some who own professional sports teams,



Steve Flowers
Inside the
Statehouse

there is a Rockefeller and even movie stars. This scenario could very well play out in Alabama. We love our college football so much you could very well see a famous former Alabama or Auburn football star emerge. For example, Bart Starr in his prime would have been a formidable senate candidate. What if Nick Saban decided he wanted to go to the U.S. Senate? It appears that being from

Tuscaloosa is a prerequisite to being elected to high political office these days.

What about our current political officeholders? First on most lists is Alabama Attorney General Luther Strange. It is no secret among Big Luther's friends that his ultimate ambition is to run for the U.S. Senate. He spent the first 20 years of his career in Washington as a corporate lobbyist. He would like to return as a U.S. Senator.

The congressional ranks would also be an evident spawning pool for U.S. Senate candidates. However, I recall in my younger years I worked for Congressman Bill Dickinson. Bill served 28 years in Congress and I would periodically ask him if he would ever run for the senate. He would reply, "Steeverino, the political graveyard is full

of congressman who have tried to move to the Senate."

You see, congressmen run every two years and if they pull the trigger and gamble on a Senate race they lose their congressional seat.

One who would probably take that plunge is newly elected congressman, Bradley Byrne. Bradley has probably looked around his environment as a freshman 60-year-old congressman and realized his limitations in the U.S. House. He would be a formidable candidate for the Senate in 2016. He has run a strong race for governor and built significant statewide name identification. He is attractive and a proven fundraiser and campaigner.

Congressman Robert Aderholt would be expected to look seriously at an open Senate seat. He is young and has close to

20 years seniority built up in congress. It is because of his seniority that he may give pause to taking the risk. He has a lot to lose in congressional power.

PSC President Twinkle Cavanaugh is also young and would have to consider a once in a lifetime opportunity to go to the U.S. Senate.

Even though he is in his late 60's, former Governor Bob Riley might make the race.

Even though he looks older than his 73 years, Governor Robert Bentley may be spryer than he appears. He could make the plunge. After all, he is from Tuscaloosa.

See you next week.

Steve Flowers is Alabama's leading political columnist. His weekly column appears in over 60 Alabama newspapers.

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CALENDAR

2015 Trussville City BOE meetings

The Trussville City Board of Education will meet Sept. 17, Oct. 19, Nov. 16 and Dec. 14. All board meetings are at 6 p.m. at the Central Office.

Georgiana Davis Masonic Lodge meetings

Georgiana Davis Masonic Lodge No. 338 in Trussville meetings are at 7:30 p.m. on the second and fourth Monday each month. Practice nights are on the first and third Monday. Family nights are on the fifth Monday of the month. The lodge is at 190 Beechnut St. in Trussville. For more information, call Bryan Stover at 205-706-5220.

Center Point Masonic Lodge meetings

Center Point Masonic Lodge No. 872 located off Old Springville Road meets every Thursday at 7:30 p.m. For more information call Mike Lann at 205-687-7160.

Springville Military Order of the Purple Heart meetings

The Military Order of the Purple Heart Chapter 2213, Springville, meets at the Smokin Grill at 85 Purple Heart Boulevard

on the first Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m.

Republican Women of Trussville meetings

Republic Women of Trussville meetings are at Sherry's Cafe on Valley Road near Trussville the first Thursday of each month. Meet and greet is at 5:30 p.m. and the meeting follows at 6 p.m. For more information, visit www.rwot.net or email cherylamathews@gmail.com.

Cahawba Art Association meetings

The Cahawba Art Association meets monthly on the second Monday at 6:30 p.m. at the Trussville Public Library.

Jazzercise at Trussville Civic Center

Jazzercise is Mondays at 5 p.m., Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9 a.m. and 5:30 p.m., and Saturdays at 9 a.m. at the Trussville Civic Center. For more information, contact Beth Gilbert at 205-966-9893.

AL School of Math and Science meeting

Students and their parents are invited to an informational meeting about admission to the Alabama School of Math and Science, the state's only public, residential high school for Alabama's brightest and

most talented students. All current 9th and 10th grade Alabama students are eligible to apply. Because ASMS is a state-sponsored public school, tuition, room, and board are free. The meeting in Birmingham will be held Thursday, Oct. 22, 6 p.m. at UAB Heritage Hall, room 104.

Hewitt-Trussville Class of 1995 reunion

The Hewitt-Trussville HS Class of 1995 will hold their 20-year class reunion the weekend of Oct. 16-17. The class will host a tailgate party for family members at the Hewitt-Trussville football game from 5 p.m. until 7 p.m. Oct. 16. On Saturday, Oct. 17, the event will be for adults only, and will be held at Superior Grill on U.S. 280. The cost for the event is \$25 per person before Sept. 24 or \$35 per person after that date. Email hthsclassof95@gmail.com to pay or graduates may contact Ashley Rogers-Lybrand at alybrand2@yahoo.com for more information.

Historical society hosting event on local archaeological dig

The Trussville Historical Society is sponsoring an event to hear of the findings of a 2012 archaeological dig at the site of the new Hewitt Trussville Football Stadium.. Matthew Gage, RPA, Director of the University of Alabama Museums in Moundville, Alabama will be speaking at the Trussville Civic Center, Thursday, Oct. 15, at 7 p.m. regarding the findings. Their dig revealed a glimpse into the lives of the people who lived there 3,500 years ago. Some of the items that were found at the site may be as old as 10,000 years.

Birmingham Genealogy Society meeting

The Birmingham Genealogy Society will meet on Saturday, October 24 in the Birmingham Public Library Auditorium at 2:00 pm. Members will be displaying their family genealogy projects and visitors are welcome to attend!

Sons of Confederate Veterans meeting

The Sons of Confederate Veterans meets the 3rd Thursday of each month at First Baptist Church Trussville at 7 p.m.

Friends of Camp Coleman hosting reunion

The Friends of Camp Coleman are hosting a reunion at the camp on Sunday, Oct. 13 from 9:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. with opening flag ceremony at 11:30, a luncheon at noon, traditional boat float -- candles placed on pieces of bark, lit and then set afloat down the Cahaba River -- followed by a campfire with singing, beginning at 3:30. In between will be group singing with guitars, hikes around camp and several of the trails and lots of tales. All are welcome. Pre-register at www.friendsofcampcoleman.com.

Annual WCE fundraiser

The Women's Connection East will hold an accessory sale for their annual fundraiser and brunch on Oct. 14 at 10 a.m. at the Grayson Valley County Club. The group requests that reservations be made ahead of time by calling Cathryn at 640-6182 or by email sf.hardy@charter.net. Speaking at the event will be Phyllis Page. Doors for the event will open at 9:30 a.m.

Have events you want to share? Email them to news@trussvilletribune.com.

Scan this QR code with your smartphone to see all these calendar items and more at www.trussvilletribune.com.



2015 City Council meetings

Trussville

The 2015 Trussville City Council meetings will be Oct. 27, Nov. 10, Nov. 19, Dec. 8 and Dec. 17. All meetings are at 6 p.m. at Trussville City Hall on Main Street.

Clay

The 2015 Clay City Council meetings are scheduled for Oct. 19,

Nov. 2, Nov. 16, Dec. 7 and Dec. 21. All meetings are at 6:30 p.m. at Clay City Hall on Old Springville Road.

Pinson

The Pinson City Council typically meets the first and third Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. The meetings are at Pinson City Hall, located at 4410 Main St. in Pinson.

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SPORTS

Cash with game-changing play to lift Huskies to win over Thompson

by Kyle Parmley

Staff Writer

Hewitt-Trussville had some trouble finishing the game strong, but walked away from the field on Friday night with a 35-17 win over Class 7A, Region 3 foe Thompson at Hewitt-Trussville Stadium.

“We’ve got to do a better job of finishing off a game,” Hewitt-Trussville head coach Josh Floyd said. “We had opportunities. We made a couple of mistakes in the second quarter, where it could’ve been 28-0 or 35-0 at the half. I’m a little disappointed that we didn’t do that, but hey, it’s a region win and we’re fired up.”

One of those mistakes in the second quarter came after the Huskies recovered a fumble at the Thompson 30-yard-line after a kickoff. They drove to the 14, but Zac Thomas threw across his body – a cardinal sin for quarterbacks in the red zone – and was intercepted by KJ Robertson.

Thompson attempted to make a game of it in the third quarter, after going into the break trailing 21-0. In the midst of a torrential pop-up rain shower, the Warriors scored on a throwback pass from two yards out from wide receiver Jordan Haywood to quarterback Walker Lott in the end zone.

The Huskies had nothing to worry about, however, as they still had Cash left in the



photo by Ron Burkett

Hewitt-Trussville improves its Region 3 standing with a win over Thompson on Friday night.

bank.

Grayson Cash picked up the ensuing kickoff and did the rest, rumbling 80 yards down the left side of the field to crush any momentum the Warriors had.

“The kickoff return was probably the biggest (play) in the game,” Floyd said. “They obviously had the momentum after a long drive and for him to respond like that; it was a big time play.”

“We had a regular return on and I saw the ball and I saw the seam. We had great blocks and I just hit it,” Cash said of the return.

Cash was all over the place the entire night,

contributing in all facets of the game – offense, defense, and special teams. Aside from the kickoff return touchdown, he broke up a pass on defense, recovered a fumble on special teams, and gained 21 yards on six touches on the offensive side of the ball.

“Grayson Cash is a football player. That’s what I tell everybody. If you put him at quarterback, he could play quarterback,” Floyd said.

The Warriors refused to die, as the Huskies never quite put the game on ice until a time-chewing drive late in the fourth quarter.

“We told them at halftime

to just go play the second half,” Thompson head coach Mark Freeman said. “We had the ball four drives and we scored three of those four drives. We’ve got to remember what we’re trying to do. We’re trying to build and at the same time win games.”

After an easy 41-7 victory over Thompson last season, Hewitt-Trussville had a much tougher battle on its hands with Freeman leading the Warrior program in his first season.

“It’s a totally different program this year,” Floyd said. “Coach Freeman has done a great job. He’s going to get them rolling. They’ve

got some players over there.”

Running back Jarrion Street had another electric night, getting the Huskies on the board first and never looking back. The Ole Miss commit totaled 125 yards and three touchdowns on 23 carries. He was a bruiser near the goal line as well, scoring his touchdowns on runs of three, two, and two yards.

Seth Keahey stepped up on the defensive side of the ball, picking off a pass from Lott in the second quarter, setting up one of Street’s scores.

Ed Johnson caught a six-yard touchdown from

Thomas on a rollout play in the first quarter, and was the first varsity score of Johnson’s career.

Carlos Stephens had a great night on the ground for Thompson, picking up 112 yards on 15 carries. Backup running back Frank Mwakajumba scored in the fourth quarter on a 30-yard dash.

In lieu of the scoreline, both defenses made things tough on the offenses, especially through the air. Thompson passed for just 32 yards, and Hewitt-Trussville accumulated 80 yards through the air. The Huskies picked up 322 total yards on the night, thanks to 242 yards on 54 total rushes.

Despite the success on the ground, Floyd called Thompson’s defensive line the best his team has played all season. He had high praise for the Warrior defense as a whole as well.

“Their defense is really good this year. You have to earn every yard, and we saw that tonight,” he said.

As he was walking off the field, Floyd mentioned that a win is a win, especially when it means improving to 4-1 in region play.

“I think it’s so tough every week. We’ll have to bring it again next week,” he said.

Hewitt-Trussville hosts Mountain Brook next Friday night in another region contest. Thompson plays Tuscaloosa County at home for its senior night.

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Pigrome unstoppable in Clay-Chalkville win over Shades Valley

by Erik Harris

Sports Editor

There was no Cinderella story to be told on Friday night in Cougar Stadium. Things went according to plan for those wearing blue as they captured their second home win of the season with a 52-14 win over Shades Valley (2-5, 2-2 Class 6A, Region 6).

With the win, No. 1 Clay-Chalkville is now 10-0 under its home lights since falling to Florence in the second round of the 2013 state playoffs. Through that stretch, the Cougars have scored no less than 35 points in each contest.

They were in typical spirits on Friday night, amassing 597 yards of offense in a region win. Senior quarterback Ty Pigrome, who has won all ten of those home games over the past two seasons, went for 444 yards of his own.

He got 43 of them with a touchdown strike to Nico Collins in the second quarter. The dual-threat

weapon rolled up 89 more of those yards with a simple dump into the flats. Running back Brandon Berry did almost all of the work, grabbing the short completion, planting his left foot and tight roping the visitor's sideline all the way to pay dirt.

"The offense, they just keep getting better and better and better. They were able to do a lot of great things tonight," said Clay-Chalkville head coach Jerry Hood.

Pigrome struggled with his accuracy in the first half, but found his rhythm in the second half to finish a special night.

Things didn't start particularly pretty for the Cougars' defense, as they fell victim to a trick play on the Mounties' first snap of the game. Radey Edwards took a jet sweep and fired a pass downfield to Joshua McKenzie, who was all alone behind the Clay-Chalkville secondary. That trickery went for a 72-yard touchdown to evened the game at 7-all early in the opening quarter.

"The funny thing is, I told them today at walk through, 'that's what's coming.' Then I told them in the pre-game meal, 'you're going to get a double pass.' They got a double pass," said Hood.

"We've had that play actually since this summer and we didn't have it on film. We just felt like we could get a little spark there and we felt like we could get it on the first play," said Shades Valley head coach David Partridge.

Unfortunately for the visitors, that double pass was the only score they would enjoy for quite a while. The Cougars made six trips to the end zone before Shades Valley quarterback Claude Newell connected with Anthony Williams for a 7-yard touchdown late in the fourth to end the night at 52-14.

"I was proud of our kids, because I felt like they kept playing and kept fighting through the game, and it will pay off for us eventually," said Partridge. "We've really fought



photo by Ron Burkett

Clay-Chalkville quarterback Ty Pigrome has thrown one interception to 18 touchdowns in this his senior season.

through some games and it will pay off for them."

Newell never showed quit, despite the unsightly scoreboard. He completed 17 of his 29 passing attempts for 199 yards and the late score. He did however toss three interceptions. C.J. Toney, Kenyon Hasberry and Keeston Smith all got their hands on Newell passes.

Five plays after Hasberry's second quarter interception, Pigrome found Collins for the pair's

second score of the night to give Cougars a 14-point advantage.

"Kenyon Hasberry's interception was huge. C.J. Toney played great. All the kids, defensively, bought in," said Hood. "We ran a completely different scheme this week based on what they did and we were able to execute that with two (sophomores) on the field."

Cole Baker and the Clay-Chalkville defensive front won the war up front

all night, containing a dangerous Shades Valley rushing attack to less than 100 yards. Sparked by the 72-yard first play from scrimmage, the Mounties ended the night with 358 total yards of offense while converting three of 12 third-down conversions.

For the Cougars, Collins pulled down four receptions for 119 yards and a pair of scores (all of his production came before the break).

"Nico (Collins) had an incredible night. He made some plays that makes him a big-time kid," said Hood.

Alabama verbal pledge T.J. Simmons reached the end zone twice, once on a 19-yard reception and again on a 24-yard reverse.

Clay-Chalkville will be back in region action again next week when it travels to Lawson Field for a collision with Woodlawn (1-6, 0-4). The following week will likely decide the region champion, as the Cougars host Gardendale (6-1, 5-0).

Follow Erik Harris on Twitter @jeharris2.

Clay-Chalkville approaches 23-game winning streak

by Erik Harris

Sports Editor

It's been 23 months since No. 1 Clay-Chalkville has lost a football game, and that stretch of wins doesn't seem to be in danger of ending this Friday with a fifth Class 6A, Region 6 contest awaiting.

"I am proud of these guys, because it's a hard thing to just win (22 consecutive games) and not let up mentally if you're a young person," said Clay-

Chalkville head coach Jerry Hood following last week's win.

Woodlawn (1-6, 0-4) will be the challenge on Friday night at Lawson Field. After starting the season with a 36-12 win at Class 2A Tarrant, the Colonels have dropped six straight contests that have seen them score only 18 points.

The Cougars are allowing a region leading 13.3 points per contest. That average could drop after Friday, as Woodlawn enters the game scoring 1.5

points per Region 6 game.

With a win, Clay-Chalkville would improve to 8-0, 5-0 in region play, which would tie it with Gardendale at the top of the league standings. That likely scenario sets the table for another championship stage between the Cougars and the Rockets on Oct. 23.

Woodlawn's defense, through four region games, has surrendered 29.5 points an outing. The hosts will have its hands full with a Clay-Chalkville offense that has produced over

50 points in its last three games.

Quarterback Ty Pigrome, a three-time Tribune Player of the Week, is coming off a memorable performance against Shades Valley. The senior struggled through the air in the early portion of the game, but shined in the running game from the beginning.

He finished with 444 yards of offense in a 52-14 home win. After throwing high on multiple first half throws, Pigrome kept the ball down after the break.

"I thought after the first quarter, our quarterback played better," said Hood. "He played a lot smarter and that's what we want him to do."

He finished the night 12-of-21 through the air for 307 yards and four scores. He ran with the ball on scramble scenarios and on designed running plays 11 different times for 137 yards.

Follow Erik Harris on Twitter @jeharris2.



photo by Ron Burkett

Armoni Holloway (6) and the Clay-Chalkville defense hope to hand Woodlawn its fourth shutout of the season on Friday night at Lawson Field.

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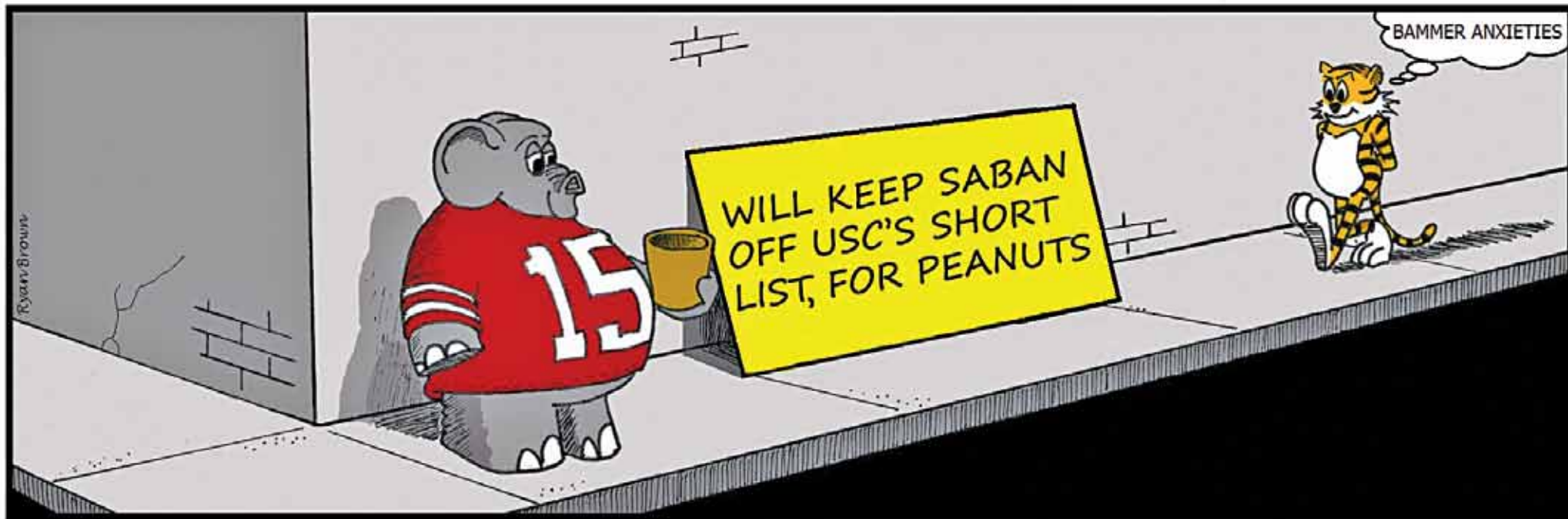


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Iron Grudge

by Ryan M. Brown



Tricky game lurks for Hewitt-Trussville

by Erik Harris

Sports Editor

With a big matchup against Hoover brewing up for Oct. 23, Hewitt-Trussville (5-2, 4-1) must keep its mind on the task at hand this week.

The Huskies, under the direction of second-year head coach Josh Floyd, have worked their way into position to possibly earn home-field advantage for the upcoming state playoffs. They are currently tied with Hoover for second place in Class 7A, Region 3 with two region contests remaining. Hewitt-Trussville is scheduled to visit Hoover's Buccaneer Stadium in two weeks for

the final regular season league game of the year.

That game will likely determine who secures the No. 2 seed from the region, but before all of that fun happens, Floyd must make sure his team is ready for an unpredictable Mountain Brook (2-5, 1-4) team this week.

The Spartans have lost five of its last six games, the last of which was a 21-14 stumble at the hands of Oak Mountain. Despite owning the much more pleasing resume, the Huskies will have to do much more than just show up with their cleats on to take a win on Friday night at Hewitt-Trussville Stadium.

Three of Mountain Brook's five losses have come by seven points or

less. On Sept. 4, they took a 21-14 home loss to then No. 1 Hoover before falling by a 30-point margin the following week to Vestavia Hills.

A 28-10 win over the Spartans was key for Hewitt-Trussville's 2014 postseason birth. Their salty defensive performance, particularly through the final 24 minutes of play, propelled the visitors to victory in last season's version of the series.

Huskies' linebacker Bailey McElwain and his defensive unit held Mountain Brook scoreless after the break, and will be searching for a similar performance this time around.

McElwain, who just received an invitation



photo by Ron Burkett

Hewitt-Trussville running back Elliott McElwain looks for running room in last week's 35-17 win over Thompson.

to play in the Alabama-Mississippi All-Star game, leads an even stronger defense this season. They are currently holding

opponents to 22.8 points per game.

Expect Hewitt-Trussville to secure its fifth league win this Friday night in a tough

one. Follow Erik Harris on Twitter @jeharris2.

Indians can clinch playoff berth with win over Center Point

by Kyle Parmley

Staff Writer

A road win over Center Point would have added meaning for Pinson Valley this Friday night.

If the Indians (5-2, 2-2) can find a way to do so, they will clinch a playoff berth as one of the top four finishers in Class 6A, Region 6. It will mark the sixth year in a row The Tribe has advanced to postseason play.

The last time Pinson Valley failed to make the state playoffs was 2009, when Matt Glover first took over the program.

To clinch the berth, the Indians will have to knock off a Center Point team on

a four-game losing streak. The Eagles have managed to score just 22 points total in its past four games, and their lone win was a 6-0 victory over region foe Woodlawn.

Center Point's offense will face another tough test against the Pinson Valley defense. The Indians have already notched two shutouts this season and have held four of their seven opponents to 13 points or less.

Coming off a bye week, Pinson Valley hopes to get a number of key playmakers back to give the team an added spark. Starting running back Torrey Hendrix missed the last two games with a knee injury and cornerback

Jay Woods is expected to return after missing the game against Huffman.

Sophomore quarterback Jackie Matthews was removed from the Huffman game due to illness, but should return to the field as well.

Clay-Chalkville (7-0), Gardendale (6-0), and Pinson Valley (5-2) are the only teams in Region 6 with a winning record, but Shades Valley, Center Point, and Huffman could make things interesting, because the only thing that matters in terms of a playoff berth is region record.

Expect the Indians stay on track and notch a win against the Eagles. I'll predict a final score of 35-7.



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HTHS hosting 24th annual Husky Challenge

by Erik Harris

Sports Editor

Head coach David Dobbs and the Hewitt-Trussville cross-country team will welcome high school and junior high school programs from across the state to participate in the 24th annual St. Vincent's Husky Challenge this Saturday.

The varsity portion of the day is scheduled to begin first, with junior varsity and middle school action coming shortly after. Varsity girls will get the day started at 8 a.m. Varsity boys will start running at 8:40 a.m. Awards will be presented to varsity runners at 9:30 a.m.

Junior varsity girls begin running at 9:20 a.m. with the junior varsity boys starting 40 minutes later. The junior varsity awards ceremony is scheduled to begin at 10:30 a.m.

For the middle schools, girls fire the gun at 10:20 a.m. before the boys start at 10:40 a.m. All middle school awards will be distributed at 11:15 a.m.

Each run of the day will end at Hewitt-Trussville Stadium. According to a press release, the course will consist of grass, asphalt and trails.

According to alabamarunners.com, 33 teams are currently listed to compete this weekend, including Hewitt-Trussville High School and middle school, Clay-Chalkville Middle School,



photo Courtesy of J.R. Tidwell



photo Courtesy of J.R. Tidwell

Pinson Valley High School and Rudd Middle School. The Hewitt-Trussville High School boys will enter

Saturday with momentum, as they're coming off a second-place finish at Decatur's Dew it on the

Trails run last week. The girls' team finished eighth in that run.

Follow Erik Harris on Twitter @jeharris2.

Clay-Chalkville junior lands first Big Ten offer

by Erik Harris

Sports Editor

It was just a southern thing until last Wednesday.

Clay-Chalkville junior Nico Collins has all the attributes that make offensive coaches at every level smile with approval, and defensive coaches spitting mad. His rare combination of size and athleticism has had the best of the Southeastern Conference singing his praises since his sophomore season that saw him go for 805 receiving yards and 15

touchdowns. From the state of Florida to Louisiana to Mississippi and, of course, Alabama, every elite program in the region has made its most enticing sales pitch to the 6-foot-4 wideout.

However, things were taken to another level on Wednesday when first-year Michigan head coach Jim Harbaugh did what he's known for doing — looking south for some top-tier talent.

The Clay-Chalkville football program took to Twitter to announce the offer last Wednesday

afternoon.

"The Michigan Wolverines offer Nico Collins, Jr. WR from Clay-Chalkville. #Coughlife," wrote the team's twitter account.

Six games deep into the 2015 season, Collins has a team-high 31 receptions for 581 yards and eight scores. Two days after receiving the Michigan offer, he celebrated with, perhaps, his strongest outing of the season. The blue-chip prospect grabbed four receptions for 118 yards and two touchdowns in a win over Shades Valley.

Five from the area selected to Alabama-Mississippi All-Star Game

by Kyle Parmley

Staff Writer

Five football players from Trussville were announced Tuesday as part of the Alabama roster for the Alabama-Mississippi All-Star Game.

Quarterback Ty Pigrome, wide receiver and Alabama commit T.J. Simmons, and offensive lineman Cole Garrison were selected to the squad from Clay-Chalkville. Running back Jarrion Street and linebacker

Bailey McElwain made the team out of Hewitt-Trussville.

The pair of Huskies named to the Alabama team are the first Hewitt-Trussville representatives in the all-star game since Brandon Cox in 2002. Hayden Moore and Jalen Harvey represented Clay-Chalkville last in 2013.

This year's game will be played in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, at M.M. Roberts Stadium on December 12. Kickoff is scheduled for noon.

The head coach of the

Alabama team will be Mark Freeman, head coach of the Thompson team that Hewitt-Trussville knocked off October 9.

Clay-Chalkville (7-0, 4-0) has already clinched a state playoff berth and Hewitt-Trussville (5-2, 4-1) is on the cusp of doing so, as the aforementioned players have led their teams to successful seasons to this point.

Earnest Robinson (2012) is the only player from Pinson Valley to play in the Alabama-Mississippi All-Star Game.

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