

2025 SOUTHERN NASH HS FOOTBALL A BIG EAST BASH

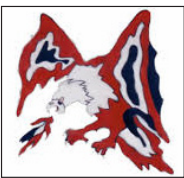


SOUTHERN NASH'S CAMRON LYONS FOLLOWS THE BLOCKING OF TEAMMATE MARLEE ALSTON AGAINST C.B. AYCOCK
(Photos Submitted by Carl Copeland)

SN solid in early-season league games

By CHANCE PUCKETT
Correspondent

PIKEVILLE -- The view from the top of the league football standings is currently quite nice for the Southern Nash Firebirds, who improved to 2-0 in Big East Conference play last Friday night with a 35-0 win at C.B. Aycock.



The Firebirds punched in five touchdowns courtesy of its ground game, with Camron Lyons totaling three scores and Luke Faulkner adding two of his own while the defense pitched its first shutout of the year.

"I was really pleased with the backfield," said Brian Batchelor - Southern Nash's fifth-year head football coach. "I was happy, we played clean."

Even without their leading rusher Jaden Hartsfield who was sidelined for preventative measures, the Firebirds

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SOUTHERN NASH'S JEREMIAH BATTLE COMES DOWN WITH AN INTERCEPTION



MARY KATE BULLUCK STRETCHES FOR A RETURN FOR NASH CENTRAL

NCHS Hits The Court Bulldogs competing in new tennis conference

By CHANCE PUCKETT
Correspondent

ROCKY MOUNT -- The regular season comes to a close this week for the Nash Central High School Girls Tennis team, with the Lady Bulldogs set to wrap up their slate against South-

West Edgecombe today.

Central enters today's season finale having won back-to-back Quad County matchups against Roanoke Rapids and Bunn, both outings resulting in a 6-2 decision.

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NASH CENTRAL KICKER DOMINIC WOZNIAK

DOG-GONE-IT! Central battling a slow start

From Staff Reports

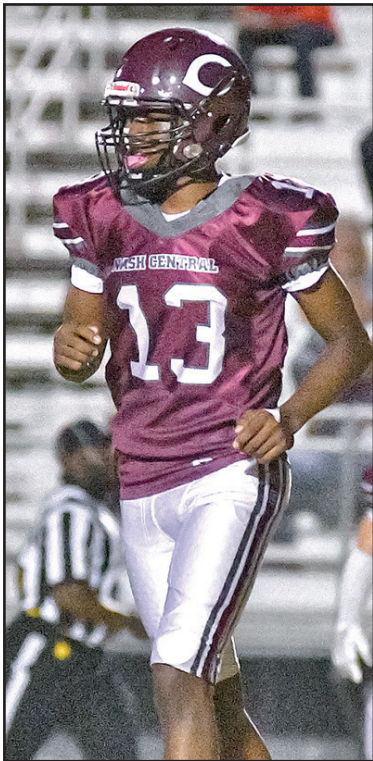
ROCKY MOUNT -- After a string of successful campaigns and deep playoff runs over the past several years, a numbers game has finally caught up with the Nash Central High School football squad.

Despite the program's overall excellence, there's always been an in-house fear of lingering injuries at Nash Central, mainly because the Bulldogs simply don't have the overall numbers to deal with such losses.

Fortunately for Coach Chris Lee's club, the Bulldogs have remained relatively healthy for the most part -- but that has changed this fall.

Injuries and a lack of depth have played key factors in Central starting 1-4, with the lone victory coming via forfeit in the season opener versus SouthWest Edgecombe.

Setbacks against area powers Northern Nash, Southern Nash and Rocky Mount



NASH CENTRAL'S SEMAJ FOBBS

weren't necessarily surprising, but nobody could have anticipated the Bulldogs' 28-8 home loss against Warren County two weeks ago at The

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NORTHERN NASH HIGH SCHOOL RUNNING BACK PRESTON MCDANIEL

Knights take win in suspended contest

By CHANCE PUCKETT
Correspondent

WILSON -- While rain may have delayed it by a few more days than originally anticipated, the Northern Nash Knights football team secured its second-straight win on Monday evening by knocking off Fike 46-14, improving to 4-1 on the season and kicking off Big East play at 1-0.

The matchup between the two conference foes was originally moved up to September 25, due weather conditions stemming from Tropical Storm Humberto, also marking the Knights' third road game in as many weeks dating back to its September 5 trip to Cleveland High School.

Northern and Fike

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SOUTHERN NASH'S DJ BAKER IS IN THE CLEAR

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amassed a whopping 464 rushing yards as a team, with Lyons' totaling a season-high 157 yards on the ground while Faulkner contributed 59 of his own.

Despite not getting into the endzone, DJ Baker had quite a night in his own right as well, contributing a career-high 202 rushing yards -- the first game of his two-year tenure at Southern Nash with more than 100 yards on the ground.

The Firebirds' defense had an impressive night as well, holding the Golden Falcons to just 133 yards of total offense while winning the turnover battle 2-0, seeing Jeremiah Battle secure an interception and Zavion Cooke recover an Aycock fumble.

The Southern Nash defense has seen notable growth as the Firebirds have hit the year's midpoint, allowing just six points of their last two games after surrendering an average of 39 points per game in the team's first three outings of the season.

"I thought we were atrocious on defense," said Batchelor of his team's season-opening performance against Knightdale, but is satisfied with how the unit has grown since.

The Southern Nash Firebirds began the year with 10 of their 11 defensive starts either in their first year as a varsity player or learning a new position, the lone exception being Faulkner, who primarily serves as the team's middle linebacker outside of getting carried at running back.

"It's been nice after six games to see how far those guys have come through game reps and situational stuff," remarked Batchelor - who specifically pointed to Friday's victory over Aycock as a significant step forward for his team.



SOUTHERN NASH'S MARLEE ALSTON TAKES ON A DEFENDER



NASH CENTRAL'S JAICE JOHNSON TRIES TO AVOID A TACKLE AGAINST THE WARREN COUNTY EAGLES

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Dawg Pound on the NCHS campus.

Warren County is more of a fit enrollment and skillwise to the Bulldogs, if not even a bit less -- and least in the past decade.

But the banged-up Bulldogs, once again without starting quarterback Winston Lee, stayed with the Eagles until the visitors pulled away in the second half of action.

Nash Central mustered just 129 yards of total offense, though there was some encouraging work done by backup quarterback Jaice Johnson, who completed two passes for 70 yards.

One of those attempts went to Elijah Dunn for 50 yards and a score in

the third period -- Nash Central's lone touchdown of the game.

But Warren County sealed the victory with a fourth-quarter tally that saw the Eagles control the ground game with 205 yards to go with 70 markers through the air.

Central's postseason fate will now be determined by its final five games as the Bulldogs will make history as part of the newly formed Quad County Conference.

NCHS' first QCC matchup will be this Friday at home against Louisburg, which is off to a 5-0 start -- its best beginning to the season in recent memory.

Lee is plenty familiar with the Warriors as he coached at LHS from 2009-2015 before moving over to The Dawg Pound. Louisburg was also in the Big East Conference for four years before leaving in 2023.

More familiar foes await the Bulldogs as they will tangle with former Big East opponents Roanoke Rapids (October 10 on the road) and Bunn (October 17 at home) before closing with a pair of schedule newcomers -- October 24 at Wake Prep Academy in Youngsville and October 31 at home against American Leadership Academy-Johnston out of Clayton.

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got through less than ten minutes of game action before weather halted play on Thursday evening, with the Knights scoring a pair of touchdowns early and just before attempting its second extra point, the teams were waved off the field by officials due to impending weather.

Head coach Andrew Farriss' squad sat on a 13-0 lead for nearly four days, but wasted no time getting back into their rhythm once the game restarted on Monday, posting 33 points in the second, third and fourth quarters alone, picking up its a fifth-straight victory over the Golden Demons - a streak stretching back to 2019.

It was also Northern Nash's first league game as a member of the Class-5A/6A Big East Conference, serving as the midway point of the regular season with the Knights having now played five games and have five contests remaining in the schedule.

Having outscored its opponents 184-126 thus far, the Knights have run through the first half of their schedule with a punishing ground game - and its contest against Fike was no different.

"Concentrate on players, not plays," is what Farriss, who is in his eighth season leading the Northern Nash program said after the Knights' September 19 win at South Central, and that philosophy showed in the team's first league games.

Feature back Myles Eatmon - a junior that has now surpassed over 800 rushing yards this season - carried the ball a whopping 33 times against The Golden

Demons, totaling three touchdowns and handling the majority of Northern's 400-yard rushing performance. Jamarcus Robinson found his way into the endzone as well for the Knights, doing so once on Thursday before the game was suspended and again on Monday after its resumption.

Perhaps the most interesting story of Northern's matchup against Fike though wasn't what it did in the run game, but who was patrolling the offense.

Rocky Mount Academy transfer Gehrig Miller made the start at quarterback for the Knights against the Golden Demons, throwing for a touchdown and rushing for another while accruing 154 passing yards - the most for Northern in any game this season.

Miller took the reins from Hylan Wheeler, a fellow senior who started each of the team's first four contests. Miller and Wheeler battled for the starting quarterback job all offseason long, with Wheeler eventually emerging the winner, a decision that was made just hours prior to the team's season opener. "It's been agonizing," said Farriss after his team's week one win over J.H. Rose of the offseason discussion between his staff over who should receive the starting job. "They both have done a great job."

It may not be the last time a change is made at QB this year for the Knights, but the switch certainly seemed to have made an impact - with the 46 points scored by Farriss' squad the most it has put up in any game this season.

TENNIS

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The Lady Bulldogs have been one of the top programs in the Class-2A/3A/4A Quad County Conference this season, having closed league play on September 25 at 5-1-1, second to only the Louisburg High School Lady Warriors from Franklin County.

Nash Central split its two-match series with the Lady Warriors earlier this season, clipping Louisburg 5-4 at home on September 2 followed by dropping their return trip to Franklin County on September 18 by a 6-1 decision.

While Louisburg clinched the conference

crown on Tuesday with a 7-2 win over Bunn, the playoffs are still likely imminent for the league runner-ups as the playoffs draw nearer.

The Lady Bulldogs have a solid chance to add another win to its résumé before the postseason arrives, having already thumped South-West Edgecombe 8-1 on the road earlier this season.

Each of Central's six singles players collected wins against the Lady Cougars the first time around, including all three of the team's freshmen, Ava Holloman, Nadia Cooper and

Ashlyn Gardner.

The Lady Bulldogs' first-year trio have been a major contributor to the team's success in the regular season, with all three seeing action in doubles play as well.

Holloman, who plays as Central's second seed, has been paired with top-seeded junior Hannah Bulluck in doubles action this year, proving to be one of the toughest outs in the Quad County Conference.

Furthermore, Cooper has been paired with the team's fourth-ranked Ella Bryant while Gardner has played alongside Lillie Long.



HERE'S OUR PITCH....CATCH
YOUR TEAM'S SCORE IN
the *Nashville*
GRAPHIC SPORTS

