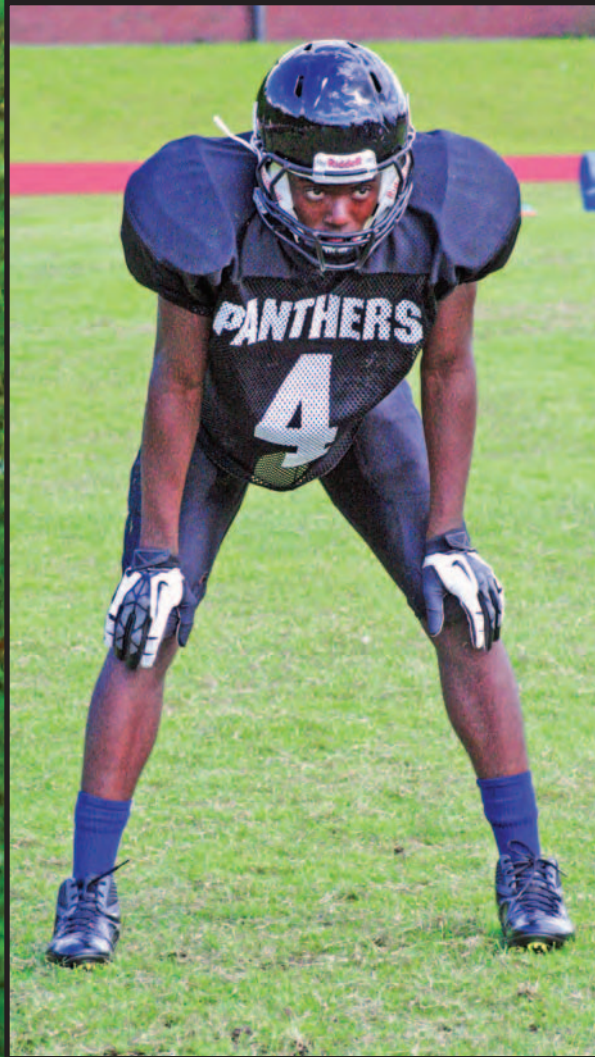


2013 FOOTBALL PREVIEW



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INSIDE: Meet the players and see what the coaches have in store for this season

2013 PANTHERS TEAM



GO PANTHERS!

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Highly touted team ready for region revenge

Panthers aim to improve after coming up short in region play last season

BY PATTY LEON
pleon@coastalcourier.com

While competing in Region 3A-AAAA last year, the Liberty County High School Panthers lacked a region win and missed the playoffs. They finished strong in non-region games with a 6-4 overall record and were ranked No. 230 in the state at the close of the season. With the return of five-star national recruit Raekwon McMillan and a host of other highly touted and talented players, the Panthers are starting the 2013 season ranked No. 194 in the state. Their upcoming season will be another competitive one, so here is a breakdown on what's ahead for the Panthers:

- **Aug. 16 at Glynn Academy, preseason scrimmage:** The Panthers and Red Terrors didn't play each other last year, but between 2008-11, Glynn Academy earned narrow victories within a touchdown or less. This year, the outcome could set the tone for the regular season. Glynn Academy (8-4 overall, 5-2 in Region 3-A-AAAA) had a successful run last year and made it to the second round of the state tournament. Between Oct. 12 and Nov. 16, the Red Terrors annihilated their opponents with four consecutive shutouts — 56-0 against Groves, 55-0 against Bradwell, 21-0 against Effingham County and 63-0 against Windsor Forest) — and big wins over Jenkins High (70-26) and Jones County (26-14).

- **Aug. 30 vs. Bradwell Institute:** Last season was the first time since 2004 that these two crosstown teams battled in a regular-season game instead of just a scrimmage. The Panthers embarrassed the

Tigers in a 13-7 victory last year during the rededication and opening of the newly renovated Olvey Field. Liberty County opened the game with an 80-yard kick return for a touchdown, which set the tone for the rest of the game. The Tigers, trying to launch a new era under first-year head coach Adam Carter, want to exact revenge by taking down the Panthers at Donell Woods Stadium.

- **Sept. 6 vs. Appling County:** Appling County (8-2-1 overall, 6-1 in Region 1-AAA) leads the series, 3-1. The Pirates beat the Panthers, 48-0, in 2001 and 28-20 in 2002, and then the Panthers bounced back for a 30-21 win in 2003. The teams didn't meet again until last season, when the Pirates won, 35-16. Liberty County managed to put up 122 rushing yards and 147 receiving yards in that game.

- **Sept. 12 vs. Johnson High:** Last year, Johnson High (5-7 overall, 4-3 in Region 1-AAA) lost, 22-0, in its first matchup against Liberty County. Johnson completed eight passes for 70 yards against the Panthers and put up 68 yards on the ground but couldn't punch the ball into the end zone. Meanwhile, the Panthers had 263 all-purpose yards against the Atom Smashers and recorded 13 sacks for 70 yards lost and 93 total tackles. In 2011, while playing in Region 3-A-AAAA, the Atom Smashers had back-to-back losing seasons.

- **Sept. 20 at Cross Creek:** The Razorbacks were another first-time opponent for the Panthers last season. Liberty County pulled off a 42-7 victory against the sub-region team. The Panthers' running game came together against the Razorbacks, and Liberty rushed for 313 yards and two touchdowns. Liberty also had four receptions for 83 yards and a touchdown. But the Razorbacks managed to finish in third place in Region 3B-AAAA, while the Panthers stayed at 0-3 in 3A-AAAA.

LCHS FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

Aug. 16 at Glynn Academy, preseason scrimmage

Aug. 30 vs. Bradwell

Sept. 6 vs. Appling County

Sept. 12 vs. Johnson High (Thursday)

Sept. 20 at Cross Creek

Sept. 27 vs. Hephzibah

Oct. 4 at Glenn Hills

Oct. 11 vs. Statesboro*

Oct. 25 at Wayne County*

Nov. 1 vs. South Effingham*

NOTES:

- All games start at 7:30 p.m. and are held on Fridays unless otherwise noted
- Home games, in bold, are played at Donell Woods Stadium
- * Denotes region game

- **Sept. 27 vs. Hephzibah:** Liberty County is 3-0 against the Hephzibah Rebels, who had a disappointing 0-10 season last year and finished last in Region 3B-AAAA. The Rebels return five offensive and defensive starters, including quarterback Chris Hall, who completed 15 passes for 178 yards and two touchdowns against Liberty last year. The Panthers answered with 301 rushing yards, 193 receiving yards and five touchdowns in their 41-19 win against the Rebels.

- **Oct. 4 at Glenn Hills:** Liberty played Glenn Hills (3-7 overall, 2-3 in Region 3B-AAAA) twice last year between the regular season and the subregion play-in game. The Panthers persevered in both games, winning 37-14 and 21-14, respectively. The Spartans averaged 15.8 points per game last year and allowed 27.6 points per game.

- **Oct. 11 vs. Statesboro:** In 2010, the Blue Devils came to Donell Woods Stadium and were stunned when the Panthers shut them out, 29-0. Since then, the Blue Dev-

ils have taken back-to-back wins against Liberty to lead the series, 2-1. Statesboro, which finished second in the region behind Wayne County, held the Panthers to 73 yards rushing and 28 yards passing in their matchup last season. The Blue Devils finished 8-3 overall and start the upcoming season ranked No. 103 in the state. The Blue Devils were junior-heavy last year, meaning they should have a strong core of returning seniors for the upcoming season.

- **Oct. 25 at Wayne County:** The Yellow Jackets (6-5-1 overall, 3-0 in Region 3A-AAAA) took first place in the region last year and are 3-0 in the series against the Panthers. Last year, Liberty County lost a heartbreaker at home against Wayne County; the Jackets eked out a 14-13 victory in a tightly contested game. The Yellow Jackets' returning quarterback, Malique Jackson, has given a verbal commitment to Florida State. Wayne County also returns wide receiver Krenwick Sanders, who has offers from Florida State, Wisconsin, South Carolina, Florida and Georgia. Wayne County made it to the second round of the state playoffs last season before losing to Stockbridge, 42-21.

- **Nov. 1 vs. South Effingham:** The Mustangs (8-5 overall, 1-2 in Region 3A-AAAA) hold a 7-1 lead in the series and beat the Panthers, 33-16, last season. South Effingham was good enough to earn a spot in the playoffs and advanced to the third round before losing to Monroe, 47-8. The Mustangs had 20 first downs against the Panthers in last year's matchup and held Liberty to 8 yards passing. The Mustangs rushed for 276 yards and four touchdowns to the Panthers' 201 yards and two touchdowns. South Effingham had 7 receptions for 141 and a touchdown and a total of 447 all-purpose yards to the Panthers' 266. The Mustangs, much like the Panthers, return a strong corps of linebackers and will start the season ranked No. 168 in the state.

Panthers' defense features all-star cast led by McMillan

BY PATTY LEON

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When fans come to watch the Liberty County High School football team this season, they will be looking for great running plays, long passes and touchdowns. But throughout the spring and summer, it has been the Panthers' defense making headlines as several college scouts and coaches hope to claim the state's top linebacker prospect, Raekwon McMillan.

McMillan rose to fame after posting a good varsity season in his freshman year and then skyrocketed the past two years as he earned countless accolades, attended specialized camps and started receiving college scholarship offers from the top Division I schools in the nation.

With more than 23 offers, McMillan has said Alabama, Clemson, Florida, Ohio State, Georgia and Ole Miss are among his top choices, although not specifically in that order.

Last year, the five-star recruit posted 128 solo tackles, 23 assists, seven sacks and one interception, and caused five fumbles. McMillan also spent time on offense, where he rushed for 316 yards and nine touchdowns on 49 carries.

The Panthers' coaches know McMillan is their leader, but there also are other veterans and newcomers who are making waves for the Panthers.

"(McMillan) leads the pace, and he leads every drill we do and he makes sure the drill is done right. And if it isn't, he is the standard we hold the other players to," linebackers coach Tony Glazer said. "But we also have Jeremy Caldwell Fabregas returning. We have a good mix of older guys who will play, and we have five to six sophomores and one freshman, so we have some young guys who are athletic and physically ready to play."

Glazer said Calvin Holmes will see more time on the field after starting in eight games as a freshman last season. Tim Dobson saw limited time on varsity, Joaquin Lemapu played a lot on defense last year, and the Panthers have a new player, Xavier Tunstall, who will split time as a linebacker and defensive back.

Head coach Kirk Warner and offensive coordinator Ryan Glazer said they expect a lot from incoming freshman Richard LeCounte, who has been explosive all summer, and Jonathan Britton, who brings size and will serve as the nose guard. Glazer added that Jacari Roberts played in all 10 games as a freshman last

"Obviously, people will keep an eye on Raekwon McMillan. It isn't often that you get an Under-Armour All-American, and he is just a good kid."

Defensive coordinator Derek Sills

year and is expected to make big plays again this season.

Fabregas had a breakout season last year, earning his fair share of scouting looks and offers. He had 70 solo tackles, 25 assists and five sacks, and led the offense with 21 receptions for 454 yards and seven touchdowns. Roberts, meanwhile, tallied 25 solo tackles, 13 assists and two sacks.

Britton only played in four games last year for the varsity squad, but he added size and power over the summer. He had five solo tackles and a sack last year.

"He is a big, 6-foot, 3-inch, 290-pound nose guard," Warner said. "We had been lacking that kind of size for years, so I think he is going to be very important in keeping those offensive linemen off Raekwon and letting him make the plays."

The Panthers' defense is loaded with talent, but the common denominator is speed.

"This is probably one of the fastest teams we've had since I've been here," Tony Glazer said. Warner said 60 percent of the team can run the 40-yard dash, on the field, in under 5 seconds.

"We don't clock our players on the track ... because you don't play football on a track," Warner said.

Defensive coordinator Derek Sills said the Panthers will utilize their secondary and that LeCounte will be a big factor even though he is a freshman.

But Sills added that opponents likely will key in on McMillan.

"Obviously, people will keep an eye on Raekwon McMillan. It isn't often that you get an Under-Armour All-American, and he is just a good kid," Sills said.

Sills said the team's speed is beneficial, but maintaining the basics that have been successful in the past is what keeps the defense strong.

"We want to be fundamental, physical and we don't want to be out-leveraged," Sills said.



Raekwon McMillan (42) and Jeremy Caldwell Fabregas (45) are among the returning veterans on defense this season. McMillan led the defense last season with 128 solo tackles, 23 assists, seven sacks and one interception, while Febregas notched 70 solo tackles, 25 assists and five sacks.

Patty Leon



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Liberty County offense bolstered by speed, talent, depth

BY PATTY LEON

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The Panthers will return several players to their offense this season. Some are veteran starters who have plenty of experience or contributed to scoring most of Liberty's points last year. Others played in limited games, showing great potential before they were struck with injuries. The consensus among the coaching staff is that this year's offense also is blessed with tons of speed.

"The fastest guy on the team right now is Paris Boles," speed coach Nathan Mims said of the returning wide receiver.

Boles missed all of last season due to a torn anterior cruciate ligament in one of his knees. As a sophomore in 2011, he started to emerge as one of the offensive leaders, posting nine receptions for 118 yards in nine games.

"He worked hard during the off-season, coming to speed training every day, and he is faster now than before his injury," Mims said.

"We missed him last year, and he is looking like a stud player right now," head coach Kirk Warner said. "We are still easing him into the

game coming off that ACL."

Warner said 60 percent of the team can run the 40-yard dash in under 5 seconds.

"If you can run under a 5 flat in cleats on grass, well, that's pretty good," Warner said.

The Panthers plan to stick with the spread offense, according to Warner and offensive coordinator Ryan Glazer, although Glazer said they will toss in the pistol package to utilize the arsenal of weapons the team has this season.

"We still have a power game we can run out of it. ... We have some big guys, and we can put Raekwon (McMillan) in a bone package and try to pound teams to death," Warner added.

The head coach said the offense starts with four-year veteran and returning quarterback Jordan Waters.

"This will be his chance to shine. ... He has impressed me with the work ethic he's displayed throughout the off-season," Warner said. "He has become more accurate in his passes and is making sound decisions, which was his weak point in years past, so we are looking for a big year out of him."

For the past two seasons, Waters served as the backup to JJ Grant. Last year, Waters had

nine completions on 22 attempts for 212 yards and a touchdown. He showed his speed and versatility as well, rushing for 75 yards on 19 carries and even had three receptions for 34 yards and a touchdown. Glazer said incoming freshman Richard LeCounte might take a few snaps from under center this year as well.

The offensive coordinator said the team is deep with running backs this season, starting with Trentice Williams, who showed promise last year before being injured.

"Trentice has been lifting pretty hard and he is durable. ... He had lingering injuries last season, but our running backs corps is probably the most depth we have on offense with Trentice (and) Raekwon, who said he wants the ball 20 times a game," Glazer said. "Jamarques Ladson is joining us again; he didn't play last year but showed promise when he played as a freshman."

Warner said he also is looking for big plays from Freddie McSwain.

"McSwain is just a complete athlete," Warner said. "He is 6 feet, 5 inches, 205 pounds, and he is going to create matchup problems for everybody."



Patty Leon

Thanks to off-season speed training and natural talent, the team is blessed with tons of speed, according to the Panthers' coaches.



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Highlanders to debut new coach, new look

Former LCHS assistant ready for new challenges

BY PATTY LEON

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A new coach will lead First Presbyterian Christian Academy as the football team kicks off its second season in the school's history. Jamie Sharp III was hired in July as the head coach.



Sharp III

Sharp, who wasn't initially aware that former FPCA football coach and athletic director Andy Yanzetich had moved away from the area, said he was happy as an assistant coach at Liberty County High School.

He said when he learned about the opening and later met with the FPCA Board of Directors and staff, everything just came together and fell into place.

"This wasn't something I was out searching for; it just kind of fell on my lap — came out right out of the blue," Sharp said. "When they gave me the job, I smiled from ear to ear. I couldn't believe it. ... Honestly, this came out of nowhere."

Sharp also plays as a linebacker and defensive captain for the Hinesville Hurricanes, a semiprofessional football team that represents the community in the United Spring Football League. Sharp's father, James Sharp II, is the Hurricanes' head coach. Jamie Sharp's longtime friend, Michael Jones, is the Hurricanes' assistant coach.

"And his father and Michael Jones are coming on board to assist him in any capacity they can," FPCA Principal Shannon Hickey said.

In addition to Sharp's father and Jones, several coaches from last season are on hand to prepare FPCA for its upcoming games.

Hickey said Reginalde Castille and Mike Fitzgerald will assist, and Sharp said David Linderman also offered to help.

The challenge ahead is good for the new



Patty Leon

The FPCA Highlanders have been running daily drills to prepare for the upcoming season under new head coach Jamie Sharp III.

coach, partly due to a small squad. Last year, Yanzetich was able to hold on to a 22-man roster, but this year it will be difficult to maintain a roster that size because many former players graduated, moved or transferred to other schools.

Turnout at practices has been low at times because some potential players are still participating in fall ball.

A small group still runs drills with the coaching staff every evening, and Sharp uses a hands-on approach in teaching the

skills and routes the receivers should run.

Sharp said he welcomes the challenges ahead and come game time he will have the right personnel on the field ready to play.

At least the team will look good as the Highlanders debut new uniforms and sport new equipment. Last year, FPCA won the Under-Armour Finding Undeniable Challenge and is slated to receive \$140,000 worth of uniforms and athletic equipment for different sports programs throughout the year.

One week into his new job, Sharp was busy ordering the new uniforms, and Hickey said Under-Armour is planning a big event during the Highlanders' first home game.

"They are planning to unveil the new uniforms and everything at our very first home game on Sept. 13 at 7:30 at Long Bell Stadium," Hickey said. "Under-Armour has indicated, at least from my understanding, it's going to make it a big production."

Iron-man style set to return

BY PATTY LEON

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First Presbyterian Christian Academy made history last year when it launched its football program and fielded a 22-man roster that produced 191 points.

The team likely will have another small roster this season after losing players to graduation and military families' relocations. For the second year in a row, the Highlanders will go iron-man, with most players seeing action on both sides of the ball.

Last season's 0-10 mark doesn't reflect the fight and heart the players displayed and how their never-quit attitude nearly allowed them to steal away the opponents' thunder on two separate occasions.

The Highlanders might lack numbers, but they more than make up for it with fortitude and athleticism.

Most, if not all, of the players are multi-sport athletes who stay in shape with year-round conditioning. Among the returners are Domonique Kirkley, Dylan McGarry, DeAngelo Streeter, Davion Mitchell and George Mitchell. Last year's standout player, Herbert Roberts, is expected to return pending matriculation paperwork.

First-year head coach Jamie Sharp III said he knows the numbers are a bit low but added that he wasn't too nervous about it. Come game time Aug. 30, he said, there will be a fully dressed team on the field.

Sharp said he looked over the strategies and schemes put in place by last year's football coach, Andy Yanzetich, and plans to retain a few items while implementing a simple strategy and tweaking the defensive look.

"I probably won't have the size to go I-formation, which is probably the simplest offensive formation, so we will stick to some of the offense they ran last year," Sharp said. "We will run some spread and incorporate some basic inside- and outside-zone reads."

Defensively, the Highlanders ran a 4-3 last year, and Sharp said they plan to utilize that and transition to a 3-5-3 look as well.

"We will be moving to a 3-5-3 simply because we have fast athletes on the field, and the formation doesn't necessarily require size, which we lack," the head coach said. "It allows us to blitz more and plug on any holes. We will run multiple offensive and defensive formations."

Sharp said the FPCA boys have a lot of speed, and he plans to use that to counteract

"You can only put 11 on the field. And if you are going to win, it has to be your best 11, and we plan to do that."

FPCA head coach Jamie Sharp III

some of the stronger opponents the Highlanders will face. He added that the key to their strategy will be to look for the mismatch and pick apart their opponents.

"We will try to exploit their weaknesses," the head coach said.

Sharp has a strong staff of assistant coaches who all have experience. Sharp played football at Liberty County High School and currently plays as a linebacker for the Hinesville Hurricanes, a local semiprofessional team. His father, James Sharp II, is the head coach for the Hurricanes and will assist FPCA as the defensive coordinator along with returning coach Reginalde Castille. Michael Jones, the Hurricanes' assistant coach, will assist Sharp III in coaching the offense.

Much like last year, the quarterback duties will fall to both Kirkley and Roberts. But Sharp said he plans to adjust players as needed, and a few people could fill in spots to throw off the competition.

"I like to keep the opposing teams off-balance," he said. "We might have games where Domonique starts or Roberts starts but we see that no one would be able to touch him as the receiver. ... Things will change, and that is a good thing for our players because they will understand every aspect of offense and defense while playing these multiple positions. It gives them a better understanding of the game."

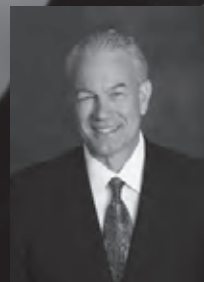
Sharp, who said he still is studying his opponents and is not familiar with every team on the schedule, plans to take the season one game at a time.

He said he spoke to his players and told them that if they play hard, the results will come in the form of a win.

"The only thing we can control is what we do on the field," Sharp said. "We have to keep our head in the game and not worry about the numbers. ... Look to your teammates. I do believe we will start winning. You can only put 11 on the field. And if you are going to win, it has to be your best 11, and we plan to do that."

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A LOOK AT THE HIGHLANDERS' UPCOMING OPPONENTS

FPCA ready for challenges vs. seasoned programs

BY PATTY LEON

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First Presbyterian Christian Academy fielded a football team last season for the first time in school history. While the Highlanders didn't win a game, they consistently played with heart and determination. This season the Highlanders will have a new coaching staff to lead them through the challenging task ahead: playing against a host of seasoned programs.

FPCA managed to score 191 points last year despite its small roster and will start the 2013 campaign ranked No. 473 in the state

- **Aug. 30 at Bethesda:** The Highlanders lost, 40-7, to a strong Bethesda team last year. The Blazers controlled the time of possession, and the Highlanders gave up 75 yards on eight penalties. Last season, the Blazer completed nine passes for 249 yards and four touchdowns. But the Blazers lost their quarterback, wide receiver and running back to graduation. Bethesda will return only three starters from last year's defense as well.

- **Sept. 6 at St. Andrews:** Last year, the Highlanders opened their first home game of the program's history against the Lions and were up, 28-27, before St. Andrews scored the go-ahead touchdown with less than 30 seconds left in regulation. The young FPCA squad once again fell prey to penalties, losing 90 yards on 11 tosses of the little yellow flag. The Lions had a strong group of running backs, two of whom graduated, and carried the ball 47 times for 297 yards and four of their five touchdowns.

- **Sept. 13 vs. Curtis Baptist:** In another close game, FPCA fell to the Crusaders, 26-19, last year on the road. Curtis Baptist finished with the best record in school history at 6-6 overall. The Crusaders expect to return 20 of their starters this season. This matchup will have special meaning for the Highlanders not only because it's their first home game of the season, but also because they will get to unveil their new Under Armour uniforms that night. The celebration is expected to draw a large crowd as FPCA is recognized for its efforts as the winner of last year's Under-Armour Finding Undeniable challenge. FPCA will receive \$140,000 worth of equipment and uniforms this school year.

- **Sept. 20 vs. David Emanuel:** The Eagles travel to Hinesville after handing the High-

landers a 46-29 loss last season in Stillmore. David Emanuel, which won three games last season, averaged 19 points per game on offense while giving up 31 points per game on defense.

- **Sept. 28 at Memorial Day:** Last season, the Matadors trumped the Highlanders, 68-16 — by far the largest point spread in the Highlanders' first year of football. The Matadors controlled the ground game, rushing for 407 yards on 24 carries, and ended the game with 643 all-purpose yards against FPCA. Memorial Day starts the year ranked No. 100 in the state after finishing 8-3 overall last season.

- **Oct. 11 at Frederica Academy:** Frederica, boasting a first-year varsity football team last season that was twice the size of the FPCA squad, defeated the Highlanders, 38-15. If not for two turnovers by FPCA that led to Frederica scores, the score might have been a little closer. The Knights finished the year 11-2 overall and 4-0 in Georgia Independent School Association's Class A division, winning the region and state titles.

- **Oct. 18 at Robert Toombs Academy:** The Crusaders had a 36-14 lead by halftime last year against the Highlanders, but FPCA staged a dramatic comeback and nearly stole the first win of its inaugural season. In the second half, FPCA recovered two fumbles and an onside kick and converted them for touchdowns. Toombs added some points, but FPCA set up touchdown drives of 55 yards and 20 yards to trail, 48-46, with just two minutes left in regulation. FPCA had one last opportunity to win the game but was intercepted in the end zone. This was the game that proved to Highlanders fans that the 22-man team never gave up. The Crusaders finished with an 8-6 overall record and a GISA Class A second-place finish.

- **Oct. 25 vs. Crisp Academy:** The Wildcats beat the Highlanders, 50-14, in Cordele last year, making the nearly four-hour road trip a difficult one for FPCA. Crisp ended the season ranked third in GISA Class A and recorded a 6-5 overall record.

- **Nov. 8 at Fullington:** The Trojans beat the Highlanders, 46-35, last season while posting a disappointing 4-6 overall mark. It was another barn burner as FPCA trailed, 38-29, at halftime, but the Highlanders threw three interceptions that the Trojans capitalized on in the second half. FPCA managed a

one-play, 60-yard drive for a touchdown, but Fullington kept the lead for the victory. The Trojans placed fifth in Class A, just above the Highlanders.

FPCA FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

Aug. 30 at Bethesda

Sept. 6 at St. Andrews

Sept. 13 vs. Curtis Baptist

Sept. 20 vs. David Emanuel

Sept. 28 at Memorial Day
(Saturday game)

Oct. 11 at Frederica*

Oct. 18 at Robert Toombs Academy*

Oct. 25 vs. Crisp Academy*

Nov. 8 at Fullington Academy*

NOTES:

- All games start at 7:30 p.m. and are held on Fridays unless otherwise noted
- Home games, in bold, are played at Long Bell Stadium
- * Denotes region game



Patty Leon

After going winless in the 2012 inaugural season, the Highlanders have been working with their new coaches to improve their skills and techniques.

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Coach Carter starts new Tiger era

BY PATTY LEON

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After manning the helm for 19 years, former Bradwell Institute head coach Jim Walsh Jr. did not have his contract renewed by the Liberty County Board of Education back in February. Instead, the board voted, 5-1, to replace him as the football coach.

In all, Walsh's coaching career spanned 25 years, producing a 137-127 record. At Bradwell, Walsh produced a 113-89 record in 19 seasons.

The Tigers' last playoff appearance was in 2009, and since then, the team recorded overall records of 3-7, 1-9 and 2-8, much to the chagrin of the Tigers' fan base and alumni.

After all, this was the program

that produced 29 all-state players, 63 first-team All-Americans, 10 region titles and one NFL player. The crown jewel came in 1965, when Bradwell won the state title.

Now, first-year head coach Adam Carter has a huge task ahead as he attempts to re-establish the Tigers' football team.

When the Liberty County School System began its search for a new coach, it reached out to another football dynasty, Camden County High School, where Carter served as the Wildcats' defensive coordinator.

Carter was hired in April, and the community and players have been abuzz ever since. During spring training, parents and fans stood along the sidelines to catch a glimpse of the young new coach.

The players seem to embrace Carter's hands-on method of coaching and exude the same energy and

HEAD COACH ADAM CARTER

Hometown: Dallas, Ga.

Education: Paulding County High School; University of West Georgia, B.S. in physical education and health; Georgia Southern University, Master of Science in kinesiology

Football career: Three-year starter at the University of West Georgia in the secondary; named all-conference in academics and football

Coaching career:

- 2007-08 Paulding County High School assistant coach
- 2009 North Paulding County High School assistant coach
- 2010 South Carolina State University assistant coach
- 2011 Camden County High School assistant defensive secondary coach
- 2012 Camden County High School assistant, defensive coordinator
- 2013 Bradwell Institute head coach

enthusiasm the new head coach has for his job. Many in the community have rallied around the coach, and the fans have established a new Tiger Touchdown Club to replace the old Harvey Overton Booster Club,

which had been inactive for the past few years.

In May, Carter introduced his new coaching staff to a large crowd during an informal meet-and-greet at the home of George and Babs

Holtzman. The support continued in July when the inaugural Tiger Touchdown Club Golf Tournament drew 21 teams and \$10,000 for the football program.

However, the true test for Carter will take place Aug. 30 on the football field when Bradwell plays the Liberty County High School Panthers.

A victory could manifest into a solid season for the Tigers, whereas a loss could start the hemming and hawing of public opinion once again.

But Carter has said that being a head coach was his dream come true and the most natural progression in his career path.

"I like a challenge," he said during spring training. "Our vision is to build a successful program. ... We want to field a quality product that the community and we are proud of and these kids can be proud of."

Head coach leads defense through intense training

BY PATTY LEON

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Last year, the Tigers' defense was experienced and senior-heavy; this year, they will have to play without Jordan Portley, Greg Howard, Quonte Haggray, Khalil Harris Shakazz Johnson and Marvin Walthour, who had a combined 236 tackles last season.

The 2013 defense will be led by its new head coach, Adam Carter, who also will serve as the defensive coordinator. Carter played in the secondary all four years at the University of West Georgia and served as Camden County's defensive coordinator last season.

Carter said his new team has worked hard and spent countless hours lifting weights through the spring and summer. He said his

personal philosophy is that the work ethic employed and the strength and power developed will translate onto the field come game day. Carter said the team enjoyed their training sessions, adding that the physical difference in their appearance has boosted their confidence as well.

Having a wealth of experience and knowledge of defensive strategies, the coach said he sized up his potential players and changed the look of the Tigers' scheme.

"Our basic (defensive package) is a 3-5-3, and our goal is to put as much speed as we have on the field," Carter said. "We are not blessed with any big or huge defensive linemen ... so everything is about as much speed as possible. We will place our best players on defense and we will build our team around defense, and

our defensive is designed to continuously bring pressure from different spots."

The Tigers' defensive scheme is a popular package at the high-school level and is designed to confuse the offense with multiple blitz packages, while the secondary can stay in zone or man-to-man coverage. It is used to counteract the offensive scheme most local high school use — the spread.

For the first time in several years, the Tigers attended a defense camp when they went in July to the coach's alma mater. Nearly 70 Bradwell players raised money to attend the camp in Carrollton, where they competed with 1,500 other high-schoolers in a three-day intensive training session.

"At defensive camp, we had a lot of kids step up," Carter said, adding that returning starter

Hubert Anderson will play on both sides of the ball. "I have moved him around a couple of times trying to get him in the best spot.

Anderson spent more time last season playing offense, but Carter said Anderson's speed and agility can be put to good use as a defensive back.

"Our whole linebacking crew has a chance of being really good," Carter added. "They are really good athletes, and they like contact. I am really pleased with them."

Returning to the defensive line are Anthony Tilghman and Tristan Gonzales, who have considerable experience from last season.

"Our secondary — Cameron Riles, Ziere Diggs and Lorenzo Brinson — are all doing a good job," Carter added. "But it is a learning process, and I throw a lot of stuff at them."

A LOOK AT THE TIGERS' UPCOMING OPPONENTS

New coaches, strategy deliver bright outlook at Bradwell

BY PATTY LEON

pleon@coastalcourier.com

There are many unanswered questions about the Tigers this season. Have the players accepted and adapted to the new coaching staff and its methods? Will the introduction of new offensive and defensive strategies shift Bradwell over to the winner's column? Can the team bounce back from three losing seasons and make the playoffs this year?

Many answers will come within the first few games of the season, but if the intensity level of the Tigers' practice is transferred to their games, the team should have a bright outlook for first-year coach Adam Carter. In the meantime, here is a quick look at who the Tigers play this season:

• **Aug. 30 at Liberty County High School:** Last year, the regular-season opener at Olvey Field was a special event, as the community got to experience the big game at the Tigers' newly renovated stadium. But within 10 seconds of kickoff, the home team felt a bit deflated as the Panthers took the return for 80 yards and a touchdown en route to a 13-7 victory. Last season, Liberty fell short of making the playoffs, unable to earn a Region 3A-AAAA victory in three games, but overall the Panthers fared well, posting a 6-4 mark.

• **Sept. 6 vs. Savannah High:** Bradwell fell, 16-7, at Memorial Stadium last year in its game against Savannah High. It was the Tigers' third-consecutive loss to the Blue Jackets, a team they dominated for nearly a decade. The Blue Jackets dropped to Region 1-AAA last year and earned a respectable 3-4 region record for the season. Offensively, the Blue Jackets posted 3,514 all-purpose yards and 144 points, while their defense posted 936 tackles and 16 sacks.

• **Sept. 13 vs. Charlton County:** The Indians will make their second visit to Hinesville after beating the Tigers, 12-0, last year. It was the third of four consecutive shutouts for Charlton County, which finished last season at 5-6 overall and 3-3 in Region 2-A. The Indians made the playoffs last year but were eliminated in the first round by Marion County. The Indians have won four state titles while finishing

second three times. Indians starting quarterback Trae Harrington and starting wide receiver Julian Roberts are back as are four defensive starters.

• **Sept. 27 at Effingham County:** This matchup marks the first Region 3-AAAAA game of the season for the Tigers, who lost to the Rebels, 36-10, last season. The Springfield team finished 6-5 overall and 5-2 in the region last year. They lost in the first round of the state playoffs to Northside Warner-Robins. The Rebels also have a new head coach after Buddy Holder was tapped to replace Rick Tomberlin, who retired after the 2012 season.

• **Oct. 4 vs. Jenkins:** The Tigers still hold a 7-5 lead in the series against the Warriors since 2001, but Jenkins has won the past four matchups. The Warriors took the fifth-place spot in the region last season with Bradwell just behind them in sixth. Jenkins averaged 21 points per game to Bradwell's nine and finished the year 5-5 overall and 3-4 in the region.

• **Oct. 11 vs. Windsor Forest:** The Tigers eked out a 13-10 victory over the Knights last year in a season that saw Windsor Forest fall to seventh place in the region. Despite finishing behind the Tigers in the region standings, the Knights ended the season ranked No. 310 in the state while Bradwell was No. 317.

• **Oct. 18 at Glynn Academy:** Glynn Academy leads the series, 7-5, since 2001 and beat Bradwell last year by a whopping 55-0. The Red Terrors finished 8-4 overall, advancing to the second round of the playoffs before Whitewater High School beat them, 34-27. Glynn Academy finished with a 5-2 region mark, third behind Ware County and Richmond Hill. The Red Terrors' defense allowed only 169 points last season, while their offense put up 415 points. They were ranked 79th in the state. But this season, the Red Terrors will be without their top running back, Jonathan Alford, who scored three touchdowns and rushed for more than 100 yards in the first half of their game against the Tigers last year.

• **Oct. 25 vs. Richmond Hill:** The Wildcats moved up to Region 3-AAAAA last season, and it was the first time in many years they played the Tigers. The Wildcats ended up in second place in the

region and also shut out the Tigers, 49-0. The Wildcats return 11 starters and have a strong quarterback in Nick Fitzgerald. Richmond Hill finished the year ranked No. 102 in the state with an 8-3 overall record and 5-2 region mark.

• **Nov. 1 at Ware County:** Last year was the first matchup between the Tigers and the Gators, during which the Waycross team earned a 39-6 victory. Considering the Gators finished in first place in the region and undefeated at 7-0, it was a respectable game for the Tigers, who trailed the Gators only 15-6 at halftime. The Gators went all the way to the state finals, losing 49-13 to eventual AAAAA champion Gainesville. The Gators finished the year ranked No. 29 in the state.

• **Nov. 8 at Groves High School:** Last year, the Tigers earned the second win of their 2-8 season by beating Groves at home, 42-0. The Rebels finished last in the region, going 0-10 and 0-7. They are expected to have four offensive and defensive returning starters from last season.

TIGERS FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

Aug. 16 vs. Wayne County, preseason scrimmage

Aug. 30 at Liberty County High School

Sept. 6 vs. Savannah High

Sept. 13 vs. Charlton County

Sept. 27 at Effingham County*

Oct. 4 vs. Jenkins*

Oct. 11 vs. Windsor Forest*

Oct. 18 at Glynn Academy*

Oct. 25 vs. Richmond Hill*

Nov. 1 at Ware County*

Nov. 8 at Groves*

NOTES:

• All games start at 7:30 p.m. and are held Fridays unless otherwise noted

• Home games, in bold, are played at Olvey Field

• * Denotes region game



2013 TIGERS COACHES



(L to R) 1st row: Jeff Miller, Brenton Nobles, Adam Carter, Chris Reese, Joseph Smiley; 2nd row: Samuel Richards, Duane Johnson, Frank Troup, Franklin Akin, Mike Stanford; 3rd row: Brian Griggs, John Murat, Chris Reed.

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Bradwell's fast-paced offense built with players in mind

New assistant coach doubles as Tigers' offense coordinator

BY PATTY LEON

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Bradwell Institute's new head coach, Adam Carter, brought former fellow Camden County assistant coach, Christopher Reese, to Tigers nation and tapped him as the Tigers' assistant coach and offensive coordinator.

Reese played football at Oconee County High School under former Camden County head coach Jeff Herron, who led Reese and his teammates to a state title. Reese considered his coach to be a mentor, and they kept in touch over the years. Herron later hired his former player as an assistant coach at Camden County in 2006.

"And I earned my second championship ring with him," Reese said.

Now, Reese will serve as the Tigers' offensive coordinator and offensive-line coach, and he said they plan to pound the

pavement against opponents. Describing it as a spread run, Reese said the scheme fits with the players the Tigers have on the field this season.

"Our offense is a fast paced, up-tempo style of offense," he said. "We will initially try to pound the ball — run first — and once we've established that, we will start hitting things on the perimeter."

The Tigers will depend on their veteran quarterback, senior LeBaron Anthony, to run the show this year.

"We've got good athletes on the perimeter, and we have a very good quarterback," Reese said. "He is a senior and the leader, and the offense will revolve around him. He has a strong arm and plays with a lot of confidence; he is a natural leader. I have been very impressed with how he is handling the quarterback position."

Sixth-year quarterbacks coach Frank Troup said they've been working with Anthony all summer, and the quarterback also attended two passing-league camps over the summer. Troup said it has helped Anthony make measurable

improvements.

Troup said the offense has several packages designed for specific playmakers. He said the energy level among the players this year has intensified, and the competition is ongoing.

"Our motto this year is 'Next man up.' ... You might be the starter, but that can easily be erased. It is good competition," he said.

The offensive line has a few younger players, Reese said, but they are strong and will give the running backs a chance to move the ball.

"We also have a good corps of running backs — starting with Luther Echols. ... He is built like Maurice Jones-Drew down in Jacksonville," Reese said. "All muscle and one of the hardest workers I've seen in the weight room."

Reese said Ziere Diggs will see time on the offense as a wide receiver in addition to his defensive duties.

"He has electric skills and capabilities when he has the ball in his hands, so we will try and get him the ball as much as possible," Reese said.



Senior quarterback LeBaron Anthony attended passing camps over the summer to fine-tune his skills for the upcoming season. Quarterbacks coach Frank Troup said Anthony has made measurable improvements since last season.

Patty Leon



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