

WHAT
HAPPENED

J.T. Curtis began coaching football at John Curtis Christian High School in 1969.

J.T. Curtis coaches at the Mandeville High Jamboree in August.



One of the winningest football coaches in history, **J.T. Curtis**, works out of the modest Christian high school in River Ridge.

Curtis, son of John Curtis, who founded John Curtis Christian High School in 1962, has more than 550 wins, 26 state championships and 13 perfect seasons since beginning coaching the team in 1969. He has won 90 percent of his games. He was twice named National Coach of the Year by USA Today and has been inducted into national, high school and state football halls of fame. He is also the headmaster of the school and its athletic director. Though his father passed away in 2005, before Hurricane Katrina, the family, including J.T. Curtis' brothers and sisters and their children, still operate the school. The high school's football team was the first in the region to start practicing after Hurricane Katrina, even before electricity was turned back on. One of the team's most famous players, Joe McKnight, played at the University of Southern California and then the New York Jets. Other players that went on to the NFL include Reggie Dupard, Chris Howard and Jonathan Wells.



J.T. Curtis in front of the school's new trophy case in 2015.



J.T. Curtis speaks with his team in 2010 at the Superdome during the 2A state championship game against Evangel Christian Academy of Shreveport. Curtis lost the game, but won the championship the next three years.



John Curtis Christian and Rummel high schools played each other in football for the second time in 2015. Rummel won the matchup 24-10.



John Curtis alumnus, Joe McKnight, graduated in 2007 and went on to play for the University of Southern California and then the New York Jets and the Kansas City Chiefs. He was killed in 2016.