



Mars Hill's William Embry and Hudson Higgins.



Hackleburg's Daniel Stidham.



Rogers' Preston Littrell.



Lauderdale County's Calvin Watkins. [DREW BARTON/FOR THE TIMESDAILY]



Mars Hill's Cam Isbell.



Colbert County's Brandon Thornton.



Hackleburg's Jaquan Reeder. [PHOTOS, UNLESS NOTED, BY DAN BUSEY/TIMESDAILY]

2024 SMALL SCHOOL ALL-AREA FOOTBALL

OFFENSE

QB: Blaise Vickery, senior, Hackleburg: Class 1A All-State honorable mention. Recorded a 200.4 pass efficiency rating. Completed 65% of his passes for 1,691 yards and 22 touchdowns against six interceptions. Also ran 82 times for 610 yards, a 7.4-yard average, with eight scores. Two-time all-area.

RB: Caden Chandler, senior, Mars Hill: First-team Class 3A All-State and finalist for 12A back of the year. Averaged 9.7 yards per carry and 127.6 yards per game rushing. Finished with 1,787 yards and 31 touchdowns.

RB: Calvin Watkins, junior, Lauderdale County: Ran for 1,112 yards and 15 touchdowns, averaging 9.2 yards per carry. Amassed 1,550 all-purpose yards with 19 touchdowns.

RB: Nic Grigsby, junior, Rogers: Had 1,263 yards rushing on 215 carries with 21 touchdowns. Also caught 25 passes for 293 yards and a score.

RB: Hayden Wingo, senior, Phil Campbell: Finished with 1,326 yards rushing and 15 touchdowns. Had 1,595 all-purpose yards.

RB: Jaxon Vinson, junior, Red Bay: Averaged 113 rushing yards per game with nine touchdowns. Added two touchdowns receiving. On defense, made 83 tackles. Two-time all-area.

WR: Jaquan Reeder, senior, Hackleburg: First-team Class 1A All-State. Caught 51 passes for 979 yards and 14 touchdowns, while running for 468 yards and nine scores. Averaged 103 yards offense per game. Also intercepted five passes and made 64 tackles. Three-time all-area. Two-time All-State.

WR: Braylan McMullan, senior, Waterloo: Class 1A All-State honorable mention. Pulled in 34 catches for 465 yards and three touchdowns. Also made 66 tackles with three interceptions. Had seven interceptions as a junior.

OL: Wayne Little, senior, Colbert County: Drew at least an 82% grade in every game and helped the Indians pile up over 2,000 yards rushing in 11 games.

OL: Daniel Stidham, senior, Hackleburg: Second-team Class 1A All-State. Was Hackleburg's top offensive lineman. On defense, made 50 tackles.

OL: Gunner Kirchharr, senior, Mars Hill: Four-year starter helped the Panthers exceed 4,000 yards rushing. Posted 20 pancake blocks. Two-time all-area.

OL: William Embry, senior, Mars Hill: Second-team Class 3A All-State. Had nine touchdowns, as a linebacker, led the Panthers with 161 tackles.

OL: Reed Hamilton, senior, Red Bay: Posted an 86% grade for the season with 42 pancake blocks and no sacks allowed.

ATH: Hudson Higgins, junior, Mars Hill: First-team Class 3A All-State. Totaled 2,640 all-purpose yards and scored 23 touchdowns. Had 1,407 yards rushing, 566 receiving, 215 on punt returns, 385 on kickoff returns and a 67-yard interception return for a touchdown.

ATH: Brandon Thornton, senior, Colbert County: Averaged almost 7.7 yards per carry and scored 11 touchdowns. Finished with 1,378 yards total offense and accounted for 18 scores. Also made 58 tackles.

ATH: Hayston Scott, sophomore, Phil Campbell: Rushed for 1,075 yards and 12 touchdowns, returned 13 kicks for 156 yards and completed 53% of his passes for 605 yards with seven touchdowns against four interceptions.

HONORABLE MENTION

Cherokee: QB Jon Schleifer, WR Nik Curry.
Colbert Heights: LB Cristian Gonzalez, RB Kaden Harvey.
Collinwood: RB Harrison Rich.
Lauderdale Co.: Chase Belue.
Lexington: LB Will White
Mars Hill: WR-DB Isaiah Owens, RB-DB Jaxon Penn, QB William Mann.
Phil Campbell: LB Mason Weeks.
Rogers: QB Tiger Wood.
Sheffield: OL Jon Will Hufstedler.
Vina: RB-LB Cai Lawler.
Wayne Co.: RB-LB Drew Bevis, LB Dane Bryant.

DEFENSE

DL: Samuel Swinney, junior, Mars Hill: First-team Class 3A All-State. Totaled 13 sacks among his 27 tackles for loss. Posted 97 tackles. Also started on the offensive line and had 26 pancake blocks.

DL: Preston Littrell, junior, Rogers: Second-team Class 3A All-State. Totaled 20 tackles for loss, including five sacks, in his 94 tackles. Forced three fumbles with two recoveries and four pass breakups.

DL: Brayden Jordan, senior, Phillips: Finished with 16 tackles for loss among his 99 stops, including 4.5 sacks. The 6-foot-2, 275-pounder ran for one touchdown. Also ran and threw for two-point conversions.

DL: Thomas Smith, junior, Lexington: Totaled 18 tackles for loss with four sacks among his 77 tackles. Helped the Golden Bears reach the playoffs for a fourth straight season.

LB: Frank Hayes, junior, Colbert County: Finished with 86 tackles, including 11 for loss with two sacks. Helped the Indians land their 42nd playoff berth in the last 43 seasons. Two-time all-area.

LB: Cash Fuqua, senior, Colbert County: Racked up 100 tackles with two sacks among his five tackles for loss. Returned his one interception 20 yards for a touchdown.

LB: Noah Tubb, junior, Hackleburg: Led the Panthers with 141 tackles and had two sacks. Helped Hackleburg reach the state semifinals for the first time since 2009 and the second time in school history.

LB: Cam Isbell, senior, Mars Hill: Averaged 10.2 tackles per game. Made nine tackles in the state championship game and returned a fumble 40 yards for a fourth-quarter touchdown. Four-year starter. Three-time all-area.

LB: Preston Nippers, senior, Shoals Christian: Class 1A All-State honorable mention. Made 127 tackles with 15 for loss, including four sacks. Accounted for nine touchdowns on a team that scored 99 points. Played alongside five eighth-graders on both sides of the ball. Two-time all-area.

DB: Hudson Lash, senior, Lauderdale County: Second-team Class 3A All-State. Returned one of his two interceptions for a 67-yard touchdowns and made 55 tackles. At receiver, caught 26 passes for 410 yards and six touchdowns. Also averaged 24.2 yards on 14 punt returns with a TD.

DB: Xzavier Mason, senior, Lauderdale County: Intercepted five passes and finished with 41 tackles. Also caught 15 passes for 393 yards and six touchdowns, plus ran for 279 yards and three scores. Helped lead the Tigers to a fifth straight season with at least seven wins and their 15th winning season in 16 years.

DB: Noah Lemay, senior, Lexington: Made two interceptions to finish with 21 for his career and had 24 tackles. With the ball, had 946 all-purpose yards and scored seven touchdowns. Three-time all-area.

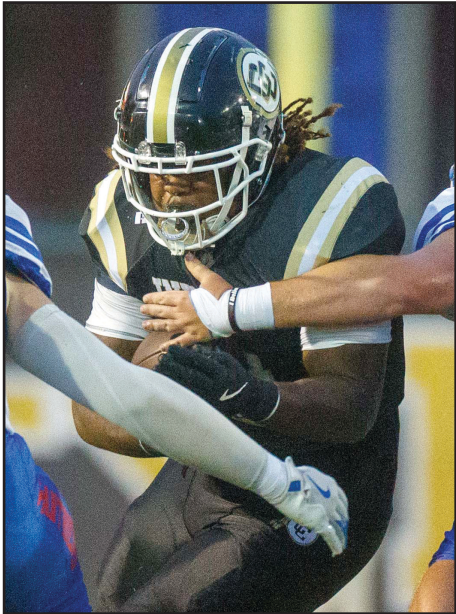
DB: Skyler Johnston, senior, Sheffield: Finished with 83 tackles and forced three fumbles. On offense, had 1,638 all-purpose yards and scored 20 touchdowns, including 1,148 yards and 16 TDs rushing.

P-K: Parker Kennemer, junior, Mars Hill: Averaged 39.1 yards on 15 punts. Was 62-of-64 on extra points and 2-of-5 on field goals. Was 6-of-6 on extra points in the Panthers' 50-43 win over Houston Academy in the Class 3A championship game.

COACH OF THE YEAR

Darrell Higgins, Mars Hill: Led the Panthers to their third state championship, all in the last seven years, but their first in Class 3A. Was the 3A state coach of the year. Guided Mars Hill through a 14-1 season with the only loss coming at home by one point. Three-time all-area coach of the year. Has a 92-27 record in nine seasons.

All-area team compiled by A. Stacy Long in consultation with area coaches.



Colbert County's Frank Hayes.



Mars Hill's Gunner Kirchharr.



Rogers' Nic Grigsby.



Shoals Christian's Preston Nippers.



Lexington's Noah Lemay.



Mars Hill's Caden Chandler.