



**GAME ON, MILLS COUNTY**

**BEAU POWELL**

AGENCY MANAGER

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## **District 7-2A Capsules, continued from Page 21**

Goldthwaite won last year's game, 48-16, but Hamilton leads the all-time series 24-20.

### **Crawford Pirates**

Enrollment: 180.

Last Year's Record: 14-1, 5-0 in District 8-2A Division I.

Last Playoff Appearance: 2015.

Last District Title: 2015.

Head Coach: Delbert Kelm, ninth year at Crawford.

Coach's Record: 92-18 at Crawford.

Returning Experience: 16 lettermen, 6 offensive and 7 defensive starters.

Players to Watch: RB-LB Noah Bleything, 5-10, 170, Sr.; OL-DE Clayte Hickey, 5-9, 165, Sr.; RB-LB Lucas Steinkamp, 5-8, 165, Sr.; RB-DB Garrett Dutschmann, 5-7, 140, Jr.; WR-DE Cade Johnston, 5-11, 165, Sr.; RB-DB Jeff Ward, 5-9, 150, Sr.; TE-DE Coalson Foss, 5-9, 165, Sr.

Strengths: Quickness, tradition.

Weakness: size, inexperienced quarterback and linemen.

Key Stats: Crawford won 14 straight games last year before losing to eventual state champ Canadian 61-14 in the state semifinals. The Pirates' defense allowed only 106 points in the first 14 games before allowing 61 to Canadian. ... Crawford averaged 37 points per game last year and allowed 11. The Pirates allowed 14 or fewer points in 13 of 15 games, including shutouts of top District 8-2A DI challengers Mart and Bosqueville. ... Crawford is joining District 7-2A, but beat current 7-2A members Hico, De Leon, Goldthwaite and Valley Mills last year by a combined 158-39.

Noteworthy: Crawford OL Clayte Hickey and LB Lucas Steinkamp were named first-team on the 2015 All Super Centex Team by the Waco Tribune-Herald. Steinkamp averaged 13 tackles per game last year. RB Noah Bleything rushed for 1,352 yards and 21 TDs last year. ... WR Cade Johnston had 460 yards and 4 TDs receiving in 2015. ... Craw-

ford has posted a winning record in 27 of the last 28 seasons. ... Crawford's 2014 and 2015 playoff wins by a combined 74-20 are the only meetings between the Pirates and Goldthwaite.

### **Valley Mills Eagles**

Enrollment: 178.

Last Year's Record: 5-5, 1-4 in District 8-2A Division I.

Last Playoff Appearance: 2011.

Last District Title: 2010.

Head Coach: Eric Blenden, third season at Valley Mills.

Coach's Record: 10-10 at Valley Mills.

Returning Experience: 15 lettermen, 7 offensive and 8 defensive starters.

Players to Watch: RB-DL Braden Owens, 5-10, 150, Sr.; RB-DB Johnathon Castonon, 5-9, 160, Sr.; OL Kevin Swing, Sr.; OL-LB Kevin Herrera, Sr.; QB-DB Mason Sexton, Sr.; OL-DL Reid Blackford, 6-3, 260, Sr.

Strengths: size, third year in Coach Blenden's system.

Weaknesses: inexperience at offensive skill positions, 15 wins in last four seasons.

Key Stats: Valley Mills moves with Crawford from District 8-2A to 7-2A this year. The Eagles were 1-0 against 7-2A members last year, beating San Saba 62-21. ... The Eagles averaged 22.4 points per game last year and allowed 22.6. ... Valley Mills enters this season having lost 25 of its last 40 games. The Eagles' best season of late was a state quarterfinals appearance in 2006.

Noteworthy: Valley Mills started 4-1 last year, but opened District 8-2A with losses to playoff qualifiers Crawford, Mart and Bosqueville by a combined 126-16. The Eagles missed the playoffs because of a 21-20 loss to Axtell in the regular-season finale. In that game, Valley Mills scored with four minutes to play, but had a tying extra-point kick blocked. ... Goldthwaite leads the all-time series with Valley Mills 6-1, with the six wins by an average of 36 points.