

Head Coach: Keith Wood, ninth year at Hico.

Coach's Record: 58-33 at Hico.

Returning Experience: 13 lettermen, 6 offensive and 6 defensive starters.

Players to Watch: QB-DB Parker Wood, 5-9, 150, Sr.; RB-DB Hunter Mullins, 5-7, 155, Sr.; OL-DL Cameron Matthews, 5-7, 220, Sr.; OL-DL Guillermo Zuniga, 5-9, 200, Sr.; RB-LB Ethan Warren, 5-7, 170, Sr.; RB-LB Stran McLain, 5-7, 160, Jr.; WR-P Cooper Conlee, 5-7, 140, Jr.; RB-LB Jacob Smith, 5-8, 160, Jr.

Strengths: nine returning all-district players, playoff experience from last three years.

Weakness: size, depth.

Key Stats: The Tigers would like an injury-free season after losing all-state RB Blake Hyles in 2014 and starting QB Parker Wood in 2015. Both injuries led to a 1-9 nondistrict record over the last two seasons. However, the Tigers regrouped both years to go 9-1 in district and advance to the playoffs. The key was stability by the defense, which allowed 18.7 points per game in 2015 and 15.5 ppg in 2014. The 2014 team won Hico's first district title in 12 years.

Noteworthy: Hico returns nine all-district players, including Newcomer of the Year Stran McLain, who made 134 tackles at linebacker last year as a sophomore.

Other first-team all-district returnees include RB Ethan Warren, OL Cameron Mathews, P Cooper Conlee, DE Guillermo Zuniga, and DBs Jacob Smith and Hunter Mullins. Warren rushed for 1,016 yards and 12 TDs last year. Mullins has been all-district the last two years. ... Hico leads the all-time series with Goldthwaite 8-5-1.

San Saba Armadillos

Enrollment: 187.

Last Year's Record: 2-8, 0-5 in District 7-2A Division I.

Last Playoff Appearance: 2012.

Last District Title: 2012, 1991 outright.

Head Coach: Jeff Pannell, eighth year at San Saba; eighth year overall.

Coach's Record: 33-44, all at San Saba.

Returning Experience: 18 lettermen, 6 offensive and 6 defensive starters.

Players to Watch: OL-DL Daniel Aragon, 5-9, 215, Sr.; WR-DB Bryce Lewis, 5-9, 145, Sr.;

WR-DB Dalton Pierce, 5-6, 150, Sr.; OL-DL Zayne Rhodes, 6-4, 250, Sr.; RB-LB Josh Lambert, 6-0, 170, Jr.; RB-DB Payton Gage, Sr.

Strength: experienced linemen, improved depth and defense.

Weaknesses: inexperienced QB, small junior class, no playoffs the last four years.

Key Stats: Several top defenders return from last year, including DL Daniel Aragon (88 tackles last year), LB Josh Lambert (58 tackles), CB Dalton Pierce (33 tackles), DL Zayne Rhodes (33 tackles), and DB Payton Gage (4 interceptions). Offensively, lineman Aragon made all-district last year. Lambert, a junior, already is a third-year starter.

Noteworthy: After a 2-2 start last year, the Armadillos lost their final six games by an average of 42-12. San Saba is 10-30 since dropping a classification in 2012. This after the Armadillos set a school record by winning a playoff game in three consecutive seasons from 2009-2011 while in the larger classification. ... This year's game will mark the 99th between San Saba and Goldthwaite, with the Armadillos leading the series 57-37-4.

Hamilton Bulldogs

Enrollment: 208.

Last Year's Record: 3-7, 1-4 in District 7-2A Division I.

Last Playoff Appearance: 2011.

Last District Title: 2001.

Head Coach: Mike Reed, third year at Hamilton.

Coach's Record: 3-17 at Hamilton, 135-36 overall.

Returning Experience: 11 lettermen, 5 offensive and 7 defensive starters.

Players to Watch: QB-DB Weston Nolen, 6-0, 155, Sr.; WR-DB Riley Stephens, 6-1, 175, Sr.; TE-LB Tim Ramirez, 6-2, 220, Sr.; RB-LB Martin Najera, 5-10, 170, Jr.; RB-DB Ethan Pierce, 5-9, 160, Jr.; FB-LB Ian North, 5-9, 190, So.

Strengths: more experience, third season in Coach Reed's system.

Weaknesses: still a young team, lost 29 of last 34 games.

Key Stats: Hamilton didn't have any first-team all-district players last year and no second-team selections are returning this season. QB Weston Nolen was 32-72-6 passing for 476 yards and 4 TDs in five games last year. He also ran for 3 TDs in an offense that averaged only 170 total yards per game. Most of the other 2015 skill players were seniors. Ethan Pierce is the top returning rusher with 92 yards last year. WR Riley Stephens and TE Tim Ramirez combined for 18 catches and 3 TDs. Defensively, CB Stephens and LB Ramirez combined for 44 tackles last year. LB Martin Najera logged 33 tackles, 3 interceptions and 2 fumble recoveries.

Noteworthy: After a 2-0 start last year, Hamilton lost seven of eight games and allowed 39 or more points four times. ... Hamilton plays four of its first five games this year at home, including the Sept. 23 district opener against Goldthwaite. ...

Continued, Page 22



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