

# WASHINGTON COUNTY BULLDOGS

## Glass is back — with no regrets

BY TOMMY HICKS  
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There will be no regrets for Washington County senior quarterback Cade Glass. He knows exactly why he decided to return to the Bulldogs' football team after initially announcing he would skip his final season of football to concentrate on playing baseball at WCHS.

But the closer the season approached, the more it tugged on Glass to return to the football field. And there were other factors, those that had nothing to do with Glass himself, factors he said he simply couldn't ignore.

And so he returned to a Bulldogs team that welcomed him back as though he had never left. He returned to spend his final season of football with his friends, especially those in his senior class. He returned to try and help the Bulldogs return to chasing the Class 2A state title.

Perhaps most importantly — certainly the more emotional of his reasons — Glass returned for Morgan.

Morgan Fell was a member of the Class of 2018 at Washington County High School, an all-county volleyball player who was one of the most popular students at the school. She died on Dec. 4 in a single-vehicle automobile accident, her memory honored with a candle-light vigil.

Now, Glass and his teammates hope to continue to honor the memory of their former classmate and friend this season through their play on the football field, and off.

"Just it being my senior year, I felt like I would regret it if I didn't play," Glass said, almost in a whispered tone. "It wasn't all on me, it was an us thing. I talked to the team and we all want to play together as a group. One of our best friends was killed, Morgan Fell, and we're doing it for her. The senior class, we're doing it for her. I feel like she'd be mad at us if we didn't."

"I think (playing in her honor) it's going to push us a bunch this year. I think it's going to do big things. Everything we do from the weight room to the football field to the classroom, everything is for her. We're all pushing and everything is for her."

Having Glass, who was the Bulldogs' starting quarterback last season until he was sidelined by injuries, pushing the offense is going to be a plus, new head coach Devin Roberts said.

"Cade's a guy who has a ton of ability and I think any doubt that was in his mind about whether he wanted to play football is gone now and he's 100 percent committed," Roberts said. "He's been early every day (to workouts) and stayed late every day and he's been the ideal leader for

our football team."

Having a healthy Glass in charge of the offense is important, too, Roberts noted.

"I haven't seen any drawbacks from the (elbow) injury," he said. "I know he played baseball last spring and I don't think he was 100 percent then, but he seems fine now. He throws the ball well and I think the biggest attribute he provides is just his presence. Everyone just calms down a little bit and we execute better. The 10 guys around him are better when he's on the field."

Glass insists the injury isn't a factor now, but admitted the infection (and later the surgery associated with the infection) was an issue that contributed to his previous decision not to play football this season.

"The infection, it was kind of like staph, but worse," Glass said. "(Doctors) told me another 48 hours (without treatment) and I would have lost my arm. That kind of scared me. That was one of the things that had me a little worried about playing this year, but I've overcome that."

"It was a long recovery, but it went well. I'm 100 percent. I've been in the weight room. Everything is 100 percent."

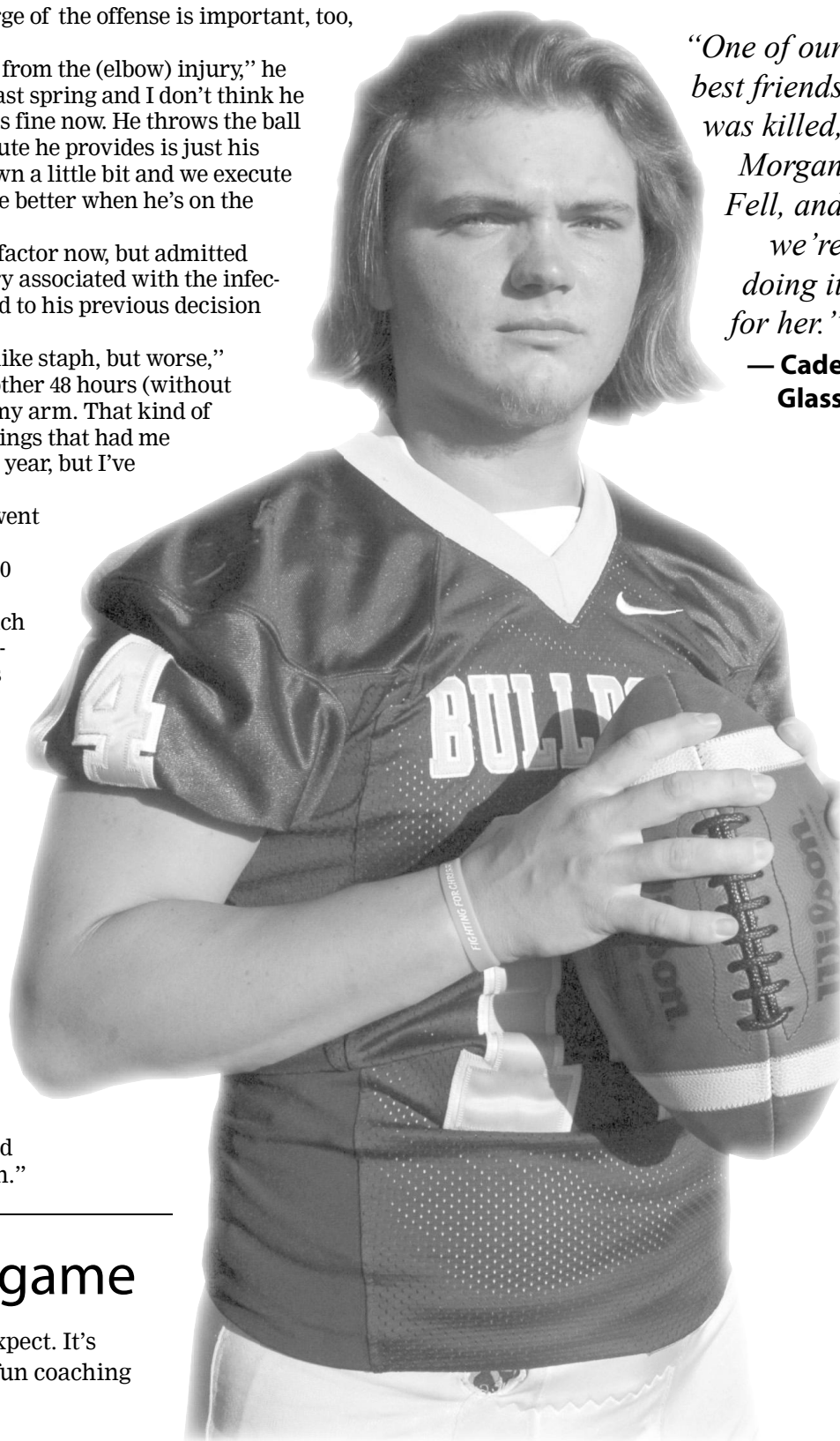
That includes his attitude, which is fully dedicated to helping Washington County win football games this season, he said.

"I can't do it by myself, we do it as a team; everything we do, we do as a team," Glass said. "I think we have some pretty good guys coming back who can take some spots from people who have left (and graduated). We have a couple of people who didn't play last year who are playing. I think we'll be all right as a team."

"I'm ready. It's my senior year and I'm ready. It's nothing different than last year, you just go out there and play. My year got cut short last year; I had a couple of surgeries done and I'm ready to get this last season in."



Morgan Fell



*"One of our best friends was killed, Morgan Fell, and we're doing it for her."*  
— Cade Glass

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talents. If that happens, the Bulldogs' chances at success will dramatically increase.

"The identity of our team is just that — consistent execution," Roberts said. "And I expect us to have a lot of five-yard results and an occasional chump play where we catch 'em off guard and bust 'em with a big play. We're going to be a lot of I-formation, similar to Saraland and what they did at Auburn with (head coach) Tim Carter. It's basically I-formation out of the shotgun. I'm not a big fan of the tight end, I'd rather split him out wide. ... So we'll be in a lot of 2-by-1 and no tight ends and two backs in the backfield."

Again, Roberts emphasized, the guys up front will play a huge role in the success of the offense this season. "I've learned a ton just by listening to them

and how they get on to each other. You learn a lot about your kids (that way). You learn about which ones are your leaders and which ones they respond to."

Defensively, the Bulldogs need to change their approach to tackling, Roberts suggested.

"Again, we're going to be pretty young," he said. "And I mean this as a compliment, I don't mean it as a negative toward players before, but a lot of kids who played in the years past at Chatom — there are two or three who were on the field last year — that were probably better than anybody on the field on either team. And that kind of talent allowed them to get away with some bad habits."

"So we're breaking those bad habits. But the kids have bought into it. We were able to film an OTA (recently) against Bayside (Academy) and we got to

watch film and look at it and they bought in. They saw a tendency to kind of ease up sometimes because they assumed that somebody else was going to make the play."

"This year, this is the difference that I want to see: I want to see a lot less solo tackles and a lot more team tackles. And I think you're going to have to see that with this group. They got away with that in the past because they were so good at solo tackles (because) they had some really good players. This year we have got to rally to the ball and play fast and get a lot of hats in the mix. And they've bought into that by how much they have picked up on it so far."

Overall, Roberts said, "They're great," he noted of his team. "I could not have asked for a better group of kids from the respect they want to win and they're used to winning and that's

what they expect. It's going to be fun coaching them."

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