



Tigers charge into season finale with postseason in their sights

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"I don't care if we have to play in the Wal-Mart parking lot in Memphis, we want to go to the playoffs."

Those are the sentiments of DeKalb County High School Tiger Head Coach Steve Trapp as his team comes off its bye week and prepares to play host to Cumberland County – the winner assured of a place in the state high school football play-

offs.

"No, 3-7 and facing a top seed wasn't the way we wanted to go in but it is what it is," Trapp said of his team's narrow 20-17 loss to Macon County last week. "Had we been able to get the win there that would have put us up further in the seeding."

With the loss, DeKalb finds itself in a win or go home situation when they wind up their regular season against the Jets this Friday in Smithville.

"It's, in essence, a playoff game because the winner gets

to advance and the loser has their season over," Trapp said of taking on the 1-8 Cumberland team who they beat 16-8 to end last season. Cumberland's only win this season was a forfeit by Powell. Otherwise, the Jets have only been able to muster 26 points all season.

Following their win last season over the Jets, Tigers would go on to be knocked out in the first round of the state playoffs by Marshall County, 42-0. Marshall County would then move on to the state semi-final where they would be beaten by eventual state champion Greenville, 49-24. "It's a five-team district, so the top four teams go to the playoffs."

Trapp said he gave the players some time off to enjoy their fall break with a couple of workouts crammed in between. They were back in full preparation-mode this week, preparing for the Jets.

"It'll be a question of who wants it most," Trapp said. "I know for us, we want to go to the playoffs, no matter who we play."

Should the Tigers make the playoffs, they will play either Maplewood or Tullahoma, both of whom go into Friday night with perfect 4-0 records and both ranked the state's 4A top ten. The winner of the game, which will played at Maplewood, will then play the Ti-

ger-Jet winner the first round while the loser of the game will play Macon County.

The Tigers boast wins this season over Warren County, 19-14 and Grundy County, 28-6. There were also three near misses with the 20-17 loss at Macon, a 47-34 shootout at Smith County and a grinding 19-7 loss at Cannon where the Tigers held the lead going into half-time. The Tigers didn't fare as well in their three games against top ten opponents as they fell to the third ranked Watertown squad 48-14, fourth ranked Upperman, 43-0 and ninth ranked Stone Memorial, 35-0.

Kick off for the Cumberland game is at 7 p.m., Friday Oct. 26.

All-District



Carly Vance and Sophie Hackett were named first team all-district for their play on the pitch for the Lady Tigers.



Sarah Starnes and Anna Rachel Blair made the second team all-district squad for the Lady Tigers.



The DeKalb County Middle School cross country teams finished strong in the state finals in Knoxville this past week after taking high honors in the regional meet the week before.

Running with the state's best

DeKalb Middle cross country performs well on big stage

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DeKalb County Middle School went toe-to-toe with some of the state's best cross country teams and emerged with good results.

Out of 30 teams at the state championships, the girls team finished 14th and the boys team finished 17th. This season marked the first time in four years the program placed both their teams in the state track meet. The squads qualified last week when the girls placed second overall out of 10 teams in the regionals while the boys took fourth out of 11. The top five from each region make it to the state. This year the finals

were run at Victor Ashe Park in Knoxville. Aaron Gottlieb took third in the regional race while Zoe Keys took fourth and Katherine Knowles took fifth in the girls competition.

"I am really proud of their effort and commitment this entire season," said Coach Kristen VanVranken. "This DeKalb XC team is one the grittiest bunch of runners I have had the pleasure of coaching."

The coach noted it was a season of hurdles to clear, their training starting during the heat of summer and ending on a fall day in east Tennessee.

"They are truly an amazing bunch of student-athletes," she said. "There are so many factors that take place when a team steps on the line, just like

in many sports: the weather, the terrain of the course, the health of the athlete, whether they are sick or dealing with an injury. Many times in racing you don't get the perfect scenario. You can train and train for weeks, and it all comes down to race day, putting forth your best effort with whatever you may be dealing with. The DeKalb Middle School Cross Country team did just that. They each rose up to the occasion and put forth their best despite any obstacles they had."

The competition in Knoxville at the state finals was tough but she is happy with the performance her squad gave.

"We ran against the "best of the best" on Saturday and competed well and tough," she said. "From huge counties and private schools, we earned our place there. It's a huge honor and accomplishment to make it this far and we held our own."