

Braced for border battle



Thomas Trigueros bulldozes through the Friendship Christian line during the DeKalb County Tigers' last tune up for their regular season opener with Warren County this Friday night. The Pioneers hold a 7-6 series lead in the border battle series. Kickoff for the 2018 season is at DeKalb High School at 7 p.m.

Tigers to open season against neighboring Warren County

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The DeKalb County Tigers look to draw even in their series against rival Warren County this Friday night as they play host to their old foe to kick off the 2018 campaign. "It's a border rivalry," said Tiger Head Coach Steve Trapp whose coaching career is tied to the border battle. "We started the series my first year as coach and we've played ever since."

The rivalry has come a long way since that 50-6 loss to the Pioneers at Nunley Stadium in McMinnville with the Tigers posting a 50-0 drubbing of the 6A Pioneers in 2009 in the series. The Pioneers own bragging rights presently having beaten the Tigers last year 26-10 and also own a 7-6 series advantage. Both teams finished the regular season 3-7 last year.

While the game is not a region battle, Coach Trapp said the game is still very important. "It means a lot to our program to start off the year right, and that means a win against Warren County this Friday night," the coach said. "A win to kick off the season helps the mindset of a young football team like we are."

Trapp expects the Pioneers to come after their quarterback, Axel Aldino, who will be making his first high school start. However, Aldino showed poise in the Tiger scrimmage against defending state champion Friendship Christian last week as the perennial powerhouse came after the sophomore signal caller. Aldino was able to hurl a touchdown on their first series during the scrimmage.

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Trapp is keeping tight-lipped about strategy when it comes to the Warren County game this Friday, noting he expects to run a "balanced offense" and knows the Pioneers have a potent ground game.

Coach Trapp pointed out that a cancellation by the Tigers' planned jambo-ree opponent could be a double-edged sword.

"While we didn't get that other scrimmage under our belt it did give us an extra week to prepare for Warren County," the coach said, noting he is looking forward to the electricity of the border battle.

"The first game of the season is huge and gets the community involved," Trapp said, noting Warren County is usually one of the biggest gates of the season.

Kick off in the 14th installment of the border battle is at 7 p.m. this Friday night at DeKalb County High School.



Walker shines in tournament



DeKalb County High School golfer Isaac Walker won the Early Bird tournament in Cookeville.



Anna Chew placed third in the Early Bird tournament in Cookeville and shot the low score in DeKalb County's game against Monterey.

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The beginning of the high school golf season could not have gone better for local product Isaac Walker who topped 77 golfers from around the midstate to claim the Early Bird Tournament in Cookeville last week.

"He will be playing collegiate golf somewhere," predicted DeKalb County Golf Coach John Pryor, noting the top DeKalb County High golfer is expected to continue doing big things on the golf courses around the state this season.

Walker won the Early Bird Tournament at the Golden Eagle Golf Course, besting golfers from 15 schools including the host Cookeville squad. The senior carded a two under par 68 on his way to the win. The DeKalb team as a whole finished 13 out of the 15 teams with Jayden Young shooting an 87, Ethan Jenkins a 99, Justin Washer a 106 and Chance Mabe a 106 on the par 70 course. The DeKalb golfers finished 65 strokes behind the host and winner of the tournament as Cookeville finished with a combined 295.

Joining Walker with a great start to the season was Anna Chew who finished the Early Bird tied for third, four strokes behind winner Mallorey Teurucht of Tullahoma who won with a 73. DeKalb does not have enough golfers to field a girls squad as of yet so Chew was competing in single competition.

Coach Pryor believes Walker and Chew have excellent opportunities to make the state tournament given their improvement coming into the season.



Colby Barnes was the workhorse for the DeKalb County Middle School Saints during their season opening win at Avery Trace this past week. Barnes had a touchdown and over 100 yards in the Saints' 16-14 win in Cookeville.

DCMS Saints start season with win

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The DeKalb Middle School Saints marched out of Cookeville with a season-opening win, dominating the host Avery Trace Raiders in the first half only to have to hold on with a white-knuckle grip to claim a 16-14 victory.

The kickoff to the season in Cookeville looked to be well in hand for the Saints as the Justin Poteete-coached squad imposed its will on the hosts early.

"We were able to move the ball on the ground," Poteete noted, "and we did well defensively in the first half."

Helping establish the ground game was running back Colby Barnes who carried the ball 18 times for 80 yards in the first half alone. He accounted for the first of his team's two touchdowns, romping into the end zone on a one-yard burst. A Briz Trapp to Josh May pass gave the Saints an 8-0 lead in the first, the loud DeKalb County crowd drowning out their hosts with the clanging of cow bells.

Avery Trace was unable to answer the early volley, a couple of dropped passes stopping their first drive. Their frustrations continued as penalties, dropped passes and a complete inability to move the ball on the ground left them without a single first down the entire first half.

Meanwhile, the Saints had no problems moving the ball up and down the field for the rest of the first half. However, they were unable to punch another score into the end zone, a near miss coming when the ground forced the ball out of Gabe Hollingsworth's hands after Trapp hit him with a pass in the end zone from 30 yards out.

The Saints didn't waste much time adding to their lead in the third quarter as Josh May took it in for a touchdown and was then able to add the two-point conversion to give DeKalb a 16-0 lead. The Saints then looked to turn the game into a route only to fumble the ball away, the miscue leading to a change in momentum.

"They started hitting their passes," Poteete explaining, adding the Raiders were able to turn the tables, scoring two touchdowns in the second half to make the score 16-14 after Avery Trace missed a crucial two-point conversion.

Having lost momentum, the Saints were stuck in a dire situation with just two minutes to go – a fourth and four situation.

"We had to have the first down," Poteete said.

Their solution was the solution they had used all day, their work horse back Colby Barnes, who took the ball and galloped 10 yards for the first down, sealing the win.

The Saints look to make it a perfect start to the season as they host Jackson County this Thursday night at 6:30 p.m.