

WCHS soccer sets roster

BY **JEFFERY SIMMONS**
Sports Editor for the Southern Standard
(McMinnville, Tennessee)

Matt Jackson will have plenty of players at his disposal when choosing a starting lineup this spring. The second-year WCHS soccer coach posted a 33-player roster last week after holding three days of tryouts.

Jackson, who took over last year after winning five CTC championships with Warren County Middle School, will have a number of familiar faces. The Pioneers lost only five seniors, while returning starters at every level.

The senior class features nine players, including returning all-district defender Rob Phillips. Other seniors include Ethan Cowan, Alex Flores, Jax Griffith, Joshua Macanus, Wesley Pepper, Andres Perez, Jordan Ruiz and Adrian Tejas.

Keeper Josiah Jackson highlights the junior class, along with David Castro, Brayden Chisam, Jake Toney, Julian Villegas and Angel Zarate.

Reigning District 6AAA

Midfield MVP John Jackson will be back for his sophomore year. He'll join classmates Dominique Betancourt, Tony Curtis, Marvin Franco, Ayden Guevara, Cullen Lopez, Jahier Martinez, Albert Rouse, Kade Simpson, Carter Smith and Ethan Thomas.

"I think we have a good group of seniors. The junior class isn't as big, but they're solid," said Jackson. "Our sophomore class will make an impact. I think a bunch of our sophomores could earn varsity playing time."

Newcomers include Joan Garcia – the top scorer last year for WCMS – Baylor Hitchcock, Ethan Melton, Jordan Ramirez, Hagen Stewart, Sawyer Thompson and Edgar Villegas.

Team members will start conditioning soon, but those who didn't make the cut or were absent from tryouts last week will get another chance in the spring. Jackson announced he will hold a second tryout in February before the start of the season.

"There were some hard choices. Sometimes a younger kid is there working hard



The Pioneers will need the speed of Jax McBride this spring.

and maybe you choose them over an older kid who won't be playing as much," said Jackson. "I told the kids who didn't make it to go home and work your tail off. There's always room for a kid to go and really work hard and make the team in February."



Jordan Ruiz is one of nine seniors who made the cut for the WCHS boys soccer team. The Pioneers will play in the spring.

File photos



Photo provided

WC Barcelona traveled to Orlando last weekend to compete in the 3v3 Nationals. Members of the team are, from left, coach Reed Palmer, Albert Rouse, Brayden Chisam, Jackson Smith, Andrew Palmer, Kade Simpson, Alex Pullon and coach Anthony Palmer.

Local soccer team travels to Orlando

Local soccer players got their kicks last weekend while spending time in Orlando.

Six players traveled to compete in the Challenge Sports 3v3 Nationals held at ESPN's Wide World of Sports complex.

The team, named WC Barcelona,

featured Andrew Palmer, Jackson Smith, Alex Pullon, Brayden Chisam, Kade Simpson and Albert Rouse and was coached by Reed and Anthony Palmer.

WC Barcelona faced a stacked field of squads in the U-18 field, including teams from Florida and Georgia. WC

Barcelona was competitive in each of its five games, but bowed out early in the knockout round Sunday.

WC Barcelona was led in scoring by Chisam's five goals, while Smith followed with four. Simpson, Rouse and Palmer, the team captain, each scored once.

Lady Pioneers ready for season



Jeffery Simmons photo

Rain cancelled the final warm-up match for the Lady Pioneers Thursday, so coach Todd Willmore improvised with an intersquad scrimmage. Sophomore Journey Cowan was one of the standouts in the workout.

The Lady Pioneers start their season Tuesday at home against Ooltewah.

New staff offers second chance for veteran Vols

KNOXVILLE (AP) — Tennessee's hopes for a quick resurgence rest in part on its upperclassmen finally performing up to their recruiting rankings.

The Volunteers return 18 juniors or seniors who arrived as four-star or five-star prospects, according to composite rankings of recruiting sites compiled by 247Sports. None have earned all-Southeastern Conference honors.

A new coaching staff gives them the opportunity to reboot their careers.

"It's a fresh start for everybody, a clean slate, new coaches here who didn't recruit you and stuff," senior defensive tackle Shy Tuttle said. "Like they said when they got here, positions are up for grabs."

Tennessee coach Jeremy Pruitt says all players will get the same number of reps in camp regardless of what they've done in the past. That means a fresh start for everyone.

"We have lot of competition, which is great," Pruitt said. "We needed competition, and we're

going to have it this fall camp. It will be exciting for me to see how guys respond and who can be consistent in their performance day in and day out."

Perhaps that will provide a spark.

Tennessee returns seven juniors or seniors who signed out of high school as top-100 national recruits according to the 247Sports Composite. The Vols also have senior outside linebacker Jonathan Kongbo, rated as the nation's top junior-college prospect in his class.

Even with all that talent, Tennessee went 4-8 last season and failed to win a Southeastern Conference game for the first time since that league started football competition in 1933.

"I feel like in my Tennessee career, it's been a hard four years, going on four years, for me," redshirt junior offensive tackle Drew Richmond said. There has been "a lot of criticism and everything. But I'm blessed I'm still here, you know what I mean? A lot of people aren't here anymore. I'm still here."

WC Barcelona would like to thank all of our sponsors and supporters

Enterprise Rent-a-Car
Warren Co Youth Soccer
Dr Pepper Bottling Co
Auto World
Homeland Community Bank
Middle TN Natural Gas
Sherrill Pest Control
Vallen Industries
Ben Lomand
Chisam Auto Repair
Pioneer Pediatric
The Wax Strip - Murfreesboro
Kidd Ford
Pinnacle Orthopaedics
Newby's RV Sales
Brewster LLC
Clark Brothers Construction
Cumberland Lumber
DM Simpson Realty

Galligan & Newman Law Office
Highland Rim Crossfit
Jewell Hale General Contractors
Lynne Cole - Kirby Real Estate
Randle Walker Farms
Smile Doctors
Smooth Rapids
State Farm Insurance - Neil Helton
Sullens Transport
Super Gas
Womack Printing
Hayes Fire Protection
Mullins Vision - Cookeville
ABC Ice
All-O-K'sions
Brewer Amusement
Dann's Termite & Pest Control
Diamond Classics
Donald Hillis Realty

Dr Mike Netherton
Gateway Tire
Hoover & Son
Horton & Horton
National Diamond
Prater's BBQ
Tim's Motors
Totherow Haile & Welch
USA Chiropractic
Mud Bums
Foster & Foster
McMinnville Florist
McMinnville Hearing Center
Southern Traditions
State Farm Insurance - Bill Zechman
Warren Co Co-op
Mary's Greenhouse