

SIMMONS SAYS

**JEFFERY
SIMMONS**



Time for the Vols to step up

It's just three days until it's football time in Tennessee once again. Well, not actually in Tennessee, but the Vols start their season Saturday against West Virginia in Charlotte.

It's the first foray for head coach Jeremy Pruitt, who has a reputation as a defensive guru after coaching at Florida State, Georgia and, most recently, Alabama. Pruitt has developed a no-nonsense, no-information approach on The Hill, sending players packing and rarely speaking to reporters.

Pruitt isn't the kind of coach who feels the need to endear himself to fans. After the team's spring game, he questioned why some fans didn't come out to support the Vols.

"Why weren't they here? It's kind of like our football team. I think we all need to look in the mirror and see who we want to be," Pruitt told reporters following the spring game.

I was one of the fans Pruitt was questioning. I wasn't there and I'll gladly say why. I'm tired of buying into a product that rarely produces.

Blind loyalty is easy to ask for when you're the defensive coordinator at Alabama. The track record of the last decade speaks for itself.

Brick by brick, the Vols have been torn down during the same time frame. It's been two decades since Tennessee last won the SEC – the same year the Vols won the BCS National Championship. The Vols haven't even played in the SEC Championship game since 2007, now four regimes ago.

We've gotten aboard the Lane Train, hopped in the Big Orange Dooley and watched Butch Jones lay bricks (which seems very symbolic of his tenure now).

Sorry coach Pruitt, fool me three times and I'm going to be skeptical.

And by skeptical, I mean I'll spend my Labor Day weekend in Charlotte supporting my alma mater. Tennessee takes on the Mountaineers and their Heisman hopeful QB Will Grier, last seen by Vol fans converting a 4th-and-14 into a 63-yard touchdown in the waning seconds of a 2015 matchup in the Swamp to give Florida its 11th straight victory over Tennessee.

I don't expect the Vols to win. I'm not really sure it will even be close. West Virginia is a 10-point favorite for a reason.

I just hope to see some semblance of improvement, which shouldn't be hard considering the Vols were historically inept last fall. By Saturday night, I'd like to look in the mirror and see a proud Vols fan. I haven't seen that guy in a while.

Best in the county



Lady Pioneer Beth Vaughn rises for a slam while Covenant's Emma Madewell angles for a block. Warren County dropped the opening set to the Lady Lions, but stormed back to win the next three to sweep the local rivalry.

Photo courtesy of Painted Barn Media

WCHS tops Lady Lions

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

Playing on its homecourt, Covenant Academy was unafraid of Warren County. The Lady Lions even won the first set of the anticipated volleyball rematch.

From there, the Lady Pioneers showed why they should be feared.

Warren County rallied to win the next three sets 25-11, 25-16 and 25-12, completing a season sweep against its local rival.

"It was another sluggish start against Covenant," said Lady Pioneer coach Katie Rogers. "Digging ourselves a hole early by starting slow has been one of our biggest issues all season. We proved we could dig ourselves out though."

The matchup went much like the first meeting at Charlie Dalton Gym, only this time the teams played a best-of-five match. Covenant again took the first set, winning 25-23, before Warren County took control late.

"Even though the result was the same as the first one, I think our effort was better this game. I am proud of the effort the girls gave," said Covenant coach Chris Madewell. "It's always fun to see both teams giving great effort. Our girls were all over the court going after balls. They were very tired at the end."

Covenant (6-7) had to rally back in the first set, trailing 19-15 before Madisen Madewell flipped the game with her serving. Madewell chopped the deficit in half with back-to-back aces before seeing her team tie on a long spike try by the Lady Pioneers.

The Lady Lions didn't surge into the lead until Emma Madewell crept an ace over the net, the ball dropping in front of two diving Lady Pioneers to give Covenant a 22-21 advantage.

Lily Kell sandwiched two kills around a Beth Vaughn spike for Warren County to get the Lady Lions a point away from victory.

Continued on **2B**

Pioneers stick with ground and pound

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

Attacking through the air has become the new wave of football. Slinging the ball while five receivers run free is en vogue, with young players dreaming of becoming the next Tom Brady or Odell Beckham Jr.

The Pioneers haven't joined in on the trend. Warren County still prefers to keep it on the ground.

The reasoning is simple: what coach wouldn't run when they have an offensive line opening holes big enough for trucks to come through.

"If it works, you keep doing it. We're going to keep trying to run it," said Pioneer coach Tom Moore. "I think we have guys who are taking pride in coming off the ball. Our line is playing with a good mentality."

Moore believed in the offseason his strength would be in the trenches. He was right.



Warren County has relied on its ground game through two weeks, rushing for 550 yards. The Pioneer offensive line has been opening big holes. Pictured are, from left, linemen Noah Martin, Jessie Lira and Kaden Jordan.

Jeffery Simmons photo

Continued on **2B**



\$4 per dog

WATERPAWS: A Doggy Pool Party

Pet Food Drive!

Presented by  and 

September 8 • 10 am - 1 pm @ the Gilley Pool

Dogs must have proof of current rabies vaccination and show no sign of aggression. For complete rules/info call HAWC at 931•743•6012 or visit their Facebook page.

HUMANS FREE!!! when accompanied by a dog