

THE ART OF RACING



Playoffs are here

The Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series playoffs begin Sunday in Las Vegas. A few changes have been made this year, mostly with tracks being used, and the Charlotte track being configured into a road course.

The playoff (originally called the Chase) was developed after the 2003 season when Matt Kenseth won the Championship after winning only one race that year. His 25 top-10 finishes enabled him to garner enough points to win the Championship. Ryan Newman won eight races that year but finished sixth in points due to DNFs from crashes.

Sixteen drivers will compete for the Championship over the final 10 races of the season. The first nine races are divided into three rounds, with four drivers being eliminated after each round. The four remaining drivers compete for the Championship in the last race at the Homestead-Miami Speedway. They do not have to win the race. They just have to beat the other three combatants.

In 2018, as part of a substantial schedule re-alignment, a number of changes occurred in the playoffs.

In the first round, Las Vegas replaces New Hampshire, Richmond will be the second race and Charlotte will use a new road course configuration. Charlotte Motor Speedway's new road course oval, or "ROVAL," will make its debut in the Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series and NASCAR XFINITY Series September 28-30.

The Cup Series race, the Bank of America 500K will become the longest road-course race (248.5 miles). The track will feature 17 turns - eight left, four right and two chicanes - and have a distance per lap of 2.28 miles. It will make use of almost all the Charlotte Motor Speedway 1.5-mile oval. Drivers have practiced on the course, but this will be the first race on the new setup.

The second round consists of races at Dover, Talladega and Kansas. The third round consists of races in Martinsville, Texas and Arizona.

Drivers accumulate valuable playoff points during the year. One point is awarded for each stage win and five points for a victory. These points stay with the driver as long as they remain eligible for the Championship. Kevin Harvick, Kyle Busch and Martin Truex Jr. have accumulated the most playoff points and are huge favorites to make the final four.

Since the playoffs inception, Jimmy Johnson won in 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2013 and 2016. Tony Stewart won in 2005 and 2011. Kurt Busch won in 2004, Brad Keselowski in 2012, Harvick in 2014, Kyle Busch in 2015 and Truex Jr. in 2017.

Renewing rivalry with Red Raiders

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

A resistible force meets a movable object this week when Coffee County comes to Nunley Stadium to face the Pioneers.

The Red Raiders have started 0-3 behind a stalled offense, one which hasn't gained over 100 yards in the last two outings. Meanwhile, the Pioneers have slipped to 1-3 after a win over Sparta, with the defense allowing 83 points and over 700 yards in losses to Cookeville and Shelbyville.

Which trend will break Friday? Coach Tom Moore is hopeful his defense returns to form from the first two weeks, when the Pioneers held both opponents below 20 points.

"Certainly I expect to play better on defense," said Moore. "Sometimes it's a function of who you're playing. Coffee County is a physical team, they just don't have as many weapons as they did last year."

"Alontae Taylor [last year's QB, now at UT] - sometimes you play everything perfect and he beats you anyway."

Not having to deal with the all-everything quarterback this year is a break for the Pioneers, but Moore knows the challenges will still be there.

"They're really physical. They're going to try to beat you up," said Moore. "The challenge is when you stop them in the middle, then stop them again in the middle, and the third time they pop it outside for a big one. We can't give up any free touchdowns."

Continued on 2B

COFFEE COUNTY RED RAIDERS @ CLASS: 6A REGION: 3	WARREN COUNTY PIONEERS CLASS: 6A REGION: 3
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PIONEER SPOTLIGHT



Jeffery Simmons photo

Joel Ramirez, left, and the Pioneer defense will need to continue to grind down Coffee County. The Red Raiders have just 155 yards and eight points in their last two games. Warren County has allowed 83 points in its last two losses while surrendering 721 yards.

AREA TEAMS IN ACTION

(Using state AP rankings)

- Spring Hill at Tullahoma, 7 p.m.
- Cookeville at Pearl Cohn, 7 p.m.
- Siegel at No. 2 Blackman, 7 p.m.
- No. 3 Oakland at Riverdale, 7 p.m.
- Lincoln County at Shelbyville, 7 p.m.
- Franklin County at White County, 7 p.m.
- DeKalb County at Grundy County, 7 p.m.

SERIES HISTORY

RED RAIDERS LEAD 22-21

FIRST MEETING:
Manchester won 14-6 (1969)

LAST MEETING:
Coffee County won 28-14 (2017)

WHO TO WATCH



Photo courtesy of Matthew Tyson
Manchester Times

Coffee County had an extra week to get its offense in gear. The Red Raiders have been held under 100 yards in their last two games. Andrew Mahaffey has accounted for most of the offense, rushing for 150 yards in three games.

CURRENT STANDINGS

CLASS 6A, REGION 3

	REGION	TOTAL
T1. Blackman	1-0	4-0
T1. Cookeville	1-0	3-1
T1. Riverdale	1-0	2-2
4. Oakland	0-0	2-1
T5. Siegel	0-1	1-3
T5. WARREN CO.	0-1	1-3
T5. Coffee Co.	0-1	0-3



Jeffery Simmons photo

Samantha Jennings, seen in a previous game, had 14 kills, 14 digs and three blocks in Tuesday's road victory over Coffee County.

Lady Pioneers net close win

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

The sigh of relief could be heard all the way back in McMinnville.

After weeks of being on the brink, only to fall short late, coach Katie Rogers saw her young volleyball team pull out a close contest. Warren County downed Coffee County in Manchester Tuesday, winning 25-19, 25-23, 23-25 and 25-19.

"We needed this win badly - if anything, it should boost our confidence and morale a little bit" said Rogers, whose team had lost its previous two matchups with the Lady Raiders. "Most of our wins this season haven't been strongly contested. This one felt good because we had to dig deep, work hard and fight."

Warren County (9-12) had been in a slide. In several matches, the Lady Pioneers had chances to win, only to see their advantages slip away.

History didn't repeat itself in Manchester.

"They had already beaten us twice this season. They're a good team that is well-coached. I think that is what felt so good about winning," said Rogers.

After a back-and-forth battle swung Warren County's way in

the second game, the Lady Pioneers were just one game away from a signature victory. Coffee County responded though, winning a tight third game to test the mettle of the Lady Pioneers.

Senior Megan Davis erased any doubts. Davis swung the momentum back to the visitors in the fourth game, stepping up his duties as a blocker to challenge Coffee County at the net.

Coach Rogers also praised the impact freshman Marli McBride made. Just added to the rotation last week, McBride's defense was vital in preserving the win.

She was one of many standouts in the victory.

"I was proud of the team as a whole. Now we have to carry this momentum over in our final matches and into the tournament," said Rogers.

LADY PIONEER STATS

ACES: Marah Wanamaker, Hailey Wood, Madison Hollis and Danika Reno- 2 each

ASSISTS: Hailey Wood 31

KILLS: Samantha Jennings 14, Marah Wanamaker 10, Beth Vaughn 8

BLOCKS: Samantha Jennings 3, Megan Davis 2

DIGS: Madison Hollis 26, Samantha Jennings 14, Hailey Wood 11

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