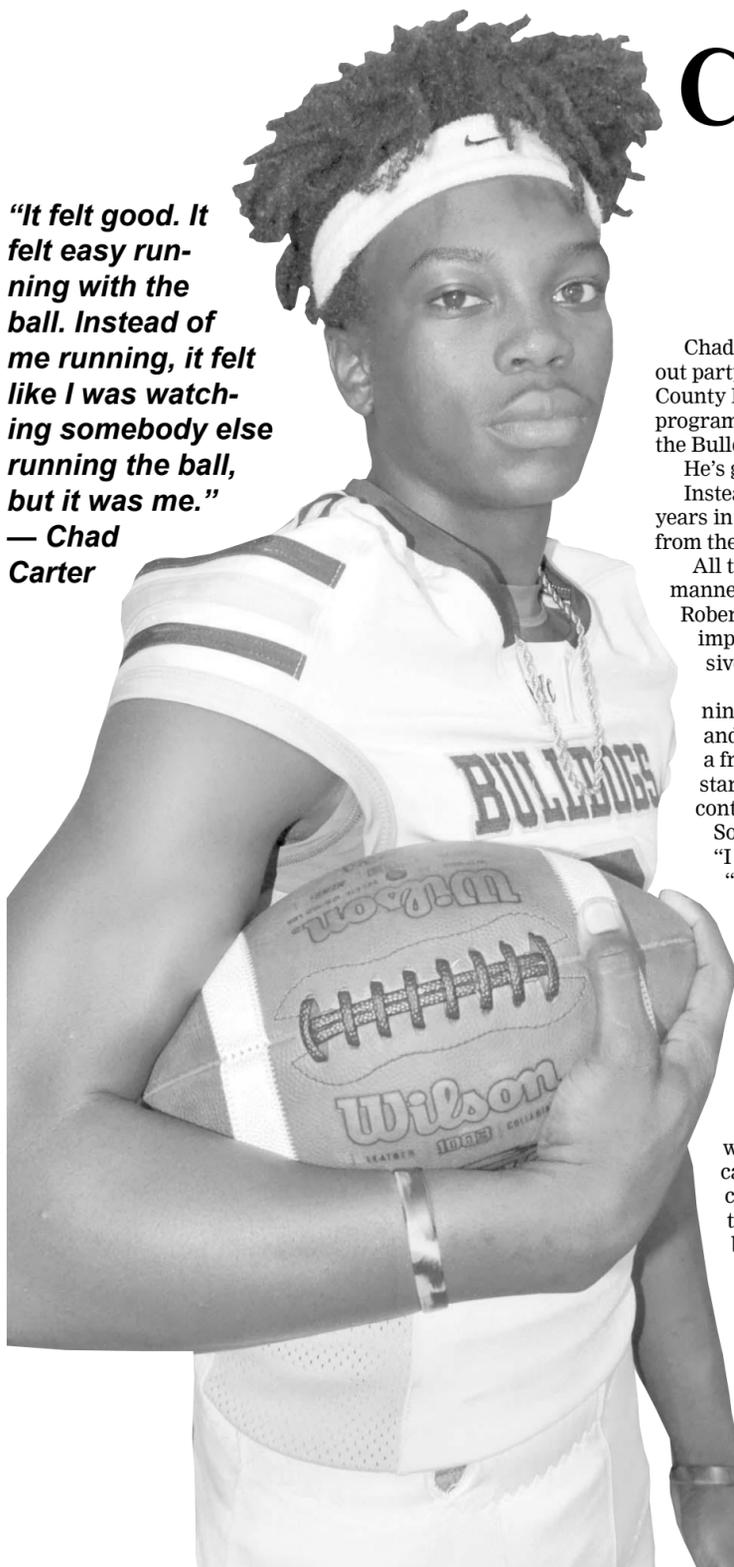


# WASHINGTON COUNTY

## Chad Carter: The Natural as WCHS senior rookie

*"It felt good. It felt easy running with the ball. Instead of me running, it felt like I was watching somebody else running the ball, but it was me."*

— Chad Carter



BY TOMMY HICKS  
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Chad Carter took his time in scheduling his coming out party. While many of his classmates at Washington County High School have been a part of the football program for several years, Carter didn't cast his lot with the Bulldogs until this past spring practice session.

He's going into his senior year. Instead, Carter said he has spent his time in recent years in the weight room and watching the team play from the stands.

All that changes this year, perhaps in a significant manner as Washington County head coach Devin Roberts said he believes Carter is going to have a big impact on the Bulldogs' performances, both offensively and defensively.

For his part, Carter — a small, but speedy running back who will also sometimes move outside and catch a few passes on offense, while serving as a free safety on defense — says he's ready to get started and hopes to be a player that will make solid contributions to the Bulldogs' fortunes this season. So, why the long wait to join the team?

"I wanted to stay in the weight room," Carter said. "I'm glad I'm playing right now. I guess I should have been playing (in the past) but I stayed out the last couple of years lifting weights."

Some of Carter's friends who have been on the team for a while finally convinced him to give it a try.

"A couple of my friends came to me and asked me to come out and play this year," Carter said. "I'm real excited to be playing this year."

According to Roberts, when Carter made his way onto the field for spring practice he quickly caught on to the WCHS offense. He not only caught on, but excelled at the running back spot to the degree Roberts says he expects Carter to be a key player for the Bulldogs this season.

"This is Chad Carter's first year out," he said. "He's a senior and he's had a fantastic spring and offseason and I'm excited about having him back there. There's a little bit of question about a guy who hasn't been under the lights before, but what he's capable of is pretty exciting."

"If he lives up to his potential he'll put up some big numbers this year. He'll probably be running the ball mostly and we'll put him outside and throw it to him a little

bit too."

In other words, whenever the opportunity avails itself, Roberts plans to put the football in Carter's hands and see what he can do with it. Along with returning starting quarterback Elijah Johnston, who passed for 1,000 yards and rushed for 1,000 yards last season, and a deep group of receivers, Roberts said Carter provides the perfect complement to the WCHS offensive attack.

As for his new sport, Carter simply says he's ready to get started.

"It was all right. It wasn't bad," he said of his first practice as a member of the Bulldogs' team. "I feel comfortable with what we're doing."

Asked what traits he feels he brings to the table for CHS, Carter said, "My running ability and I can move and I have a lot of speed and I have good hands and can catch and I can throw the ball a little bit. All of it really," he said.

The first time he clicked on a big yardage run in practice during the spring, Carter said it felt natural.

"It felt good. It felt easy running with the ball," he said. "Instead of me running, it felt like I was watching somebody else running the ball, but it was me."

He said much of his style of running was picked up watching others run the football on TV or from other members of the WCHS team carrying the ball in practice and in drills. "I've learned from the guys I grew up with, the guys that played before, from the town that I grew up in really," he said.

With Roberts raising the expectation level for the first-year player, Carter said he's OK with the high expectations and responsibility he is likely to be handed.

"I love it," he said. When he was watching the Bulldogs play from the stands the past couple of seasons, Carter admits he might have daydreamed a time or two. "I said that could have been me running with the ball instead of sitting in the stands. So I went into the weight room. I decided to get in the weight room first and then come out for football," he said.

WCHS opens the season Aug. 23 at Class 5A Citronelle.

"I'm looking forward to it," Carter said. "I know it's going to be tough, because we're playing against a good team, but I'm excited."

As to any goals he has set for himself, Carter isn't shy in revealing what he hopes to achieve.

"I want to at least get 100 yards (rushing) every game. I'm going to try for that every game," he said. "I just want to do the best I can for my coaches and my team."

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*Good Luck Bulldogs!*

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