

JACKSON

Towering DJ Jones heads up great group of Aggie seniors

BY WILLIE GRAY
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When Cody Flournoy, better known as Coach Flo, opens the 2019 season for his first stint as the head coach of the Jackson Aggies, he will have a seasoned group of players behind him. According to Flournoy, his senior class of Aggies numbers more than two dozen.

"It's pretty obvious that we are senior heavy, about 26 players are seniors and I think that is a big plus for us this year. Our seniors are a talented group of guys who enjoy the game of football and I look forward to seeing them step up as leaders during the coming weeks," Flournoy said.

While there is a large number of the seniors on the team, it isn't hard to find the biggest member of the Aggies' senior class, it is senior Darren Stephen "DJ" Jones. According to Flournoy, Jones stands at nearly 6-foot-8 and tips the scales at 270 pounds. Jones has been a lineman for the Aggies throughout his high school career and with his final season quickly approaching Jones says he wants to make every day count.

"I want to do everything that I have to do in practice and in the games in order to help my team win the region and be successful in the state playoffs," Jones said. "This is my last time to play here and I know that what I do can impact the team and possibly take me to the next level and that is what I plan to do."

When asked about his thoughts as to Jackson's new coaching staff and the format Flournoy has put in place, Jones gave praise to the new system.

"I think it is going to be really good for us. A lot of things have changed for us since last year, like the coaching staff, and we have installed some pretty good stuff and I am looking forward to a successful season," Jones said.

Jones is said to be recruited by schools including the University of South Alabama, Troy University and the University of West Alabama.

Returning for his second year as the Aggies' quarterback is DeyJun "Dey Dey" Hunt. The 5-9, 165-pound senior moved from receiver to quarterback last year and helped to steer the Aggies to a 9-3 record and a second-round showing in the postseason.

Hunt has set the bar high for his team this



Jackson head coach Cody Flournoy

AGGIES: Flournoy feels good about skill group

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coach) system, which is a spread offense," Flournoy said.

"We plan to take advantage of the speed that we have on this team and play a quick game. We are planning to take advantage of the talent that we have. We have a good group of seniors including our quarterback, running back and some of our skill guys; they all play hard, have good ball skills and are fast, so we really like the offense that we have matched with these guys."

On the defensive side of the ball Flournoy said he is equally excited about the players he has lined up.

"We are not a terribly big team defensively, but we have a lot of speed that allows us to get to the ball quickly. Again, the defensive players are going to play traditional Jackson Aggies football — they are aggressive, they are fast and hit hard. I like what I see," Flournoy said.

The coach in charge of the defense is a familiar face for players and Aggie fans. Flournoy hired long-time Aggies' coach David Mosely as the defensive coordinator.

"We hired coach Mosely as the defensive coordinator. David has been a long-time member of the coaching staff here at Jackson. He has been the linebackers coach here, he played his high school football here at Jackson and now he will be calling the defense," Flournoy said. "We will be running a multiple 3-4 defense, which a lot of teams are running now. We will be basing it a little bit off the Alabama schemes. We feel that it will allow us to do a lot of things out of that formation to be successful."

The Aggies will open their season in a preseason game against the 2A Leroy Bears on Aug. 23, in the "Battle of the Tombigbee," a game that dates back to 1928 and has the two teams meeting 68 times during that span. Of those 68 games, the Aggies have won 40 and Leroy 24, with four of the games ending in a tie.

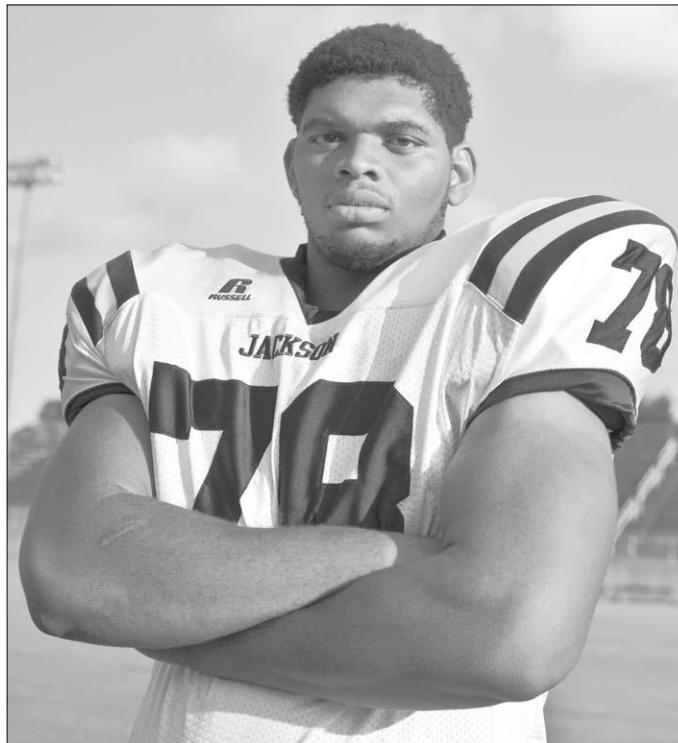
The first regular season game of the year will be Thursday, Aug. 29, when the Aggies travel to Grove Hill to face the first of two in-county rivals, the Clarke County Bulldogs. Last year, Jackson shut out the Bulldogs 20-0 and followed

the opening win with two dominating victories over Satsuma (47-21) and Wilcox Central (53-8).

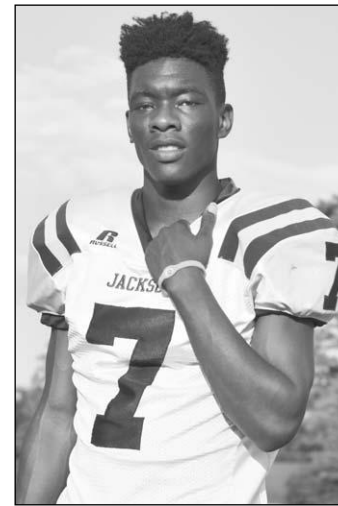
Last year, the midseason schedule proved to be a tough run for the Aggies as they took three losses on the chin — Vigor (40-6), Baker (17-7) and Thomasville (22-0). Flournoy said he knows this will be a test for his team again this season but he has confidence in his players and coaching staff they will be prepared for the run.

"The midseason schedule is our toughest part of the season. We have Vigor, who won the region last year, followed by Baker, which is a tough 7A team, and then we have a big in-county rival to play in Thomasville. I like our chances against all of them, but we have to play a lot of football before we get to those teams and I am looking forward to getting the season started," Flournoy said.

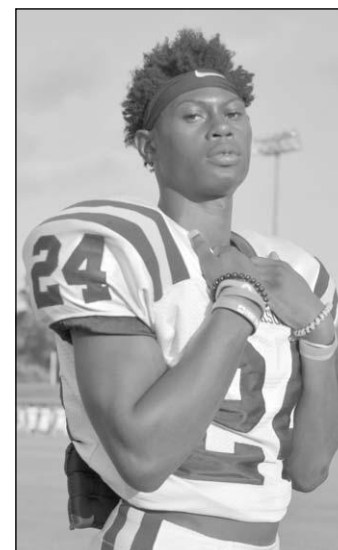
After getting through the midseason, the Aggies will take on three regional opponents in Citronelle (Oct. 11, Faith Academy (Oct. 18) and LeFlore (Oct. 24). Last year, the Aggies were able to claim victory over all three of teams before closing the regular season out with a 21-7 win over Demopolis. This year, the Aggies will host Demopolis for the final regular-season game on the schedule, Nov. 1.



Jackson lineman Darren "DJ" Jones



Quarterback DeyJun "Dey Dey" Hunt



Receiver Jarrett "Scooby" Leverette



Aggies running back Brihstyn "BB" Bell

season and says he will do his best to lead the Aggies to their ultimate goal of another state championship.

"My plan for the team is to go undefeated in the region and then work our way to state and win everything," Hunt said. "I feel real good about the guys we have. We have speed, good hands and everybody seems to be on the same page and I'm excited to see how things are coming together."

With the Aggies planning to line up in a fast-paced spread offense, one of Hunt's key receivers will likely be senior Jarrett "Scooby" Leverette. With his speed and talent, Leverette will likely be one of several Aggies who will see time on both sides of the ball, filling the spot of safety on defense. Leverette said preparation for

this season began during the last school year for him and his teammates.

"We have been working for this season since last year, through the spring and summer getting ready to get to the state championship," Leverette said.

Another key member of the Jackson offense will be Brihstyn "BB" Bell, a senior running back who has been a member of the Aggies' offense for the previous three years.

During the 2018 season, the Aggies scored an average of three touchdowns per game, many of which came from the running game. In offering his predictions for the upcoming Aggies' season, Bell said he plans to once again be one of the players who puts points on the scoreboard.

"My personal goal for the season will be to

score multiple times every game," Bell said. "As a team, we have been working together in order to get better. These are my brothers and we get better and stronger together."

Flournoy says Bell is a multi-talented player and in addition to starting in the offensive backfield he will see playing time at other positions as well.

"He (Bell) is an athlete. He will be the running back and inside linebacker and we will have him on special teams returning punts and kicks. He is a hard-nosed player who will get after it," Flournoy said. "That is what we have here, is a group of hard-nosed guys who will get after the football. They are athletic and they can run and hit, which is a tradition here at Jackson."

The four players and the other 22 seniors and the remainder of the Jackson Aggies will take the field for their first game, Aug. 23 when they face the 2A Leroy Bears in the historical "Battle of the Tombigbee," which will be a practice game for both teams.



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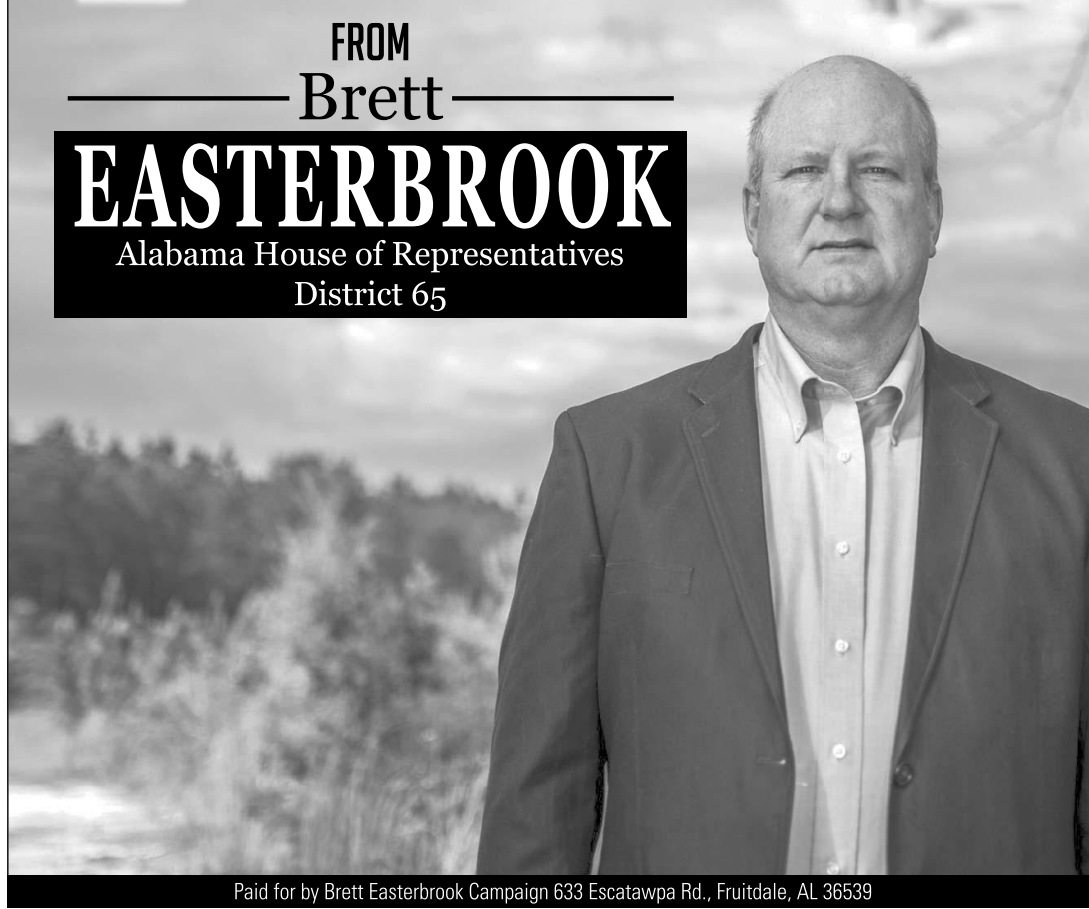
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