

# MERCER TITANS FOOTBALL



## GAME SCHEDULE

SEPTEMBER 11 **BOYLE COUNTY**  
Alvis Johnson Stadium | 7:30PM

SEPTEMBER 18 **TAYLOR COUNTY**  
Alvis Johnson Stadium | 7:30PM

SEPTEMBER 25 **CHRISTIAN ACADEMY-LOUISVILLE**  
Alvis Johnson Stadium | 7:30PM

OCTOBER 2 **WESTERN HILLS**  
WESTERN HILLS | 7:30PM

OCTOBER 9 **SOUTH LAUREL**  
Alvis Johnson Stadium | 7:30PM

OCTOBER 16 **HENRY COUNTY**  
Alvis Johnson Stadium | 7:30PM

OCTOBER 23 **DESALES**  
DESALES | 7:30PM

OCTOBER 30 **WEST JESSAMINE**  
Alvis Johnson Stadium | 7:30PM

NOVEMBER 6 **ANDERSON COUNTY**  
Alvis Johnson Stadium | 7:30PM

Last year, the Mercer County Titans earned their best regular season record (8-2) since Head Coach David Buchanan began calling the shots for the Titans five seasons ago. While the Titans played well in big games and were led by some exciting and talented athletes, they are losing 12 seniors from last year, three of whom are now playing Division-I college football.

Stepping in to fill that void are Jaden Vance and James Mathe, transfers from Anderson County and Ocean Springs, Mississippi, respectively. Both players will have an immediate impact on the team getting significant minutes on both sides of the ball. "He's good," Buchanan said about Bearcat transfer Vance. "Jaden is a good player and he can start for us."

Mathe is impressive in the weight room, squatting upwards of 600 pounds, and Buchanan is happy with his work ethic.

"James has got a lot of potential and we really like his motor, he really works hard and he wants to lead for us. We've been really pleased with him, we're crazy about him," Buchanan said.

The coach hopes both players can make the offensive line stronger giving the team even more depth. The Titans return experience and certainly aren't lacking in leadership up front; Buchanan expects the offensive line to be one of the more

impressive aspects of the team this season.

"I think they should be able to play at a really high level. I think our offensive line should be one of our stronger points. We've got experience there, we've got some depth, and I think we've got a little talent as well, so that should be a strength for us," said Buchanan.

Seniors Richie Macias, Jesus Garcia and Blake Brown are returning after opening holes for a Titan backfield last year that rushed for 2,501 yards and 35 touchdowns. Macias is a three-year starter at center.

"I'm super excited about our offensive line. We've got some new talent and I think we will be a strong force in our games," said Macias.

"Being known as the leader makes me wanna work harder and push the rest of the 'O' line so we can be our best," said Macias.

The Titans have just as much talent to replace on the defensive line with the departure of Darian Baker, Noah Sewell and Isaiah Dismuke. Buchanan wants junior Dakota Browning, senior Blade Reynolds and junior Zeydan Jackson to fill in for Baker, who now plays for Eastern Kentucky University. On the inside, Buchanan is looking for a big season from juniors Brent McKitric and Andres Lopez and expects Mathe and Browning to play inside as well. At the end of the day, the coach

always has two other options at defensive tackle as well, Garcia and Macias can fill at both interior defensive lineman positions.

"Those guys are going to get an opportunity to start, but we can come in there with Jesus Garcia and Richie Macias and they're both very, very good. I think our defensive line is highly competitive right now," said Buchanan.

The Titans are losing a lot of star power on defense from last season. Safety Kaelin Drakeford is now playing for Division-I Eastern Illinois University, leading tackler Bryce Yeast is now at the University of the Columbians, Baker is at ECU, defensive back Dillon Warren is at Georgetown College and outside linebacker, Malachi Yulee is on the Cardinals squad in Louisville. Four other graduates, Sewell, Dismuke and defensive backs Lane Horn and Jamisen Lewis were also play makers on the Titan defense. Some may consider the amount of talent the Titans are losing this offseason damning, but Buchanan's expectations for his defense have only been reinforced. He admits it won't be easy, but he is confident in the players at his disposal this year.

"We want to replace good players every year. Our expectation is not that we're going drop off, our expectation is that guys will work and prepare to fill those roles. Now, are we replacing some very talented players? Absolutely,

