

Bulldogs motivated with something to play for this year

**By Mike Lee
Eagle Contributor**

The Mullin Bulldogs' football team hopes playing for experience only in 2020 will pay off this season.

Mullin officially played as a junior varsity team last year, so its games didn't count in the District 16-1A Division II standings. On the field, the 2020 Bulldogs finished 6-4 overall and 0-4 in district. The six wins were their most since 2016.

"We had a lot of transfer kids last year that weren't going to be eligible for the varsity," Mullin head coach Brent Williamson explained. "We had a choice. We could play as a varsity with only seven players, and we might not be able to finish the season. Or we could play as a JV team (with 16 players) and fulfill our schedule all the way through.



**Brent Williamson
Head Coach**

"Our kids wanted to be able to play every week, so we had to play as a JV and forfeit all our district games. We contacted the UIL and told them what we were doing. We wanted our kids to be able to play, and we wanted to save the football program. Some of our kids might have moved to another school where they could play football," Williamson said.

Mullin opened the 2020 season with six straight wins over Olfen (64-0), Trent (46-0), Three Way (42-36), Panther Creek (62-6), Rising Star (62-24), and Veribest (60-40). In District 16-1A Division II, Mullin lost to Cherokee (47-0), Richland Springs (46-0), Rochelle (71-38) and Lohn by forfeit.

"Everybody got a lot of reps last year," said Williamson, the Bulldogs' third-year head coach. "The kids played pretty well. We need to learn how to finish the season. We got off to a good start, but then we ran into a buzzsaw against Cherokee, Richland Springs, and Rochelle in district. It was hard in district because we weren't playing for anything, but we still need to learn how to finish stronger."

The Bulldogs have 10 players this season, including nine seniors and juniors. Mullin had no seniors last season.

"Our numbers are not as high this year, but the kids we have worked hard during the

summer. They're quicker and stronger, and that should help us out," Williamson said.

Mullin's offense will revolve around the team's only lower classman, spread-back Troy Shelton, a 6-foot-1, 185-pound sophomore who started last year as a ninth-grader.

"Stepping on the varsity field as a freshman is tough for anybody," Williamson said of Shelton. "He had some success early on last year, but when we got into district, the other teams put a lot of pressure on him. I foresee Troy being a lot better this year. He understands our terminology better and sees the entire field."

Junior Craig Scott and Trent Coston, a 5-10, 190-pound senior, are projected to start as running backs. Juniors Cyrus Jackson and Abel Martinez (6-1, 165) figure to start

as wide receivers. Senior Brian Moore returns at center.

Defensively, Williams wants his players to be more aggressive and be better tacklers this season. Senior Cisco Taylor is expected to start at nose guard, with Scott and Jackson back as defensive ends. Coston returns at linebacker, as do Shelton and Martinez as defensive backs.

"We want to build on the success we had last year and play for a playoff spot this year," Williamson said. "Richland Springs is at the top of the state rankings every year, and Cherokee is very good. Rochelle is athletic and capable. Our district is brutal, but we're still shooting for a playoff berth."

The Bulldogs' last playoff berth was in 2014, and their last district championship came in 2004.



**Randy Sims
Asst. Coach**



**Matthew Lawrence
Asst. Coach**