

Owls

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room. He has picked up what we want him to do fairly well. He has performed at a decent enough level that we have to keep him on the field and keep coaching him up. He has really embraced his role on the defensive side of the ball.

#50 TY MARTIN (6'0", 270 lb., OL/DL) "Ty is going to be a rising sophomore. Ty is a specimen. He is a big kid and he can move well. He is a baseball prospect. He is a great catcher and hitter at baseball. He is able to transition a lot of his athletic ability and agility from baseball to football. We will look for good things out of Ty along that offensive line and defensive line this year."

#74 JAVIER GASPAS (6'2", 330 lb., OL/DL) "He is another one in that sophomore group who is a big kid. Behind Dane, he is probably our second biggest kid and second strongest kid. To be a sophomore, the kid is massive. We just need Javi to be a little more aggressive be a little meaner and a little nastier. Like Jamison, when he wants to turn it on - he is unblockable. We need more consistency from him on offense. We need him to also be a two-way player for us and perform at a higher level along that offensive line and play to his size."

#79 BRAXTON SIRCY (6'0", 240 lb., OL/DL) "Braxton is a big kid that shows up everyday. He is a hard worker. We just have to work on his technique a little bit and his fundamentals. He will be one of those rotational guys that gives us help. "It is a large sophomore class but those are the guys who highlight that group and help us coming out of that sophomore class."

FRESHMAN
Eleven Owls will suit up for the Black-and-Gold this fall for their first year with the program. Coach Dyer discussed members of the class who could make an immediate impact

"Out of this freshmen class, we do have some guys that are going to help us and get some playing time."

#24 JERMAINE CASON (5'7", 135 lb., RB/DB) "Jermaine is a very athletic kid. He is quick and fast. He is probably going to get some looks at cornerback for us and at wingback. He is going to get some reps on varsity for us."

#31 JAEDEN EVANS (5'6", 160 lb., RB/LB) "He has missed a few days with a sickness but we are getting him in pads and a helmet so he can get his padded acclimation days. He is going to help us at running back a little bit. He is a hard little runner. He gets behind his pads - he is a little bowling ball. He is going to get some reps with the varsity."

#32 WYATT CLAYWELL (5'8", 125 lb., WR/DB) "He plays a little X and a little Z for us on offense and a little defensive back for us on defense. He is one that is proving he is an athletic kid. He is an athletic asset. He is going to force his way into the varsity lineup or at least into a role position he can play for us."

#52 PAXTON HIX (5'11", 215 lb., OL/LB) "He is playing a little offensive line for us and linebacker. He is one of the more impressive freshmen. He has gotten a lot of varsity reps at linebacker this summer and this fall. He has performed very well along the offensive line to where he can possibly be able to give some of our starters some rest time."

COACHES

KEITH POWELL - "Coach Powell has years of experience - great years of experience. He has been to some big schools and he has been at some smaller schools. He has coached at the college level and is a very knowledgeable coach."

BILLY BARNHART - "He is a former head coach. He coached at Oneida. He is one of the most respected offensive line coaches coming out of East Tennessee."

JASON HARVILLE - "He has been coaching 20-plus years All three of those guys - Powell, Barnhart and Harville - have had 20 - plus years of coaching experience. They have all been to really good programs and they have all had successful programs. It is a blessing to have those guys on this coaching staff."

ALEX BRAY - "We have added Coach Bray to our staff over the last few weeks. I would have loved to have had him over the summer but that did not work out but we do have him now this fall. He is the youngest coach on our staff. He is a hard worker and

a student of the game. He does a lot of good things for us with our receivers and our cornerbacks."

Other members of the Owls 2021 coaching staff include: Steve Bray, Brandon Rigsby, Mark Sampson and Carson Hackett.

Lee Rice will serve as the trainer for the Black-and-Gold.

SCHEDULE
Dyer shared his insight on the Owls upcoming season and the tests the Black-and-Gold will face.

"We have a lot of hard tests on our schedule that is going to get us ready come playoff time. We expect to compete with every single one of those guys."

"Outside of our region, we have some familiar faces on our schedule as well. We have plenty of tests on our schedule. There is not a week on there where we can sit back and say hey this is a guaranteed win."

"A lot of the coaches of the teams we play have good squads and good programs."

"We are poised right now with our guys and the way they have bought in, our coaching staff and our program that we are going to be all right."

SATURDAY, AUGUST 21 SCHS AT GORDONSVILLE

This Saturday night showdown will feature one of the most storied and deeply rooted rivalries for the Owls and it will take center stage in Week One as the Black-and-Gold travel to "Tiger Town" for a tussle with cross-county rival Gordonsville. Their recent meetings have been an anomaly with the away team winning the last four meetings as the programs have won two apiece in the time span. This will be the first season since 2012 that the rivalry has served as a season opener.

Dyer quote: "This game is a big inter-county rival that has been moved to Week One."

Profile:
Mascot - Tigers
Colors - Blue and White
Region - Reg. 4-1A
2020 record and result - 9-3, Class A Quarterfinal loss to South Pittsburg

FRIDAY, AUGUST 27 SCHS AT DEKALB CO.

The second week of the season will see the Owls renew their border battle with DeKalb County. The Tigers are one of the early favorites for a Region 4-4A title and a contender in Class 4A.

Dyer quote: "DeKalb County is another team that has been very good here in the last few years. Coach Steve Trapp has done a good job with that program and they are poised to make another run in their region this year and 4A."

Profile:
Mascot - Tigers
Colors - Black and Gold
Region - Reg. 4-4A
2020 record and result - 7-5, Class 4A Second Round loss to Nolensville, 24-17

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 3 MAPLEWOOD AT SCHS

Week Three poses the first region test for the Black-and-Gold as they host Maplewood. The Panthers will be eager to prove themselves in 2021 after going 0-5 in 2020 after an abbreviated season for Metro Schools because of COVID.

Profile:
Mascot - Panthers
Colors - Maroon and Gray
Region - Reg. 5-3A
2020 record and result - 0-5, No playoffs

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 10 WESTMORELAND AT SCHS HOMECOMING

It will be a special night for the Owls' seniors when they host an old school nemesis in Westmoreland for Homecoming in Week 4. The Eagles will be searching for a good test as they compete in a difficult Region 4-2A. This matchup will be the first between the two schools since 2010.

Dyer quote: "This is an older rivalry that we have not played in a while. That is an old 2A rivalry and we used to be in the same region."

Profile:
Mascot - Eagles
Colors - Red and White
Region - Reg. 4-2A
2020 record and result - 5-6, Class 2A First Round loss to Marion Co., 35-17

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 17 WALKER VALLEY AT SCHS

Smith County will host their third straight game when Walker Valley comes to Carthage in Week Five. The Mustangs from Cleveland are coming off an 8-3 campaign and a second round appearance in the Class 5A playoffs.

Profile:
Mascot - Mustangs



SHEA HAILE / COURIER

2021 SMITH COUNTY HIGH SOPHOMORES — Front row from left: Marisa Hughes - mgr. , Anthony Hodo, Colton Meadows, Alex Mayers, Key Harris, Eli Manning, Owen Gregory. Second row from left: Kylan Johnson, Clayton Rigsby, Ryne Martin, Riley Lollar, Landon Butler, Seth Barnhart, Trenton Solomon, Ethan Madewell. Third row from left: Ty Martin, Jay Phillips, Javier Gaspar, Braxton Sircy, Noah White, Peyton Hix, Duke Jackson. Not pictured: Zaine Moore, Aaron McKinney, Jordan Burrum.

Colors - Blue and Gold
Region - Reg. 4-5A
2020 record and result - 8-3, Class 5A Second Round loss to West, 32-3

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 24 SCHS AT TROUSDALE CO.

The Owls will make the trek to Hartsville for a battle on "The Creekbank" with the Yellow Jackets of Trousdale County High. Coach Dyer will have his first meeting against one of his former teams in this matchup. In what used to be one of their traditional rivalries, this year's game will be the first between the two programs since 2008.

Dyer quote: "Trousdale County is a 2A powerhouse - they have been historically. They will be athletic as well, hard -nosed and well coached."

Profile:
Mascot - Yellow Jackets
Colors - Purple and Gold
Region - Reg. 4-2A
2020 record and result - 11-3, Class 2A Semifinal loss to Meigs Co., 16-13

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 1 SCHS AT STRATFORD

The first region road trip for the Owls comes in Week Seven when Smith County heads west to face Metro's Stratford High. This game could have major playoff implications as both squads are predicted by many to be fighting for the region's No. 2 seed.

Profile:
Mascot - Spartans
Colors - Orange, Black and White
Region - Reg. 5-3A
2020 record and result - 2-7, Class 3A First Round loss to Stewart Creek, 33-29

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 15 JACKSON CO. AT SCHS

The Jackson County Blue Devils are another old border rival that has returned to the Owls' schedule. The Blue Devils made the decision to make the jump to 3A where they are in Region 5-3A. The Owls and Blue Devils are old Class 2A rivals.

Profile:
Mascot - Blue Devils
Colors - Blue and White
Region - Reg. 5-3A
2020 record and result - 5-5, No Playoffs

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 22 SCHS AT MACON CO.

The final non-region regular season test for the Black-and-Gold features another showdown with one of Dyer's former teams as the Owls make the trek north to Macon County. The Tigers are poised for a strong run in Class 4A this season.

Dyer quote: "That is an old rivalry - we used to be in the same region. Macon County has had to move up to 4A but that has still been a rival who has been on the schedule. They are a county line rival and they are close rival. They love their football up there. Coach (Kyle) Shoulders has done a good job with that program and they are moving in the right direction."

Profile:
Mascot - Tigers
Colors - Blue and White
Region - Reg. 4-4A



SHEA HAILE / COURIER

2021 SMITH COUNTY HIGH FRESHMEN — Kneeling from left: Jay Howell, Jaeden Evans, Jermaine Cason. Second row from left: Terence Davis, Daniel Mayers, Matthew Louis, Heavenly Garrett - mgr. Third row from left: Brian Soucy, Paxton Hix, Wyatt Claywell, Spencer Estes, Treyden Niznik.

2020 record and result - 7-3, Class 4A First Round loss to Marshall County, 24-12

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 29 SCHS AT EAST NASHVILLE

The Owls will be Nashville bound for their regular season finale as they could potentially be fighting for a home playoff game in their battle with pre-season Region 5-3A favorite East Nashville. The Eagles have a talented roster and are expected to factor into the Class 3A Title picture. The Eagles and Owls last met in 2010 - a 29-27 victory for the Owls in the first round of the playoffs in Carthage.

Profile:
Mascot - Eagles
Colors - Red and Gray
Region - Reg. 5-3A
2020 record and result - 5-3, Class 3A Second Round loss to Pearl Cohn, 41-0

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