



Greene County junior Keenan Franks had a big season for the Wildcats as a sophomore, mostly at the quarterback position. Franks put on several pounds of muscle in the offseason and is expected to be a workhorse for GCHS this season as a featured running back out of the backfield. He is shown here following a blocker in jamboree action against Columbia.

# Wildcat offense features seasoned playmakers, but lack of overall experience and depth a concern

*Big play potential abundant for GCHS, but need more consistency*

By STAN CALDWELL and RUSSELL TURNER

As the Wildcats began preparations for the start of the 2022 campaign last spring, one of the areas that was generating the most excitement around the Wildcat program was the return of a dynamic threesome on the offensive side of the ball.

While GCHS expected to have some key spots to fill, beginning with their signal caller and along the offensive line, coaches knew the return of senior Kaden “K.J.” Miller and juniors Keenan Franks and Bryson “B.J.” Johnson gave them three very dynamic playmakers on that side of the ball. An explosive performance in the spring game

against Mobile, Alabama’s Davidson High School and several solid showings in 7-on-7 summer competition only served to heighten those expectations.

“We’ve got guys who can score from anywhere on the field,” said King. “In fact, we’ve got three guys who can score every time they touch the football, so that’s a luxury.”

Franks, a former quarterback for the Cats, returns for his junior season as the team’s featured running back. He rushed for 704 yards on 116 carries, a 6.1-yard average, and scored 10 touchdowns a year ago. He is a tough runner between the tackles, but also has great vision and the ability to make defenders look silly in the open field.

Johnson, who was a mainstay on the defensive side as a sophomore will spend most of his time on the offensive side as a receiver this year. Johnson caught 26 balls for 340 yards and five scores last year, but really turned heads in the spring game when he tore through the Davidson defenders for 160 yards and four TDs on just five receptions.

“Keenan ran the ball well for us late in the season, and also played some quarter-

back for us as well,” said King. “But I think his natural position is at running back. So he’ll be the workhorse and, hopefully, get the majority of the carries.”

“B.J. Johnson had a good sophomore season for us on both sides of the ball last year. We’re hoping we can spot-play him on defense and keep him primarily an offensive guy, because he’s our biggest threat in the passing game.”

But the player expected to be the offensive leader is senior Kayden Miller, who had 530 yards and six touchdowns on 45 touches last season as a receiver and a runner.

“K.J. has already got offers from Jones and Northwest, so he’s getting a lot of looks,” said King. “He’s great player who can do a lot of things for us, plus he’s a tremendous leader.”

He showed the type of big play ability King hopes to see a lot of this season in the jamboree at Columbia with a 53-yard TD scamper.

Johnson and Miller combined for nine catches and 102 yards at Vancleave, while Franks finished with 57 yards and two touchdowns on seven carries, despite having the long TD run called back.

Under King, Greene

County has become known as a team that spreads the field offensively and runs at a fast pace. But this year, the Wildcats will edge back to a more traditional approach on offense.

“I think defenses have caught onto the spread a little bit,” said King. “Used to you’d line up, go four or five wide, no huddle, go as

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Junior receiver B.J. Johnson (12) is shown here celebrating with classmate Keenan Franks after Franks scored his second TD of the game against Vancleave. Johnson and Franks have the potential to have lots of similar celebrations throughout this coming season.



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