

PRIDE

eighth grade students in the marching band, which has been done in years past, though he understands that move is just a stop-gap measure while working to grow the band.

“I’m not sure of the exact count yet,” Thornton said. “I’m hoping to still gain a few, and we ask for the community’s patience while we build size and number.”

While the band is working

on growing their numbers, they still know how to give it all they have, in the stands and on the field. Thornton said the band will play a few new tunes in the stands this year and will bring a few old favorites back as well.

The band will be under the field direction of Laura Turner as this year’s Drum Major. The show’s theme is A Night on the Town, with all original tunes composed by Fiaris. Those tunes are

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“A Night on the Town”, “Night Life” and “City Lights.”

“It’s a show telling a story of friends getting together for a night on the town,” Thornton said. “The second tune is jazzy-fun and gives different students a chance to do a solo. ‘City Lights’ is fast and is heavy on the percussion, and it has a tuba solo.”

“It’s a little different than what you’re used to.”



Photos by SHAE ROGERS  
Herald Contributor



King likes the ‘mix’ he has on coaching staff



Photo by JOHN SIMS STUDIO

The 2022-2023 Greene County High School football coaching staff is comprised of (Kneeling, L-R) Cameron Dunnam and Garrett West, (Standing) Lee Hill, Kaelin Moore, Head Coach Mike King, Caleb Prentiss, Gary Prentiss and David Tadlock.

Dungan decided that it would be better for the program if the two men switched roles back to the way it had been when King was head coach previously.

“Honestly, I felt like I do a better job, bring more to the program in the role I’m in now than when I was head coach. I didn’t feel like as a head coach, I did a very good job with my position coaching. I felt more comfortable back coaching the line.”

Not many duos could have made such a switch work, but King and Dungan have a relationship that goes back to when King was an assistant coach at George County and Dungan came to the Rebels after a long career in Alabama.

“Other than Coach Ainsworth, Coach Dungan has been the most influential coach I’ve had in my career, going on 18 years,” said King. “He became a real difference-maker in my life as a coach.”

King said there were no hard feelings about his departure from Pearl River after just one season under Seth Smith, who took over at PRCC after a successful tenure as head coach at East Central High School.

“As far as offensive philosophies go, we were just too different for it to work out,” said

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By STAN CALDWELL  
Special to the Herald

In high school football, putting together a cohesive coaching staff can be a tricky process, with a lot of moving parts that the head coach hopes will all act in unison.

At Greene County High School, head coach Michael King believes he has such a staff, and it is one of the more unusual mixes one will see at the Class 4A level.

There is a father-son combination, three assistants with decades of experience and others just cutting their teeth in the business. There are coaches with deep roots in the Greene County community and others who have come in from other areas. It’s a group that King believes can help the

Wildcats get back to the level the program enjoyed under longtime legend Johnny Ainsworth, who brought a state championship in 2003 that put Greene County on the Mississippi football map.

“Coaching can be a transient business, so this is a place where I’m looking to get guys who have a vested interest in the young men in Greene County,” King said. “They’re going to stay, and I’m not going to have to go back and fill these positions again, at least not for a while.”

Perhaps the most unusual aspect of the Wildcat coaching staff is the switch that took place just prior to the 2021 season. After serving as head coach in 2020, when King left for the job as offensive coordinator at Pearl River

Community College after three seasons as head coach at Greene County, Rotch Dungan was poised for his second season in charge. Instead, he relinquished the job to focus on some personal family issues that needed his attention, giving it back to King, who had returned to Greene County as OC after leaving PRCC.

“When Coach King left and went to the junior college, the opportunity was there,” said Dungan, a longtime assistant whose specialty is offensive line play. “I never really thought about being a head coach, but the opportunity came up and I thought it was the right time to give it a try.”

With King back in the Greene County program, and facing some personal issues,

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