



TOUCHDOWN XLVI

“Winning in the Trenches”



**Salem Times-Register
High School Football Preview
August 25, 2022**

Big, fast Highlanders hope to make Appomattox surrender Region 2C football crown

As coach Kevin Clifford enters his 16th year coaching the Glenvar football team, and 33rd year overall, he's excited to have the best turnout ever for this year's Highlander squad. Glenvar had 63 boys come out for this year's team.

"It's the most we've ever had," said Clifford, "and we had 35 come out for the middle school. I love coaching here and I'm very content. I feel blessed to be at a place like Glenvar."

The feeling is mutual in the Glenvar community. Clifford is the all-time winningest coach at the west Roanoke County school with 117 wins against just 54 losses. He led them to a state championship in 2014, and beginning with that year Glenvar's record is 79-19 through the 2021 season. That includes a 15-7 record in 22 playoff games, and Glenvar has lost just four Three Rivers District games in the past eight years in what is traditionally a very strong district.

If not for Appomattox County, Glenvar might have a few more state championships. The Raiders have beaten Glenvar in the Region 2C final for the past five years in a row, including a disappointing 27-21 loss at Highlander Stadium last November. Appomattox has dominated Class 2, winning five

state championships since 2015.

"It's frustrating, I feel like we could have won the game," said Clifford after last year's loss. "I'm proud of what we've been able to accomplish. I like the team we have coming back and they lose some people. I feel like we're right there."

The new season begins Friday night in Galax and the Highlanders have high hopes once again. Among the 63 total players are 15 seniors and Glenvar has a nice blend of size, speed and experience.

Two of the better players who graduated were quarterback Aiden Wolk and his top receiver, Dagan Williams. Both are now at Bridgewater College where they hope to continue their success. Last season Aiden threw 33 touchdown passes for over 2,600 yards and Williams caught 64 passes for 964 yards and 16 touchdowns.

Sophomore Eli Taylor will replace Wolk at quarterback, and he's already shown he can get the job done. Eli played in two games in relief of Wolk last year, including a 25-7 win at Martinsville in just the second game of his freshman season. He threw for 188 yards and three touchdowns the first time he stepped on the field as a varsity



Kevin Clifford is Glenvar's all-time winningest football coach by a wide margin.



ELI TAYLOR



ELIJAH CARTER

quarterback.

"Martinsville can be an intimidating place to play, but Eli is mentally tough," said Clifford. "He didn't look the least bit nervous, and we didn't do anything different than we normally would have done if Aiden had been in there."

"He got buried on one play but he got right up," said Glenvar assistant Rick Street. "I knew right there we had something special."

Taylor got a second chance to shine on the final Friday in October when the Highlanders hosted Radford. Wolk went out with a sore neck in the third period of a close game. Radford scored to go up 21-17 with just 58 seconds on the clock but Taylor engineered a game-winning drive, throwing a touchdown pass to Williams on the game's final play for a 23-21 victory.

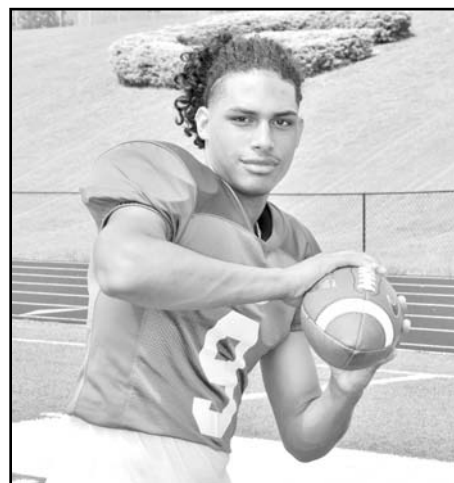
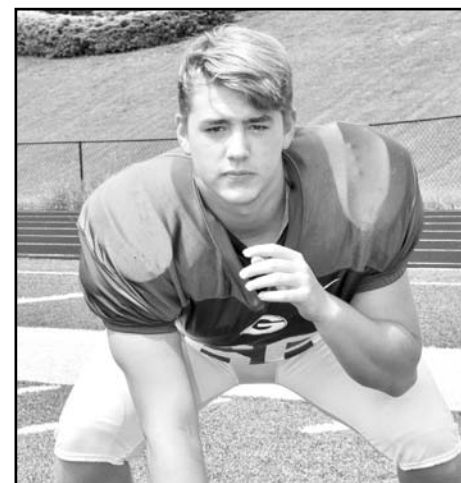
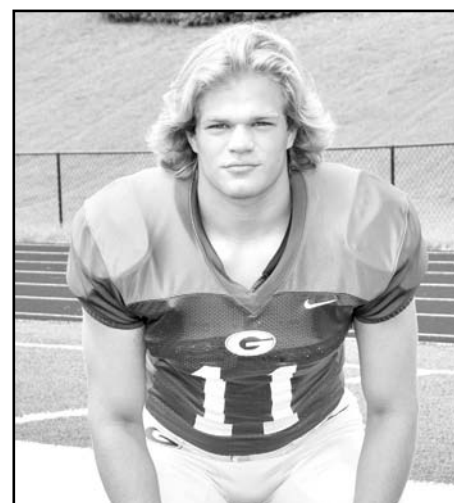
"That comes from preparation," said Highlanders' receiving coach Tony Spradlin. "When he was a rising eighth grader he'd be out here watching practice. Football is important to him and he works hard at it. He leads by example and his teammates like him. You win with kids like that."

Clifford compares him to his own son, Zack, who led Glenvar to the state championship in 2014.

"He's very similar to Zack," said Clifford. "He's a competitor and he owns up to his mistakes, and you don't see that much in an era where everything is about 'me'. I love coaching him."

Two freshmen will back up Taylor, Brody Dawyot and Cooper Mullins. Dawyot was an outstanding quarterback for Andrew Lewis Middle School last season before moving over to Glenvar. He's 6'3" and 195 pounds already and throws a nice ball. Mullins was the Glenvar Middle School quarterback last year, and the two backup

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**DAWSON ANDERSON****GABE FORD****NICK WOODSON****BLAINE BISHOP****SHANE GIBSON****JACK CAMPER****LUCAS BIRDLEBAUGH****CALEB CROWDER**

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HIGHLANDERS

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quarterbacks are the only freshmen on the Glenvar varsity to start the season.

With Williams graduated the Highlanders will look to spread the ball around to a group of capable receivers. Gabe Ford, at 6'3" and 210 pounds, is a good athlete who is expected to step up at a wide out position. He's grown four inches and put on 25 pounds of muscle in the past two years and is finally healthy.

Ford took a big hit two years ago and fractured his spine, causing him to miss the rest of the season and the first seven games last year. When he came back he was a good compliment to Williams and is ready to make his mark as a senior.

"I worried about the back last year, but not when I was playing," he said. "After treatment and rest I'm feeling good. I expect to be one of the main targets. Joey's been throwing the ball really well."

Senior Nick Woodson is another quality wide out with experience and senior Dawson Anderson is a favorite of receivers coach Spradlin.

"He's a dog," said Spradlin. "You know you'll get maximum effort out of him every time."

Senior Bryce Schart and sophomore Jack Camper are also wideouts

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GLENVAR

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who could see some time.

"We have a lot of depth," said Spradlin. "We don't really have starters as such, everyone could see some time. With the up-tempo style we play we'll be running them in and out."

Jackson Swanson returns to the slot position, and he's Glenvar's most versatile weapon. He caught nine touchdowns passes last year and he's also capable of breaking off a long run when you hand him the ball.

"He's one of the elite skill players in the area," said Clifford. "We want to get him the ball in space as much as possible."

Senior Avone Noel and junior Peyton Deel are backup slot players and both are capable. Ty Bolling, a senior, has been impressive after not playing football since middle school.

"He's picked up the offense quickly and our offense isn't an easy one to learn," said Street.

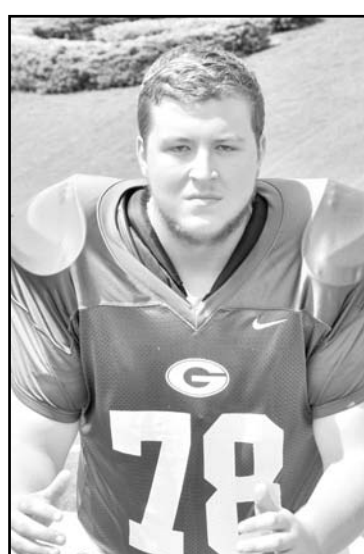
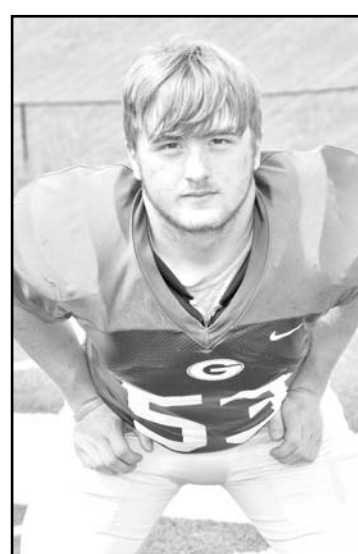
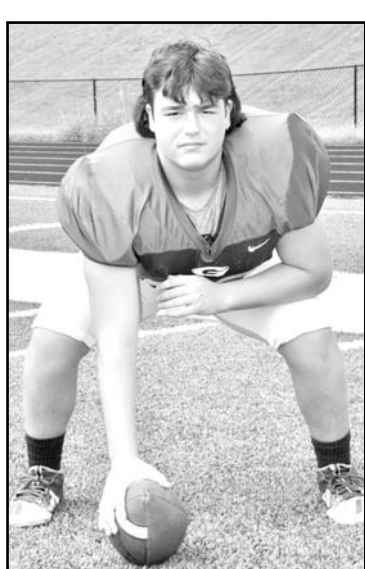
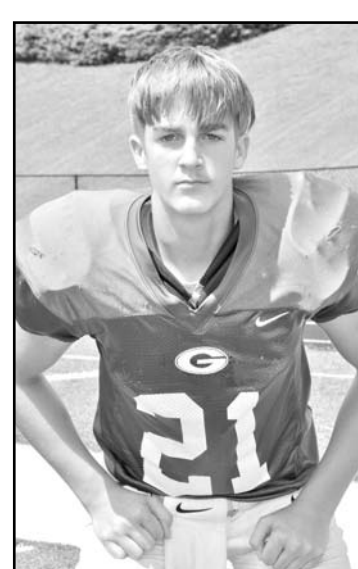
Elijah Carter, a speedy 5'9", 180 pound senior, will be the tailback. He replaces Kyle Hanks, who had 240 carries last year and shouldered almost all the load on the ground. Glenvar is looking for a similar performance from Carter.

"He could have a big year," said Street. "He's close to Jackson (Swanson) in explosiveness and he's good at catching the ball out of the backfield. He could be a big play back."

Junior Shane Gibson could also see some time and Camper can also run the ball when he's not playing receiver.

The backs should have some holes, as Glenvar has a big line with some experience. Jeff Johnson coaches the offensive line and one of his two sons on the team, Will, is a returning second team all-state right tackle. Will is 6'5" and 285 pounds and he'll be a road grader in the Glenvar running game.

The left tackle is Caleb Crowder, another big one at 6'3"

**PEYTON DEEL****AVONE NOEL****DEON TAYLOR****TY BOLLING****BEN HOLIDAY****HAYDEN ROSS****AUSTIN BLAKEMAN****TRISTIAN MUSE****ANTHONY LAROSA****BRYCE SCHAT****JOSH PATSEL****TYLER PIERCE**

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**NATE JOHNSON****WILL JOHNSON**

HIGHLANDERS

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and 270 pounds. Crowder is an experienced returnee and Lucas Birdlebaugh will be next to him at left guard. Lucas split time on the line last year.

Senior Blaine Bishop is the right guard and he can play several positions. Nate Johnson, Jeff's younger son, is a junior at 6'3", 240 pounds and he'll play some guard while starting on defense.

The center will be either Bishop, junior Anthony Larosa or sophomore Tavon Claxton. All three are underclassmen and they were battling for time in the preseason. Other linemen who could see time include 6'2", 235 pound junior Bentley Jones and 6'0", 245 pound Adam Waldron.

Glenvar's defense should be strong with seven starters returning from a unit that had three shutouts last fall and three other games where they allowed just one score. The unit is led by Nate Johnson, who earned second team all-state honors at defensive end last year. Nate was second on the team with 49 unassisted tackles and 40 assists and led Glenvar with 10 sacks.

Birdlebaugh will be the other defensive end with Crowder at one tackle and Ben Holiday at the other in Glenvar's four man front that Clifford prefers.

"It's the same scheme we always run," he said. "We have an even front and don't line up on the center. At this level I think that's the most effective, and we spend a lot of time on technique."

Other defensive linemen include Will Johnson, Bishop, Waldron and Claxton.

"We won't be little, and they all move well," said Johnson.

Gibson returns at inside linebacker and Camper and Larosa are also inside backers. On the outside Glenvar has Deel and Woodson is the "Rover." Nick had five interceptions last year and he's a three year starter who plays a hybrid safety position, playing the pass and also coming down in the box.

Carter is a three-year returnee at cornerback and he had three interceptions last year. Noel, Bolling, Ford and Deon Taylor are all possibilities on the other side and Anderson is the free safety.

"He's a baseball guy who tracks the ball well," said secondary coach Spradlin. "We have some smart kids who understand the concepts, all they need is a little experience."

Senior Tyler Pierce, who converted 57 of 60 extra point attempts last year, returns as the placekicker while sophomore Carl Muse will get some opportunities on field goals. Carl has a big leg and he drilled 10 of 14 field goal attempts between the jayvee and varsity teams last year.

Camper will take on the punting chores. He averaged 30 yards on eight punts as a freshman when last year's punter, Wolk, was unavailable. This year he'll be the full time punter and he can boom 'em.

Clifford loves his coaching staff, and most of them have been with him for the duration or close to it. Street will coach linebackers and runningbacks and be co-coordinator of the offense with Spradlin. Tony will coach receivers and cornerbacks and take over the play-calling this year.

"Rick wanted to let Tony do it," said Clifford, as Street had called the plays in the past. "What we do is more suited to Tony."

Jeff Johnson returns as offensive line coach, Nathan "Boogie" Nobles has the defensive line and Nick Spradlin handles the safeties. Clyde Landreth is the jayvee coach and he's assisted by Joey Taylor and Al Woods. Neil Swanson is the middle school coach.

"I'm proud of the job our coaches do," said Clifford. "They do a great job and they're a big part of the success we've had."

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The 2022 Glenvar High School football coaching staff. Front row, left to right; head coach Kevin Clifford, Nick Spradlin, Tony Spradlin and Nathan "Boogie" Nobles. Back row, left to right; Joey Taylor, Rick Street, Jeff Johnson, Clyde Landreth and Randy Spence.

GHS Football Coaches

GLENVAR VARSITY FOOTBALL 2022

Number	Name	Year	Position	Height	Weight						
1	Jackson Swanson	12	Slot/DB	5'7	165	20	Devin Clark	10	Slot/DB	5'9	145
2	Peyton Deel	11	Slot/DB	5'8	170	21	Josh Patsel	11	RB/LB	5'11	180
3	Avone Noel	12	Slot/DB	5'5	145	22	Shane Gibson	11	RB/LB	6'	215
4	Carl Muse	10	WR/DB	5'8	170	24	Elijah Carter	12	RB/DB	5'9	180
5	Ty Bolling	12	Slot/DB	5'8	175	28	Tyler Pierce	12	K	5'6	135
6	Bryce Schart	12	WR/DB	6'	170	33	Josh Woods	11	RB/LB	5'7	155
7	Reed Hutchison	11	Slot/DB	5'9	155	50	Nate Johnson	11	OL/DL	6'3	240
8	Eli Taylor	10	QB	5'11	175	51	Tristian Muse	12	OL/DL	5'9	210
9	Gabe Ford	12	WR/DB	6'3	210	52	Caleb Crowder	12	OL/DL	6'3	270
10	Jake Stanley	11	RB/LB	5'10	165	53	Austin Blakeman	12	OL/LB	5'9	195
11	Jack Camper	10	RB/LB	6'1	225	54	Bentley Jones	11	OL/DL	6'2	235
12	Deon Taylor	12	WR/DB	6'	185	55	Rhett Henderson	10	OL/DL	6'1	220
13	Nick Woodson	12	WR/DB	6'2	195	59	Tavon Claxton	10	OL/DL	6'3	385
14	Cooper Mullins	9	QB/DB	5'9	160	65	Alex Hale	10	OL/DL	6'2	235
15	Brody Dawyot	9	QB/LB	6'3	195	66	Blaine Bishop	12	OL/DL	5'10	215
17	Dawson Anderson	11	WR/DB	6'	170	70	Anthony Larosa	11	OL/LB	5'9	220
18	Gavin Hudson	11	WR/DB	5'9	150	71	Adam Waldron	11	OL/DL	6'	245
19	Jaden Beckner	11	Slot/DB	5'6	130	72	Lucas Birdlebough	12	OL/DL	5'11	215
						74	Ben Holiday	11	OL/DL	6'1	235
						75	Will Johnson	12	OL/DL	6'5	285
						78	Hayden Ross	11	OL/DL	6'3	280



The Salem High 2022 football sideline cheerleaders. Front row, left to right: Maggie Collins, Carliegh Martin, Emily Chitwood, Audrey Stamper, Ayla Lampros and Sophie Repasky. Middle row: Lebron Parsell, Kaylee Fisher and Isabelle Herndon. Back row: Ashlee Cundiff, Myah Sowder, Margaret Collins, Grace Bevins, Talia Hodnett and Chloe Fechko.



The Glenvar High 2022 football sideline cheerleaders. Front Row, left to right: Adrienne Hardin, Captain Victoria Guardia, Captain Isabella Boardwine and Delaney Domos. Second row: Ansleigh Ermel, Caroline Frantz, Emily Callaghan and Kayelynn Dickson. Back Row: Mara Creasy, Ryleigh Acree, Ali Brown, Julia Spencer and Gabrielle Powell.

BRIAN HOFFMAN

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LOSING TWO LEGENDS

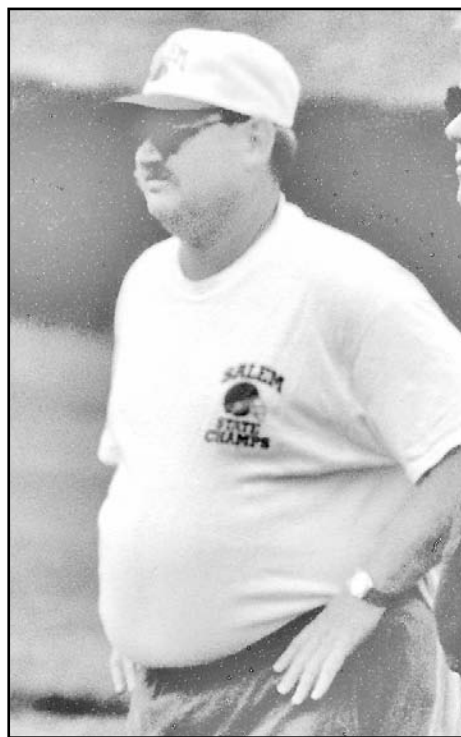
Two long time Salem High football assistants moved to the big lockerroom in the sky in the past five months as Marty Yuhas passed in April and we lost John Hinkle just three weeks ago, on August 5th.

Yuhas coached Salem running backs under coach Willis White and his successor, Stephen Magenbauer, before health issues forced him to step aside. He was also the Salem jayvee coach for many years and was credited with preparing the young Spartans for a smooth transition to the varsity.

Marty began his coaching years as an assistant to Tom Kucer on Glenvar teams in the mid-70s. He loved the game and the kids who played it, and the Spartans who came through the program under his guidance were lucky to have "Coach Yu" as a mentor. He was big on doing things the right way, both in sports and in



JOHN HINKLE



MARTY YUHAS

life in general. He was 73.

Hinkle was the defensive backfield coach for White every year Willis was head coach, starting in White's first year in 1983 and leaving when Willis retired after the 2003 season. The three years prior to coming to Salem he was the head coach at Carroll County High School.

John was a highly regarded secondary coach and Salem always had a strong defensive backfield under his tutorship. He helped at several other places after leaving Salem before health problems led to his passing at 78 years of age.

Hinkle also served a stint as baseball coach at Salem High and, ironically, Yuhas was his assistant. John grew up in Pennsylvania and was a Phillies fan like me, and we often talked baseball, as did Marty and I about his beloved Yankees.

I'll never forget how Hinkle resigned as baseball coach at Salem. As he told me, he was summoned to athletic director Sandy Hadaway's office for a meeting and when he arrived he was greeted by the parent of one of his players' who wasn't

seeing much time on the diamond. Realizing what was going on, Hinkle excused himself for a few moments, wrote out his resignation, and returned saying, "I've resigned, tell it to the next guy."

That's what he told me so I assume that's true. Whatever, we were very lucky to have both John Hinkle and Marty Yuhas find their way to Salem and we wish their families the best as we deal with their losses.

NEW COACH COMING IN

Salem has a new coach this year, but not a new face, as Austin Kirtner joins Don Holter's staff as a full fledged assistant.

Austin goes way back with Salem football, playing for the South Salem recreation team growing up and moving up the line at Andrew Lewis Middle School and Salem High. He was a middle linebacker and tight end for Spartan coach Stephen Magenbauer, graduating in 2018.

Kirtner started his coaching career by helping at Andrew Lewis under middle school coach Brian Hooker while attending classes at Roanoke College. He worked with the offensive and defensive lines at Lewis.

"After two years off it was good to get a refresher course on what Salem does," he said.

Austin was a volunteer coach for the high school team last fall, and this year he's a full-time assistant. He has one more semester to complete his college degree and he's currently student teaching eighth grade social studies at Lewis.

Holter has Austin coaching defensive ends on the varsity and he also helps with the tight ends, working closing with offensive line coach Adam Bryie. Austin hopes to land a job where he can continue coaching after graduation, preferably at his alma mater.

"I'm lovin' every second of it," he said.

FATHER-SON CONNECTION

Both Salem and Glenvar High Schools have father-son combos on the team this year and, along with out theme of "winning in the trenches," both coaches have sons playing on the line.

At Salem offensive line coach Adam Bryie is coaching his son, Jackson, who is the starting center for the Spartans this year. Jackson is a sophomore.

"He asks a lot of questions and he's shown some leadership," said Adam. "He's just a sophomore and he needs seniors around him, which we have."

Do dad and son talk football at home?

"For a long time we did, but we try to keep that separation at home," said Adam. "He loves football and he's enjoying himself."

At Glenvar, Jeff Johnson has been coaching his two boys since recreation ball. In fact, Jeff not only coached them in football but also in basketball and baseball, as well as many of the other kids on the Glenvar team.

Jeff is a good sized guy so it's not surprising his two boys are big kids. Senior Will is 6'5" and 285 pounds and junior Nathan is 6'3" and 240. Both are good players who can play on both sides of the line. Will is an offensive tackle first, where he was second team all-state last year. Nate is a defensive end first, and he was also second team all-state.

Between the lines, Jeff shows no favoritism for his offspring. He has a good group of linemen to work with and the Johnson boys have earned their positions.

"I try to treat them exactly the same as everyone else," said Jeff. "Of course I have high expectations for them, but whoever is good enough to play will play. I coach them all hard and everyone has to win their spot."

Glenvar does a lot of one-on-one work in practice and on occasion the two brothers will go up against each other, especially since they start on opposite sides of the line. Every once and a while some brotherly love will break out.

"They got in a fight last year," said Johnson. "They went one-on-one against

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Above, Nate(#50) and Will(#75) Johnson are standouts on the Glenvar line for their dad, assistant coach Jeff Johnson. Left, Jackson Bryie will be starting at center this season for line coach Adam Bryie at Salem.

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each other and Will got the better of Nathan. He didn't like it and they went at it."

Once they're on the same side of Friday nights all is well and it's been a joy for Jeff to be able to coach his sons.

"We watch a lot of game film together and all and all it's been a great time," he said. "It's very special to be out there spending time with my sons."

Both boys are hoping to play in college. Jeff is a big Tennessee fan and, if the boys had their druthers, they'd both end up as Volunteers. However, they're both keeping their options open and they don't go to the same place, that's okay.

"They both have good grades so getting into school won't be a problem," said Jeff.

IT'S CRUNCH TIME, BABY

Local broadcastling legend Dave Ross will be doing play-by-play for televised high school games for the 37th consecutive year this season, but with a new twist. The games will be carried on the "CRUNCH" website at crunchhssports.com.

In addition, fans will have an opportunity to pick which game is aired. Every Saturday morning during the football season Carol York of CRUNCH will select two football games for fans to vote on to be aired the following week. Fans will have until Tuesday at 5 pm to vote for the game of their choice, and then it will be announced on the website. Ross and color analyst Steve Myers will do the game and it will first be aired at 3 pm Saturday.

"The good thing is, if you miss it you can still watch the game any time you want," said York. "In the past if you didn't see the game or tape it, it was gone. Now it's on the website to watch at any time and as often as you like."

Ross has done games on TV since 1986. That first year Salem went to the state championship for the first time and Dave did the game at Hampton between the Spartans and the Crabbers. Ross has done high school games every year since without a break, switching stations a variety of times as the need arose.

This week's choice of games was between Cave Spring vs Hidden Valley or Lord Botetourt vs E.C. Glass. The winner should be on the website now, and check the CRUNCH radio show, hosted by York on 610-AM every Saturday morning, for future choices.

AND, be sure to vote for SALEM or GLENVAR to get your team on the air.



Ron Myers(center) will be back on the air Friday night to do Salem High football games on WRTZ 1410-AM radio with color analysts Bob Southard(left) and Mike Arthur.

SALEM GAMES BACK ON WRTZ 1410

"Radio Ron" Myers is back for his 28th year doing high school football on the radio this year, and he'll be on the air Friday night when Salem plays at Martinsburg in the season opener.

Once again games will aired on WRTZ 1410-AM with an air time of 6:35 pm for 7 pm games. Ron will do play-by-play with commentary from second bananas Bob Southard and Mike Arthur.

The games will also be streamed worldwide on trueoldieswrtz.com.

CATCH IT EVERY WEEK!!

Don't miss the weekly Salem Times-Register football contest, with great prizes every week of the season through

Christmas. The first contest will be in the September 1 edition and can be found in the sports pages of the STR. Look for "Eddie, Jr."(left) for the story about the contest every week and pick to win.



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TOUCHDOWN XLVI *"Winning in the Trenches"*

It's finally here. The 2022 football season begins Friday with Glenvar hosting Galax and Salem heading to Martinsburg. Both are good matchups to open the season.

We've had to wait a little longer for the football season this year. In 2021 the spring season, thanks to COVID postponing the fall schedule, didn't end until May 1st. Then, just four years later, the fall season began.

This year we had to wait nine months for high school football to come back around. Personally, I would be okay with having a spring and a fall season every year but that would be pretty tough on the players and coaches. In that regard, I did watch a few of the USFL games on TV in the spring to get at least a taste of the game.

This year's football preview is "TOUCHDOWN XLVI," or 46 if you're not good at Roman Numerals. The "L" is 50 and the "X" is a 10, so when you put the X in front of the L it means 50 minus 10, or 40. Then, the "V" is a five and the "I" is one more, hence 46.

This is the 46th year of Salem High football and my 49th year covering high school football in Salem. My first year was 1974, coinciding with Eddie Joyce's last year at Andrew Lewis High School.

It doesn't seem like that long ago but numbers, Roman Numerals or whatever, don't lie. There was a time when Eddie Joyce was the best football coach in the state, athletic director at Andrew Lewis High, in charge of the summer high school all-star games in Salem and father of one of the best high school quarterbacks the valley has ever seen. Oh yeah, and he was also Mayor.

Now, you can stand on Main Street in front of Powell's Pharmacy, or whatever it is these days, and ask people on the street if they've ever heard of Eddie Joyce. I bet half or more won't be able to tell you who he was. That's not surprising if you consider people 47 years old or younger weren't even alive when Joyce coached a football game in Salem. Hard to believe but true. Look it up on your phone.

In 1977 Salem High opened and I decided to name our high school preview "SPARTAN I," then up the Roman Numeral each year like they do with the Super

Bowl. However, when Salem split from the Roanoke County School System and Glenvar reopened as a high school in 1982 it didn't seem appropriate to call it SPARTAN every year and SPARTAN&HIGHLANDER was too long, so we changed the name to TOUCHDOWN.

This will be the 41st year of Glenvar High since the school reopened and the 51st year overall, as Glenvar had teams from 1967 until the year prior to Salem High opening, when Lewis and Glenvar combined to make Salem High under the Roanoke County umbrella. I hope you can follow that, it's easy for me because I lived most of it.

This year's theme for TOUCHDOWN XLVI is "Winning in the Trenches," and you old school football people know what I'm talking about. All the glitz and glamour is fun to watch but the teams that win are the ones that control the line of scrimmage.

I can remember when Mike Ditka was an analyst on one of the NFL pregame shows. Every week the talking heads would make their predictions and week after week Ditka would have the best results. One week a fellow commentator asked him what his secret was and Ditka replied, "I just look at the two lines and decide which one can whip the other, and that's the team I pick."

It reminded me of an old "Beverly Hillbillies" episode where the Clampetts were at the race track. Jed picked winner after winner and a character played by Don Rickles was sitting behind him, thumbing through his racing forms as he picked one loser after another. Finally Rickles leaned forward and asked Jed what HIS secret was, to which Clampett replied, "I just look at the horses and figure out which one can outrun the others."

To which Rickles replied, "Smart guy!!!"

Well, you could imagine Ditka's cohorts feeling the same way, but there's a lot of truth to what he said. Show me a good line and I'll show you a good football team.

These days, the spread offense is in vogue and coaches like to chuck it all over the field. Sometimes it works, sometimes it does not, but year after year the teams playing in December are, more often than not, the teams that force their will on the other team on the line of scrimmage. I remember former William Byrd coach Jeff Highfill, who played for Eddie Joyce at Lewis and used many of Eddie's schemes and phi-

losophies, talking about playing William Fleming when he was at Byrd.

"They'd be down on the five yard line and line up in the shotgun," said Highfill. "They outweighed us by 50 pounds a man on the line but they were throwing the ball. That was okay with me."

Willis White, who coached four state championships and winning teams for 20 straight years at Salem High, was a big proponent of the run. A lot of you may not know this, but he was the head coach at Fort Chiswell from 1966 to 1968 and had a 9-21 record.

"They used to call me 'Air White,'" Willis recalls. "Then I got smart."

Spartan coach Don Holter played for White at Salem High and he's following in Willis' footsteps. While many teams are eliminating the fullback in their spread formations Don, who played the position himself at Salem, is using it to his advantage. Cameron Leftwich scored 31 touchdowns from the fullback position last season.

"We'll run the same version of our offense we always do, and that includes the fullback," said Holter. "I really don't care what other teams do. A lot of coaches like to show off their fancy formations when what they should be doing is teaching their kids how to block and tackle. That's the essence of the game."

Winning in the trenches. That's the essence of the game.

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Salem High coach Don Holter watches practice from high on the hill at the fields behind the high school.

Stories and Photos in TOUCHDOWN XLVI by BRIAN HOFFMAN



JAYVEON JONES



PEYTON LEWIS



CHRIS MARTIN

Speed is strength of Salem offense

Salem High offensive coordinator Lewis Pitts lost some big pieces from last year's dynamic offense, but he has enough coming back to make the Spartans a force again. Besides, you know what they say. Good programs don't rebuild, they just reload.

Two graduated players who will be tough to replace are receiver Chauncey Logan, Jr. and fullback Cameron Leftwich. They combined to score 43 touchdowns last year while Leftwich had twice as many rushing yards as the next high and Logan had more receiving yards than the rest of the team combined. Both were three year starters.

"You don't just replace players like that," said Pitts. "The good thing is, we're blessed with a lot of speed. We'll be a very quick team."

Overall, this might be the fastest team Salem has ever had. Last spring's 4x100 relay team that finished second in the state, just six one-hundredth of a second behind the winner, was comprised of four football players. One, junior Peyton Lewis, was also the 55 meter state champ in indoor track and the 100 meter state champ in the spring, running a time of 10.62.

"We have a veteran quarterback and a lot of skill players, so with that kind of speed there's a lot of things we can do," said Pitts.

Another member of that relay team is senior Jonathan Vernon, and he's expected to step up in a big way as a "Z," or slot receiver. He'll share time with junior Chris Cole, and both play on the defense as well so they'll be shuttled in and out to keep them fresh.

"We send plays in with the Z's, so they'll get a lot of breaks," said receivers coach Matt Kesler.

Junior Josiah Moyer is the "X," or wide receiver. Also a key defensive player, Josiah is another speedy player who will be a prime target in the attack. Kesler also likes junior Khamari Garner, a 5'8", 130 pound waterbug.

"He'll give Josiah a spell on occasion," said Kesler of Garner. "He's not real big but he's a hard worker and he'll block his tail off."

DaRon Wilson returns at quarterback for his third year starting behind center.

Wilson has greatly increased his arm strength over the past two seasons and is capable of making all the throws. He passed for 1,656 yards and 18 touchdowns last year and this season he's a captain and leader of the team.

Wilson, another member of the 4x100 relay team, also adds an element of speed to an already quick backfield. He can run on designed plays or take off out of the pocket when no one is open. Versatile junior Chris Martin is the backup.

In the backfield, Jayveon Jones was Salem's second leading rusher behind Leftwich last year. Playing tailback, he had 762 yards on 159 carries for an average of 4.8 yards per carry. A junior, Jayveon will move to fullback this season where he displays some of the same qualities as Leftwich.

"He's physical and he's built low to the ground," said Salem coach Don Holter, who loves the fullback as that was the position he played during his high school days on the Spartan team. "His blocking continues to get better."

Jones was a fullback on the jayvee team his freshman year, so he knows the position.

"He runs downhill and sees things very well," said Salem runningbacks coach Brian Huff. "He knows where the holes will be. I like to call him a 'pounder'."

Senior Isaiah Barlow is another fullback. He averaged 5.8 yards per attempt last year and scored five touchdowns. Wilson Rakes can also play fullback and he has a quick burst and he plays physical.

Martin and Lewis will be the main tailbacks. That's not a comedy team from the 1950s (Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis for the younger set) but a two-headed monster that will cause plenty of problems for opposing defenses.

Chris Martin is a junior who will wear the number "3," and that's all Salem football fans need to know. The number is traditionally given to a versatile and standout player.

"We don't give that number out to just anyone," said Holter.

Wilson picked up where dad left off, quarterbacked Salem to state crown

It took another 30 years, but the Wilson family finally got their state football championship in 2021. Spartan senior quarterback DaRon Wilson is determined that it's not going to take another 30 as the Spartans open the 2022 season on Friday night.

Rewind back to 1991. Salem had, possibly, its most talented team ever. Future college players and standouts were all over the field. All-time Salem rushing leader Marcus Parker was the tailback and bruising Matt Sheffey was the fullback. Receivers were Spartan all-time reception leader Brad Bradley on one side and state caliber speedster Keith Moyer on the other with Virginia Tech bound Shaine Miles at tight end on offense and linebacker on defense. Josh Pugh and Chad Custer gave Salem size in the line and the quarterback was a dual threat standout named Tra Wilson.

The Spartans were coming off two frustrating seasons in 1991. In 1989 they went undefeated in the regular season but star quarterback Stephen Magenbauer was injured in the playoffs and Salem lost to Blacksburg in the state semifinal, finishing 12-1. Magenbauer did not return for medical reasons in 1990 but Salem still battled to a 9-1 regular season, losing only to Graham. However, injuries caught up to them and the Spartans lost in the state semifinal once again, this time 19-0 at Lee County.

Then along came Tra Wilson for 1991 and the Spartans had that standout quarterback they were missing since Magenbauer was injured. Everything clicked in the regular season. Salem got revenge on

Graham, winning 48-7 at a packed Salem Stadium, and finished the regular season undefeated and virtually unchallenged. They beat Tunstall and Brookville to win the region and drew Lee again in the state semifinal. This time, at home, the Spartans buried the Generals, 40-12.

Salem's first state championship was considered all but a formality as Spotsylvania came to town on Saturday afternoon, December 7th. A full house filled sunny Salem Stadium on an unusually warm December day to watch the Spartans finally get that ring they had come so close to obtaining in prior years.

But it didn't happen. The visiting Knights rode a bruising fullback to score on sustained drives that featured multiple four and five yard gains. Meanwhile, the Spartans committed some uncharacteristic mistakes that proved to be costly and Spotsylvania took a 31-27 win to the disbelief of the Salem faithful. It was one of the toughest losses in Salem High football history.

"To this day I haven't watched that film," said Tra Wilson. "We talk about it sometimes and he (DaRon) likes to joke that he won a state championship and I didn't. I just let him have his fun."

DaRon was a sophomore quarterback when Salem beat Lake Taylor, 28-20, on a day that was even warmer than when his dad played in the state championship. That was because it was on May 1st, due to the 2020 football season being postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic. Both teams were undefeated prior to the game in Norfolk and

DaRon passed for the score that put Salem ahead to stay, hitting Chauncey Logan, Jr. with a 65 yard hookup midway through the third quarter.

It was ironic that Wilson passed to Logan for the big score, because at the beginning of the season Logan was the starting quarterback and DaRon was the backup. However, "Deuce" sprained his ankle in practice after the third game and Wilson was called on start against Cave Spring. All he did was throw three touchdown passes in a 63-7 win and Wilson has been the starting quarterback ever since.

"That's still one of my favorite games," said DaRon. "It was a perfect game for me to start."

"We were thinking of making that move anyway but when Deuce sprained his ankle it forced the issue," said Salem offensive



DaRON WILSON



DaRon Wilson dives into the end zone for a touchdown.

coordinator Lew Pitts. "We knew DaRon was 100 percent capable of being an outstanding quarterback and Deuce was so valuable all over the field. It was a matter of having all our best players on the field at the same time."

That game concluded a long road to being the quarterback in the valley's premier high school program. When Wilson was in sixth grade he played on an AAU football team, the Virginia Wolverines, that was comprised mostly of kids from Roanoke City. He got in the game for just six quarters all season and the coaches wanted him to be a wide receiver and defensive back, but DaRon was determined to be a quarterback.

When he entered the seventh grade, at Andrew Lewis Middle School, he started to come into his own. He split quarterback duties as an eighth grader at

Lewis and when he got to the high school he was the jayvee quarterback as a freshman. He started shooting up, he put on muscle in the weight room and he was always fast.

"Everything came together for me," said DaRon. "I made a big jump when I got to high school and my confidence started to grow. I've gotten stronger and faster."

He comes by the speed honestly. Tra was always fast and he coached DaRon and his older brother, Jeremiah, on the AAU Roanoke Tigers track team. Both boys have been outstanding on the oval and Jeremiah won a state ring of his own, capturing the 110 hurdles state championship in 2019. His determination proved to set an example for DaRon.

"Jeremiah was battling a pulled

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WILSON

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hamstring and the night before the race we weren't even sure if he would run," said Tra. "It was still touch and go up to race time, but he decided to run and won the race. I think that showed DaRon what you can do if you have the right mental attitude."

DaRon ran on the second place 4x100 relay team in the state track meet in June, and with all four members of the team returning they have a shot at winning it all this year. They finished just six one-hundredth of a second behind Pulaski with four members of the SHS football team on the relay.

"Track has really helped me," said DaRon. "When I came in as a freshman I ran the 40 in 4.9 and I've gotten it down to 4.4."

Wilson has developed as a running threat for the Spartans. In the scrimmage with Brookville he took off for a 70 yard touchdown run after failing to find a receiver open. He's a threat to "take it to the house" every time he touches the ball, whether through the air or on the ground.

"I love to run the ball," said DaRon. "I've gotten faster and stronger and I'm much more confident."

DaRon was voted a captain for this year's team and he's taken over a big leadership role. Although the state win over Lake Taylor was just a year and four months ago, DaRon and tackle Andrew Lutes are the only full-time starters remaining from that team, not counting kicker Wesley Cross.

"He's really matured into a good leader," said Pitts. "He has a strong arm and a great knowledge

of the offense, and he's not only a good player, he's a great person. His confidence level is good but he's also very humble. He's just a pleasure to coach."

Last year DaRon completed 90 of 155 passes for 1,656 yards and 18 touchdowns and he ran for another 264 yards and five touchdowns. Logan, his prime receiver for the past two years, has graduated and moved on to James Madison University but DaRon feels this year's group will be equally effective.

"We have Jonathan (Vernon), Josiah (Moyer) and Chris (Martin) and they're all good receivers," said Wilson. "I look at them as my little brothers."

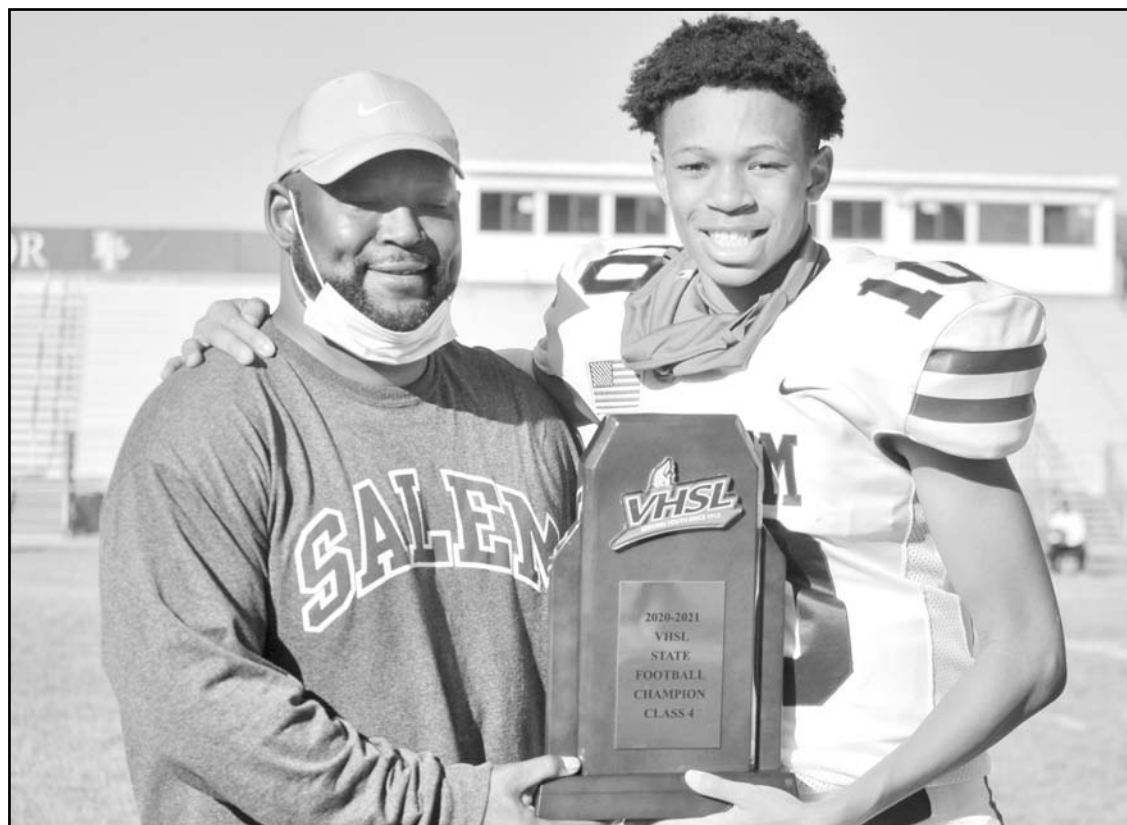
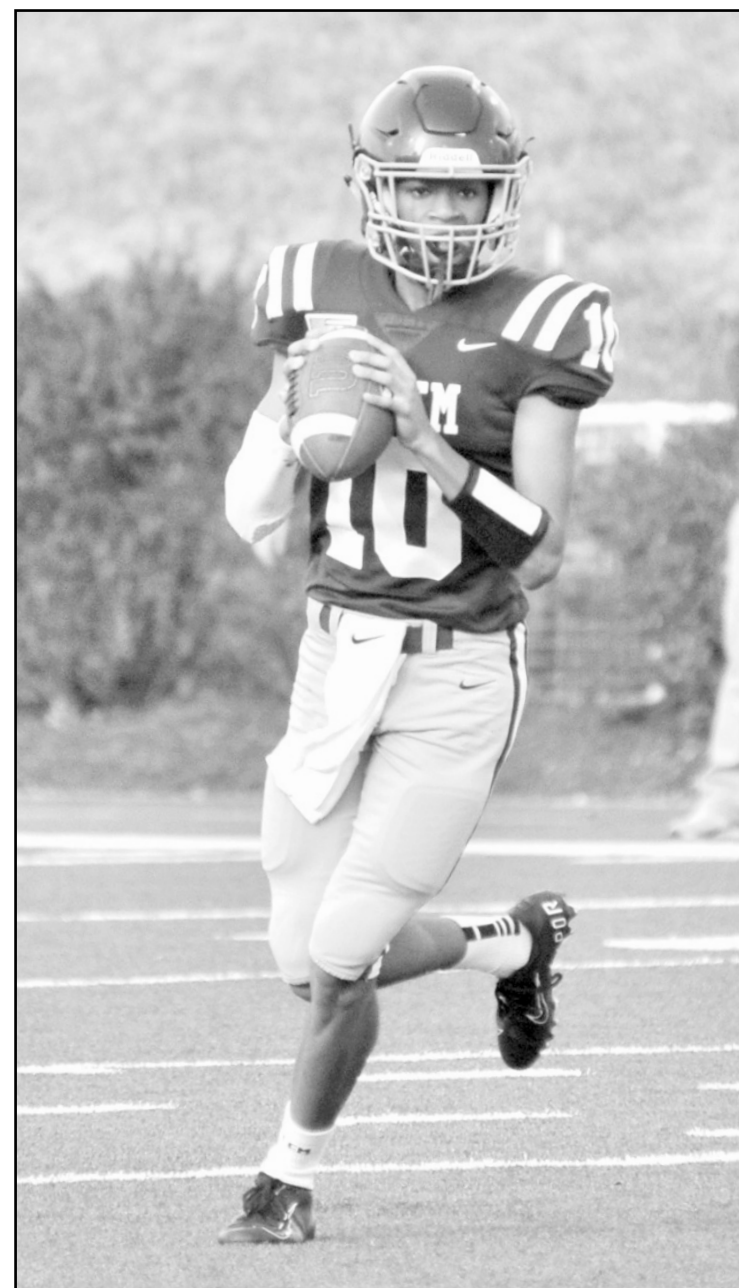
DaRon plans on playing sports in college, but he's undecided on whether it will be football or track. Older brother Jeremiah is making a name for himself running for the University of Virginia and DaRon really likes Dartmouth, an Ivy League school. He has the grades to go there.

"In our house if you don't have a 3.2 average you don't play sports," said Tra.

The 2022 season opens Friday at Martinsburg and that's one of the two teams Salem has not beaten in DaRon's 20 starts at quarterback, the other being Broad Run in last Fall's state semifinal. He's anxious to get another shot at Martinsburg tomorrow.

"I've been waiting for this game, we just have to win it," he said. "I really like our chances, and once we catch stride no one is going to stop us."

In other words, the Wilsons aren't planning on waiting another 30 years.



Tra and DaRon Wilson pose with the VHSL state Class 4 football championship trophy following Salem's win over Lake Taylor in the spring season of 2021.

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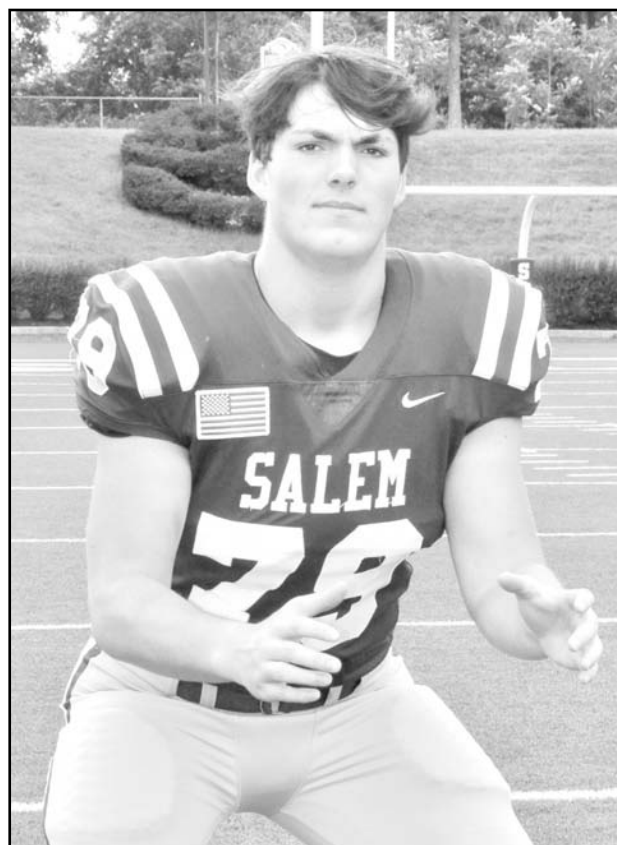
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**ANDREW LUTES****CALEB WRIGHT****KHLEIF JOHNSON**

SHS OFFENSE

continued from page 3

Martin didn't have a single carry last year but he's looked good in the preseason and is primed for a big year. He has all the tools.

"He's athletic, he's long and he's hard to bring down," said Huff. "He's very athletic."

Lewis is not only the fastest player on the team, but one of the fastest in the whole Roanoke Valley. Also a junior, he has good size at 6'1", 190 pounds. Peyton missed most of last season with an injury but he's healthy and ready to go.

Other tailbacks include juniors Ruimel Nugent and Toby Jackson. The latter is the brother of former Spartan standout receiver Shawn Collins. One this Salem is emphasizing this year is that all the backs can also catch the ball out of the backfield.

"Our tailbacks can catch and run routes," said Pitts. "We can take our tailbacks and put them at receiver when we go with two tight ends. We have a lot of two tight end sets this year."

Junior Jaelyn Allen is the starting tight end sophomore Ryan Coe will also see time there. Both are big targets with good hands and Salem tight ends always need to be good blockers as well. Junior Julian Warne could also see time.

On the offensive line, Andy Lutes is a third year starter who will move to the right side. Lutes played on the left side for the past two seasons, including the championship year, but this year he'll be on the right side as a road grader for the running game.

"We run to the right more often and he gives us a little more power over there," said offensive line coach Adam Bryie. "He won't have any trouble adjusting, he knows the offense. It's just a matter of fine tuning the nuances."

Lutes has come a long way in his high school career. As a freshman Andy was 5'11" and 180 pounds but ballooned up to 250 by the time the 2021 spring season began.

"I gained a lot of weight during the pandemic, and I kinda shot up," he said. "I ate a lot of protein shakes, and there wasn't much to do at home so I sat around a lot."

Andy was expecting to play for the jayvee team as a sophomore, but found himself starting on the varsity at left tackle.

"I got pulled up at the beginning of the year and they put me in the starting lineup," he said. "I ended up starting the whole season."

Andy is listed at 6'4" and 255 pounds as a senior. He's added muscle through hard work in the weight room and is one of the strongest players on the team. He's expected to be one of the top offensive linemen in the area, and maybe the state.

Lutes is a captain, as is right guard Caleb Wright. Also a senior, Wright moves from center to guard to give Salem a formidable combination on the right side next to Lutes.

"We do a lot of trapping and bootlegs, so we moved him to guard to take advantage of his athleticism," said Bryie.

**LONDON MILES**

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"We're blessed with a lot of speed." SALEM OC LEW PITTS
continued from page 6

Another captain, senior Khaleif Johnson, will be the left tackle. Johnson will be responsible for protecting Wilson on the "blind side" on passing plays and he has good size at 6'2" and 255 pounds. "He's a real physical player," said Bryie. "He's powerful and he wants to do well."

Senior Landon Miles was slated to start at left tackle but he was injured in the scrimmage with Brookville and hoping to return sometime later in the season. He's a talented, versatile lineman who will be missed in the early going. Landon played three different line positions last year, starting for most of the season.

Carter McBride, a senior, will likely take over the left guard spot. He also starts on defense and he's a bull on the line.

"He's a powerful kid, and he has a little bit of a mean streak," said Bryie.

Jackson Bryie, Adam's son, takes over at center. He's a sophomore.

"As the center he has to be a leader on the line, even though Andy and Caleb are captains," said Adam. "He makes the pass protection calls, and on our run calls we go from the inside out."

Senior Carter Ferguson will back up the tackles and senior PJ Bruner will back up the guards.

On special teams, junior Wesley Cross returns as the placekicker and Martin will be the holder. After an outstanding freshman season Wesley missed the end of last year after sustaining a leg injury. He still finished five for eight on field goals and 29 of 30 on extra points. Caleb Wright kicked when Wesley went out and did a good job, and he'll be the backup again.

Chris Martin will be the punter, and he's a threat to take off at any time. Cross can also punt.

Martin(aka number 3) will also return punts along with Moyer. Martin, Toby Jackson and Moyer will handle kickoff returns and Ryan Coe and Wright are long snappers.

The offense looks like a solid unit once again, with speed and versatility and some good experience in important spots like quarterback and tackle.

"We still have a lot of work to do, but I'm excited about our offense," said Pitts. "We have a quick team, a strong line and a lot of versatility."



ISAIAH BARLOW



RYAN COE



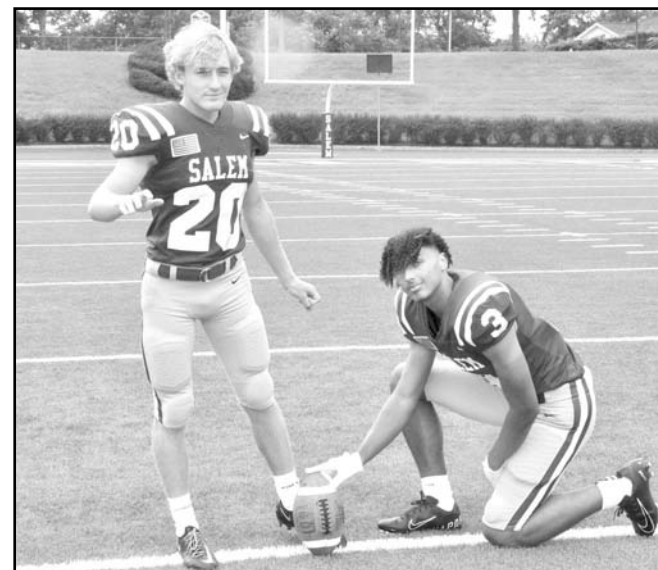
TOBY JACKSON



NICHOLAS DeHAVEN



SEAN SCOTT



**Kicker
Wesley
Cross &
Holder
Chris
Martin**

Cameron hangs tough where the boys are

Love of the game keeps McBride on the Salem High gridiron

James Brown liked to sing “This is man’s world,” and what better place than in a football locker room?

Football is a game for men, or so they say. The women cheer on the sidelines, or dress up in scanty outfits for some kind of bizarre football league that more resembles Playboy Magazine than Sports Illustrated. Still, every once and a while a girl or a woman will go out for a football team, but it’s usually as a kicker, or at most a wide receiver. So what’s the deal with Cameron McBride?

The Salem senior you see wearing number 60 on Friday nights is an offensive lineman and defensive end, not the typical positions you associate with the opposite sex. She’s been playing since she was a kid and she loves the game, and after being told for years she shouldn’t be on the football field she’ll come running out with the Spartans to start the season in Martinsburg tomorrow.

The only daughter of parents Patrick and Angela McBride, Cameron’s love for the game started years ago when she played in the backyard with older brother Peyton and twin brother Carter. Peyton played on the Salem varsity and graduated in 2019.

When Cameron and Carter were in the second grade they started into recreation sports and Patrick took Carter to football tryouts. Cameron, who had tagged along, noticed there was a girl trying out for the team. That girl ended up lasting for just one week, but Cameron got it into her head that she could play as well.

“I told him ‘dad, you have to let me play,’” remembers Cameron. “He said he wasn’t sure it

was a good idea, because I was his baby girl. I didn’t play that year but I didn’t let up, and next year he let me play.”

When Cameron showed up the next season there were lots of funny looks.

“People wanted to know, ‘why is she here?’” said Cameron. “But it went pretty good, and I was about the same size as everyone else. Not everyone thought I should play but I was okay with that.”

As it turned out Cameron not only kept up with the boys, she was one of the better players. A Denver Broncos fan, she knew the game from watching it on TV with dad and she was aggressive on the field, often dominating the boy across the line from her. It didn’t take her long to gain the respect of the other players, and to her delight she wasn’t, “a girl trying to play football” but just another member of the team.

By her sixth grade year some of the boys started passing Cameron in size, but she was determined to play. She showed up to play for Mike Jones’ Junior Spartan team and ran into a detractor in assistant Lee Eubanks. A long time Salem football fan and recreation coach, Eubanks is nicknamed “Coach Mule” for his admiration for the offensive line, the position Cameron played.

“Coach Mule didn’t think it was good for me to play because he was afraid I’d get hurt,” said Cameron. “Coach Jones decided to let me play and I had a pretty good season. At the end of the year, at our banquet, coach Mule admitted he was wrong and that I deserved to be out there.”

Next came middle school, and as each year passed the boys got bigger and stronger and



CAMERON McBRIDE

Cameron. . .well. . .continued to become a woman.

“In recreation ball we were about the same size, but when the boys started hitting puberty they started to really grow,” she said. “But the coaches accepted me and a lot of players were boys who I had played with for years so they were used to having me on the team, and Carter’s always been very helpful.”

Cameron played two years for Andrew Lewis and saw some time on the field, but once high school came around she knew it would be tougher. She showed up at the weight room with regularity and did everything the boys were doing to gain the high school coaches’ respect. Still, it was touch and go with Spartan coach Don Holter, who was starting his first year as head coach when Cameron was a freshman.

“He said it was okay (to come out for the team) but if he thought I could get hurt he would let me help out with the team,” she said.

“She came to the workouts and we didn’t treat her any differently than the boys,” said Holter. “Like the other seniors, she’s been with me all four years and she’s been an outstanding teammate. We treat her just like the other players and she gets bruised up just like the rest of them.”

Obviously there were some provisions required. During her freshman year Cameron changed in the high school and met the others on the practice field. For the past three years she’s been changing in a bathroom in the weight room that is seldom used, and she waits to shower until she gets home.

On the practice field she’s just one of the guys, and she wouldn’t want it any other way. She goes through the same drills as everyone else and, for the most part, doesn’t notice the boys taking it easy on her. It’s tougher to win battles on the line than it was in the fourth



Cameron McBride(#60) waits to take the field prior to Salem’s scrimmage with Magna Vista.

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"She's been with me all four years and she's been an outstanding teammate."

SALEM COACH DON HOLTER

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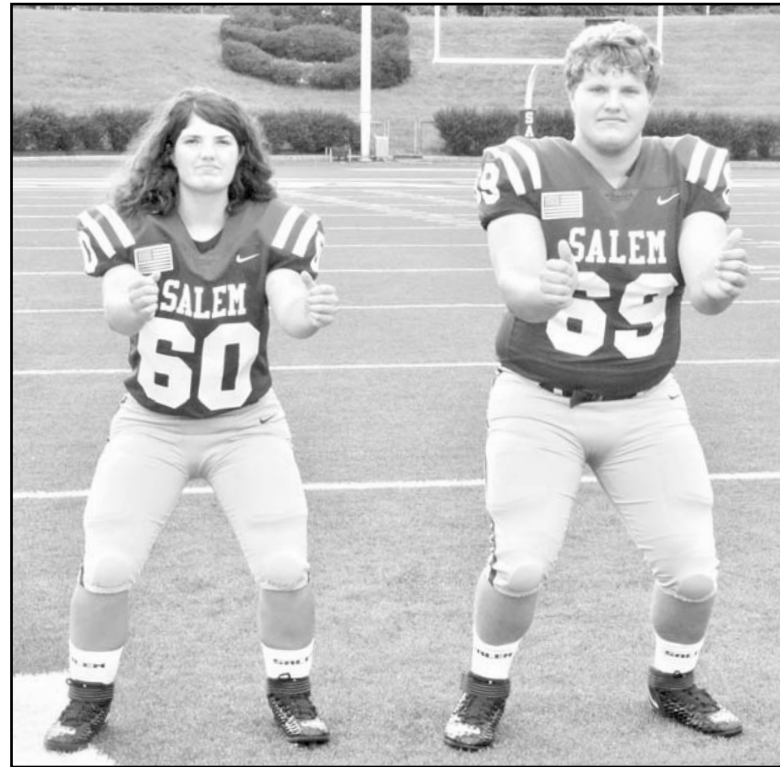
grade, but she does her best and won't back down. "When we do our walk-throughs she does a lot of scout team stuff," said Salem assistant coach Austin Kirtner, who works with the defensive ends. "She's always one of the first ones to jump up to get on the scout team."

Now 5'4" and 153 pounds, Cameron is the shortest player on the varsity roster and the third lightest on the team. Kicker Wesley Cross is listed at 150 pounds and receiver Khamari Garner is a svelt 130. Cameron's twin brother Carter is listed at 5'10" and 270 pounds.

While Carter could possibly start on both sides of the ball this year, Cameron has yet to see the field in a varsity game. Even when Holter sent in the second team late in games that were well in hand, number 60 remained on the sidelines, pining for an opportunity. If it never comes she can live with that, because she's enjoyed just being on the team.

"After this year I'm really going to miss it," she said. "I know this is going to be my last year playing but maybe I can help coach Little League or something. I'd definitely like to stay around the game, because I love it."

And what was that James Brown used to sing? "This is a man's world, but it wouldn't be nothing, not one little thing, without a woman or a girl."



Twin brother Carter now outweighs Cameron by 120 pounds.



Cameron instructs youth players at the Salem Dept. of Parks & Recreation Clinic put on by the Spartan coaches and players.

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SALEM VARSITY FOOTBALL 2022

Number	Name	Height	Weight	Position	Grade						
2	Peyton Lewis	6'1"	190	LB/RB	11	25	Ruimel Nugent	5'9"	162	DB/RB	11
3	Chris Martin	6'1"	180	DB/RB/QB	11	30	Brian Villegas	5'6"	162	K	12
4	Jonathan Vernon	5'11"	170	DB/WR	12	32	Isaiah Barlow	5'10"	172	DE/FB	12
5	Bryson Fraction	5'9"	172	DB/WR	10	34	Dontay Davis	5'9"	198	DL/FB	10
6	Josiah Moyer	5'10"	160	DB/WR	11	36	Wilson Rakes	5'8"	205	LB/FB	11
7	Jaelyn Allen	6'3"	215	LB/TE	11	50	Landon Miles	6'1"	220	DE/OL	12
8	Toby Jackson	5'11"	170	DB/WR	11	53	Javeon Henderson	6'5"	255	DL/OL	12
9	Chris Cole	6'1"	170	DB/WR	11	55	Jackson Bryie	5'11"	245	DL/OL	10
10	DaRon Wilson	6'2"	165	DB/QB	12	57	Caleb Wright	6'1"	230	DL/OL	11
11	Nicholas DeHaven	5'10"	160	DB/WR	12	58	Quinton Dillard	5'9"	211	DL/OL	11
14	Trenton Moyer	6'3"	191	DE/WR	11	60	Cameron McBride	5'4"	153	DL/OL	11
15	Sean Scott	5'7"	160	DB/WR	12	64	Daryl Myers	5'9"	228	DL/OL	12
16	Caleb Jeffreys	5'11"	141	DB/WR	11	66	PJ Bruner	5'9"	200	DL/OL	12
17	Jayon Green	6'2"	184	DE/TE	12	69	Carter McBride	5'10"	270	DL/OL	12
18	Julian Warme	6'	170	LB/TE	11	72	Xavier Robinson	5'7"	213	DL/OL	11
20	Wesley Cross	5'7"	150	K	11	75	Carter Ferguson	5'10"	215	DL/OL	12
21	Javione Jones	5'9"	188	LB/FB	11	76	Gavin Reese	5'8"	274	DL/OL	12
23	Khamari Garner	5'8"	130	DB/WR	11	77	Khaleif Johnson	6'2"	255	DL/OL	12
						78	Shakur Reddicks	6'	257	DL/OL	11
						79	Andrew Lutes	6'4"	255	DL/OL	12
						80	Ryan Coe	6'	194	LB/TE	11



SHS COACHING STAFF

The 2022 Salem High School football coaching staff. Front row, left to right; Daniel Dyer, Matt Kesler, Brian Huff and Joel Hickerson. Back row; Austin Kirtner, Lewis Pitts, head coach Don Holter, Ryan Murphy, Shaquan Manning and Adam Bryie.

Defense is a priority for Salem High Football

Ryan Murphy opens his second season as Salem's defensive coordinator when the Spartans travel to Martinsburg Friday night. The talented Bulldogs hung 35 on the Spartans in last year's opener, but in the next 12 games Salem's defense held the opponents to a touchdown or less seven times, including three shutouts.

Murphy has settled into the position like a worn sweatshirt, and he's excited about what he sees from this year's group. Certainly there's work to be done, but he had to be pleased with what he saw last Friday as Salem shut out Magna Vista when the first teams were on the field.

"The attitude and effort was there, and that's the most important thing," he said. "Complacency is not good. You're always looking for areas to improve."

Salem coach Don Holter makes it clear that defense is a priority at Salem. He puts his best athletes on that side of the ball and adheres to the philosophy his high school coach, Willis White, preached during his highly successful 21 year run as Spartan coach. "If they don't score, the worst you can do is tie," White said many times.

"Coach Holter runs a 'defense first' team," said Murphy. "He has a standard of excellence and he expects everyone to meet those expectations. I'm very comfortable with my position and understanding of what coach Holter wants."

Salem is replacing eight of the 11 starters on last year's defense and the three who return were all sophomores last year. Two of the toughest to replace will be tackles Cameron Martindale and Stacy Williams, who raised havoc on the interior line for the past three years. Stacy is now at VMI and Martindale is playing for Bridgewater.

"They were monsters," said Murphy. "They both played just one side of the ball and that's rare in high school, and they were both very good. We're going to use three or four different groups to try and replace them."

Daniel Dyer coaches the defensive line and he has some size to work with. Senior captain Khaleif

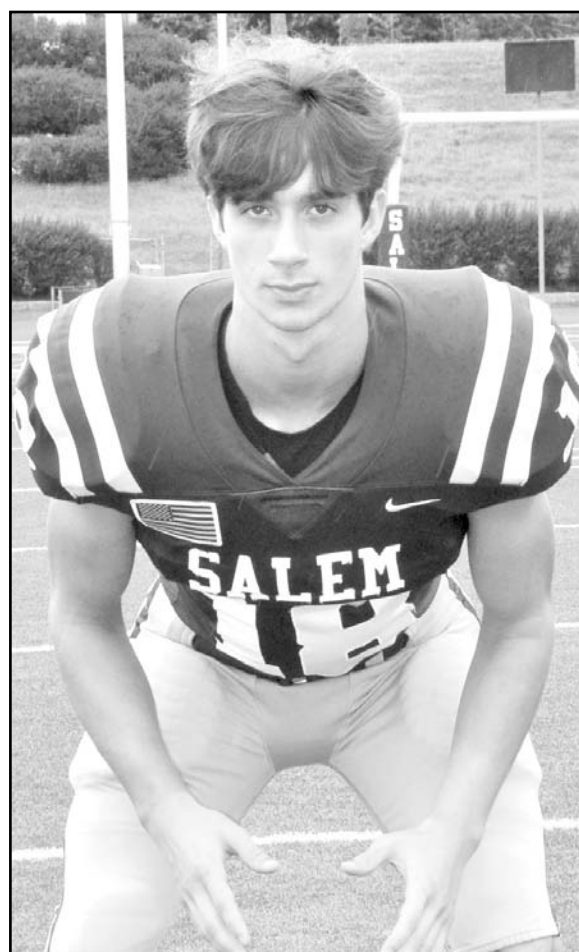
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Salem Defensive Coordinator Ryan Murphy makes a point during a Spartan practice.



JAELYN ALLEN



JULIAN WARME



CARTER McBRIDE

DEFENSE

continued from page 11

Johnson is 6'2" and 255 pounds and he's tough to move.

"He's powerful and explosive and he's worked hard in the off-season," said Dyer. "He has a big frame with long arms. We're looking for a big year out of Khaleif."

Carter McBride will be in the rotation at nose guard. A 270 pound senior, he filled in for Martindale when Cameron injured his knee in the playoffs last season and did a commendable job.

Seniors Andy Lutes and Caleb Wright both start on offense but they could also be used on the defensive side of the ball this year. Both are also captains and they're "football smart."

"Andy is one of the strongest kids on the team, he's powerful," said Dyer. "Caleb has a little grit to him. He grew up playing football and he always gives a great effort."

Senior Isaiah Barlow is slated to start at defensive end on the strong side, where the opposing tight end lines up. He had seven solo tackles last year in a backup role and he's ready to make his mark.

"Isaiah is really strong," said defensive ends coach Austin Kirtner. "He does a great job on the edge."

Julian Warne is scheduled to start on the weak side. A junior, he was making things miserable for the Warriors in Friday's scrimmage with Magna Vista.

At linebacker, junior Jaelyn Allen has switched from number 33 to number 7, the number worn by Noah Collins last year. Noah led the team in tackles and Allen could be doing that for Salem this year. He was second on the team last season with 90 total tackles, including 51 solos. He had four tackles for losses from his middle linebacker position.

In addition to changing numbers Jaelyn is also changing positions this year. He'll move from the middle to the "Sam" linebacker position. At 6'2" and 215 pounds he has good speed and brings a load.

The "Sam" position is sometimes called the "Robber." It's like a strong safety, playing down in the box on the side where multiple receivers line up.

"He'll be playing the position Carson Williams played last year," said Murphy, who handles the linebackers himself. "Jaelyn is bigger than Carson and he moves well. He's really good in space."

Junior Ryan Coe moves to the middle. He saw some time on the line last year as a sophomore when injuries hit.

"He's a smart kid," said Murphy. "You can count on him to be in the right spot."

Juniors Jayveon Jones and Peyton Lewis will man the "Will," or weak side linebacker spot. They give Salem good speed and quickness.

"They both play offense so we'll have some type of rotation,"

continued on page 13



PJ BRUNER



CARTER FERGUSON



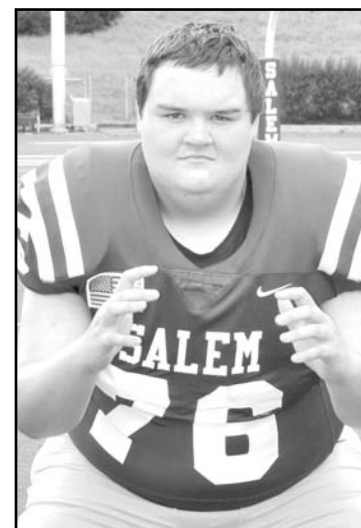
JAYON GREEN



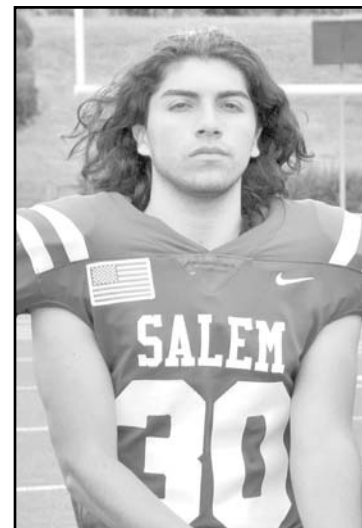
JAVEON HENDERSON



DARYL MYERS

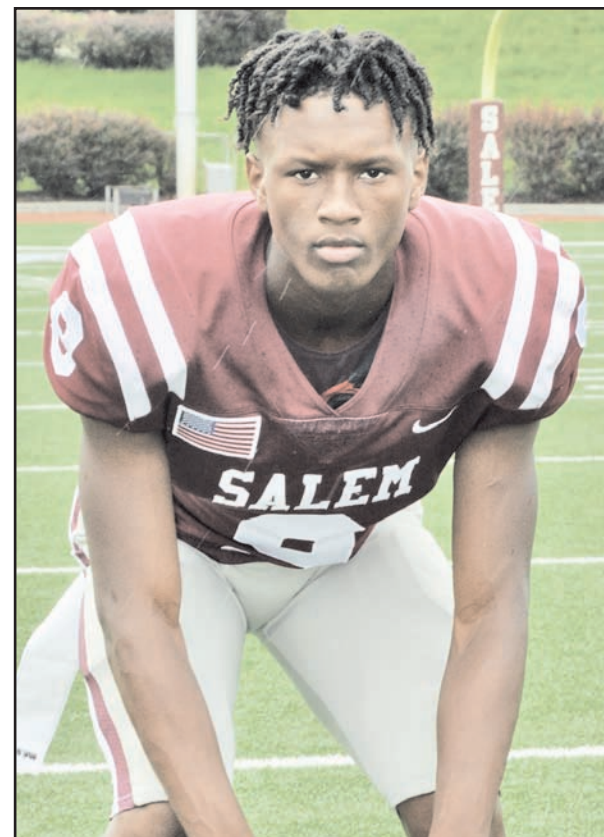


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SHS DEFENSE

continued from page 12

said Murphy. "Both are dynamic players."

Warme can also play some linebacker in addition to defensive end.

Of the three returning starters on defense two are defensive backs, Chris Cole and Josiah Moyer. Cole, the strong safety, had 73 tackles last year and led the team in passes defended with nine. He's a junior.

"Chris is very athletic and very aggressive," said secondary coach Shaquan Manning. "He's grown

some and he's not afraid to stick his nose in there. He's more of a run stopper but he's also in coverage, and he makes the calls for the defensive backs."

Moyer, another junior, is one of the starting cornerbacks. He didn't start until midseason last year but he made his mark with 23 tackles and a pair of interceptions.

"Josiah does a lot of things well," said Manning. "He's physical and he feels the game. He slows it down."

Senior Jonathan Vernon is the other corner and he brings a lot of speed to the defense. He'll be

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SALEM SPARTANS



SALEM HIGH SCHOOL VARSITY FOOTBALL

- 8-26 at Martinsburg, WV
- 9-2 at Franklin County
- 9-9 **WILLIAM FLEMING**
- 9-16 **NORTHSIDE**
- 9-23 **BLACKSBURG**
- 9-30 at Christiansburg
- 10-7 **PULASKI COUNTY**
(Homecoming)
- 10-21 **Cave Spring**
(Senior Night)
- 10-27 Hidden Valley
- 11-4 Patrick Henry



SALEM HIGH SCHOOL JV FOOTBALL

- 9-1 **FRANKLIN COUNTY**
(ALMS playing before JV game)
- 9-8 at William Fleming
- 9-15 at Northside
- 9-21 at Blacksburg
(Playing after BMS)
- 9-29 **CHRISTIANSBURG**
10-6 at Pulaski County
- 10-20 at Cave Spring
- 10-26 **HIDDEN VALLEY**
- 11-3 **PATRICK HENRY**



ANDREW LEWIS MIDDLE SCHOOL FOOTBALL 8TH GRADE

- 8-25 **BEN FRANKLIN**
- 9-1 **READ MOUNTAIN**
AT William Byrd at Hidden Valley
- 9-8 **BLACKSBURG**
at Northside
- 9-21 at Cave Spring
- 9-29 at Patrick Henry
- 10-6 at Pulaski
- 10-13



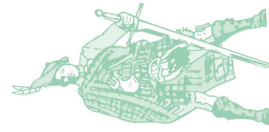
7TH GRADE

- 8-25 at Pulaski
- 8-29 at Read Mountain
- 9-1 at Glenvar
- 9-6 **WILLIAM BYRD**
- 9-12 **FLOYD COUNTY**
- 9-19 **NORTHSIDE**
- 9-22 **SMITH MOUNTAIN**
- 9-26 **LAKE CHRISTIAN**
CAVE SPRING at Clifton Forge
- 9-29 at Craig County
- 10-6



GLENVAR HIGH SCHOOL VARSITY FOOTBALL

- 8-26 at Galax
- 9-2 **MARTINSVILLE**
at Cave Spring
- 9-9 **HIDDEN VALLEY** (Rec night)
at Carroll County
- 9-23 **JAMES RIVER**
(Homecoming)
- 10-7 Floyd County
- 10-14 **ALLEGHANY**
- 10-28 at Radford
- 11-4 **GILES**



GLENVAR HIGH SCHOOL JV FOOTBALL

- 8-25 **GALAX**
at Martinsville
- 9-1 **CAVE SPRING**
at Hidden Valley
- 9-8 **CARROLL COUNTY**
at James River
- 9-29 **FLOYD COUNTY**
10-13 at Alleghany
- 10-27 **RADFORD**
11-3 at Giles



GLENVAR MIDDLE SCHOOL FOOTBALL

- 9-1 **ANDREW LEWIS**
- 9-7 **CHRISTIANSBURG**
at Carroll County
- 9-15 at Cave Spring
- 9-22 at Central Academy
- 9-29 at Radford
- 10-6 at Hidden Valley
- 10-13



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SHS DEFENSE

continued from page 13

hard to beat on deep routes and he plays with emotion.

Chris Martin, Salem's "swiss army knife," will be the free safety. He's perfect for the spot with good quickness and an understanding of the game.

"He's just a great all-around player," said Shaq. "He's fast, very athletic and he's a great kid. He's very relaxed back there and he feels the game."

Juniors Toby Jackson and Khamari Garner are backups. Speedy sophomore Josiah Persinger could also see some time in the defensive backfield.

"We have a great group of kids looking to make plays," said Manning. "They're pretty young, but I've watched them grow and they're figuring it out. I think we'll have a great secondary."

Speed seems to be the word for this year's defense, and with Martinsburg waiting for the Spartans to arrive Friday night the season can't come fast enough.

"We have speed for sure, faster than last year," said Murphy. "We have what you call 'makeup speed,' and this year it's going to be difficult for offenses to spread us out."



The Salem High Athletic Training and support staff. Front row, left to right; Bryson Williams and Jordan Eason. Back row; Ty Porter, Kirsten Milton, Joel "Trimmy" Hickerson and Grace Mullins.



SALEM CHAIN GANG

The 2022 Salem Stadium chain gang. Left to right: Wayne Dillman, Travis Hall, Mike Pope, Ron Jordan, Ron Greer, Phil Brownmiller and Daniel Hall.

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Speedy Swanson comes from family of good athletes

Tech legend Frank Beamer is his great uncle

Jackson Swanson is Glenvar's secret weapon. The speedy senior is a key player in the Highlander football team's attack, but coach Kevin Clifford feels he doesn't get the recognition he deserves.

"I think he's the best skill kid in the area," said Clifford. "He has speed, quickness and he's elusive. To me, he's the most under-appreciated and under-recruited kid in the area."

Maybe recruiters would pay a little more attention if his name was Beamer. After all, he's the latest in a long line of athletes from the Beamer clan who have shined for Glenvar. His grandfather, Barney, is Virginia Tech football coaching legend Frank Beamer's brother.

The list of Beamer family Highlanders is impressive. Jackson's mother, the former Becky Beamer, was a standout softball pitcher, volleyball and basketball player for Glenvar. Becky's younger twin sisters, Terri and Rae, were the second base-shortstop combo for some outstanding Glenvar softball teams and they also formed a formidable backcourt on the basketball team. Rae's son, Maddox Fisher, was an all-state soccer player for the Highlanders' state runner-up team last year and younger brother Kian was a freshman midfielder on that team.

Going back a few years, the Semones brothers were Frank and Barney's nephews and they were all outstanding athletes for Glenvar. Mike, the oldest son of Frank's sister, played football, basketball and ran track for the Highlanders. Middle son Mitchell played basketball and golf and youngest son Brandon was an all-state football player, a state champion wrestler, a sprinter on the track team and even played a year of baseball. Brandon went on to star for his uncle Frank on the Virginia Tech football team and his number 32 is framed and hanging in the Glenvar field house. Sometimes that jersey reminds Jackson of the legacy he's a part of.

"I see his jersey in the weight room when I'm lifting," said Jackson. "My mom talks about how strong Brandon was, and my dad played football with Mike. It's something I look up to and I hope I can uphold the tradition."

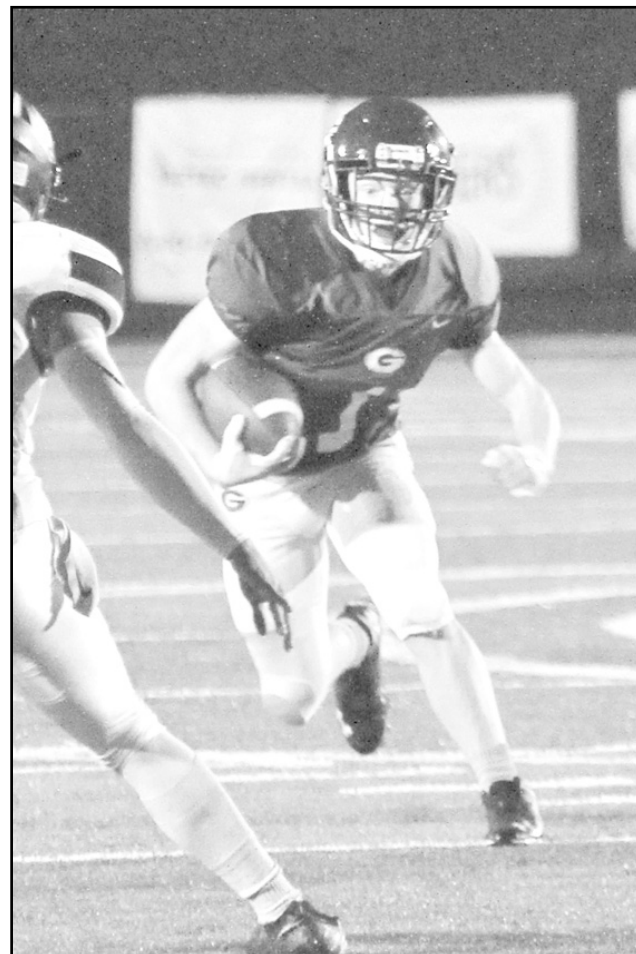
Jackson will see Frank on occasion at family reunions, but he doesn't make a big deal about it around friends. Frank Beamer's number is retired from his playing days at Tech, and he's the consensus all-time greatest coach for the Hokie football team.

"I get asked about it sometimes but I try not to bring it up," said Jackson. "When people find out they tend to ask me a lot questions."

Jackson's dad, Neil Swanson, was a terrific athlete at Glenvar in his own right. A 1988 GHS grad, Neil was a tailback, defensive back and linebacker for coach Roger Martin during his high school days. Neil and



JACKSON SWANSON



Jackson is free in space in last year's win over Floyd.

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“I see his jersey in the weight room when I’m lifting. My mom talks about how strong he was.” Jackson on being related to Brandon Semones

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his sister, Karen, also ran track for the Highlanders and, until last spring, Neil held the Glenvar record for the 100 yard dash with a time of 11.2.

Who broke it? Can you guess? Last spring Jackson ripped off a time of 10.94 to break his dad’s record that had stood for 34 years.

“He’s my dad but he’s also my coach so I guess he was okay with it,” said Jackson with a chuckle. “I was really wanting to break the 11 second mark.”

Sports has really bonded father and son as Neil has coached his oldest child in both football and track. Neil is the head middle school coach of the Glenvar football team and the head track coach at the high school.

“Me and him work together,” said Jackson. “He’s coached me since I was a young kid. We don’t live too far from the school so we would go to the track and work out. I play sports all year round and he’s always right there with me.”

Jackson’s speed is one of the things that make him such an outstanding football player. The reigning Region 2C Indoor 55 meter dash champion is just as fast with a football in his hands, and maybe even a little faster with opponents trying to catch him.

“Track really helps me in football,” he said. “When I’m in the open space I think about track.



Jackson’s dad, Neil Swanson, held the Glenvar 100 yard dash record for over 30 years and now coaches the middle school football team.

When I’m running for the goal line I think of my dad telling me to, ‘run cheek to cheek’.”

In Glenvar’s first scrimmage this summer, at William Byrd, he took a short pass from Eli Taylor and left three defenders in his wake as he pulled away for a long touchdown. That was a familiar site on the Glenvar football team last season as Jackson scored 11 touchdowns for the Highlanders.

Once again, Jackson will be playing the “slot” position on offense. Last year he caught 59 passes for 880 yards and nine touchdowns with an average of 16.8 yards per catch. He can also run the ball from the slot and he’s a dangerous kickoff and punt returner as well.

“We want to get the ball in his hands as much as possible,” said Clifford. “He’s very dangerous when he gets the ball in space.”

Jackson was a running back in middle school but the coaches like him in the slot, where he can still run the ball off the “jet motion” but his elite speed makes him not only a deep threat in the pass game, but also a chance to “take it to the house” on short passes. And, Swanson feels his pass catching ability is much improved since he’s been on the varsity.

“We work out with the JUGS machine,” he said. “The ball comes at us at 50 or 60 miles an hour, sometimes from 20 yards away.”

He also credits Glenvar receivers coach Tony Spradlin for his improvement as a receiver.

“Coach Spradlin is an amazing coach,” he said. “He has that tenacity, and he’s not afraid to get on even the best players. I feel he can coach at any level.”

Jackson caught passes from Aiden Wolk, who is now at Bridgewater College, for the past two years. This year sophomore Eli Taylor is Glenvar’s quarterback and he’s a lefty, so the ball will be spinning in a different direction. That shouldn’t be a problem as the two have played together before.

“At first it was kind of weird, but I got used to it,” said Swanson. “There’s really not much of a difference. Eli led us to a win at Martinsville last year and he knows what he’s doing. He’s going to be a real good quarterback for us.”

Jackson would like to continue playing sports in college next year but he’s leaving his options open. He’s always been a Virginia Tech fan, as you might expect. Tyrod Taylor was his favorite player growing up.

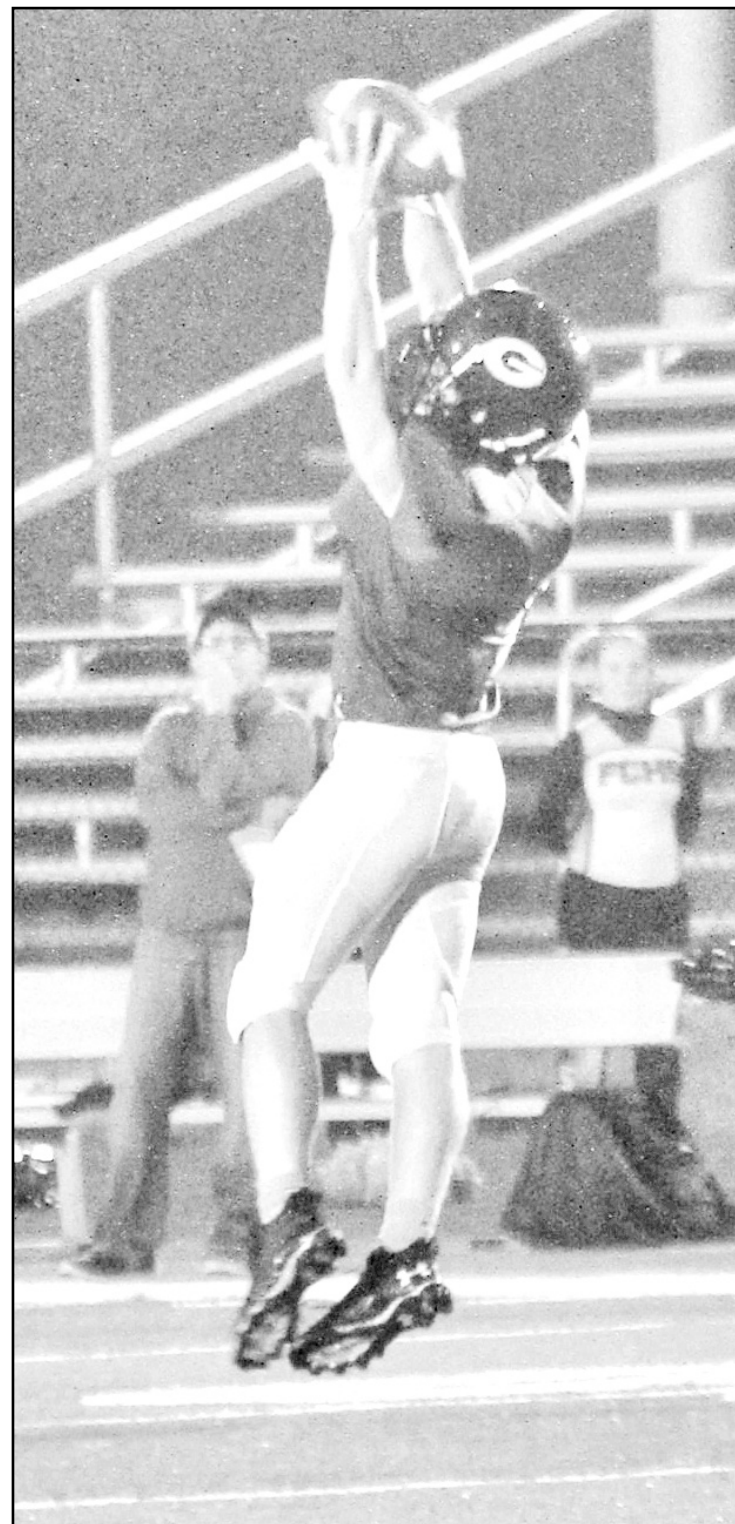
“When he was younger I think he was more interested in the Hokie Bird than the game,” said Neil. “We get to a few games and we have a blast. This year Shane has invited us to come see a South Carolina game.”

Shane, who is head football coach for the Gamecocks, is Frank’s son who played football for Blackburg and the Hokies before following in his father’s footsteps. The Beamer clan has been good to a lot of schools, and Jackson has two siblings who are making their own mark. Mahre is a sophomore

at Glenvar who already has two state rings. She was called up to the varsity when the Highlanders won the state volleyball championship last year and she was a freshman on the state champion track team in the spring. Ranger, an eighth grader, will be playing for dad on the Glenvar Middle School football team this year.

“Becky and I have never pressured any of the kids into playing sports,” said Neil. “We talk sports at home and listen to sports talk radio in the car, but it’s been their choice.”

And, after all, it is a family tradition.



Jackson Swanson goes high to catch a pass in a playoff win over Patrick County last season.