

Cleburne looks to take care of business against Centennial

247sports.com/high-school/texas/Article/Cleburne-looks-to-take-care-of-business-against-Centennial-123204151/

By [Matthew Brice](#) Oct 11, 2018



Cleburne QB Gunner Hammond vs. Ft. Worth South Hills in week 1 (Photo: Cleburne Times Review, 247Sports)

After going 0-10 in 2017, the Cleburne Yellow Jackets came into 2018 with new blood at the head coaching position. They brought in ex-Grandview head coach Casey Walraven to jump start what was once a proud football program. The Yellow Jackets are 5 games in and so far, so good as they've started 5-0 and 3-0 in district. But when they travel to Burleson to take on the Centennial Spartans (5-1 overall, 3-1 district) on Friday evening at 7:30, the Yellow Jackets will be looking to show everyone that they are no fluke.

Keys to the game

Cleburne;

Offensively, sophomore quarterback Gunner Hammond is the general and leader of the Yellow Jackets offense. Hammond needs to continue to play smart football by taking what the Spartans will give him. He's one of the best at beating you with his arm but, along with Jacob Reynolds, Hammond and the Yellow Jackets have also shown that they can win on the ground when they can't win through the air. Wide receivers Jamari Bradley and Isaak Cunningham are Hammond's favorite targets but, balance on offense is key for the Yellow

Jackets. Defensively, the Yellow Jackets are facing a Spartan offense that relies heavily on the run. Gibson Beyer, Dante Thompson and the rest of the defensive line must win upfront but, they must also play solid containment on the ends to take away the edge. Winning the battle upfront and on the edges will allow linebacker Braxton Bailey to continue to do what he does, which is come downhill with authority and stop the run. However, Anthony Chanta and the Yellow Jacket secondary must also keep their eyes open for the occasional play action pass.

Burleson Centennial;

Offensively, the Spartans run a triple option offense that controls the clock but also has a knack for breaking off the big play. However, the question is, who will start at QB for the Spartans? Senior Kyle Burns is usually the general for the Spartans but, he's gone down twice. The Spartans may turn to sophomore Hank Meyer, who finished last week's game against Burleson High. Whether it's Burns or Meyer, them along with Jaylon Jackson, Chris Mosley and Jeff Kirven will have to continue to run the ball effectively if they want to win. Running the ball effectively will also help play keep away from a dangerous Cleburne offense. Defensively, the Spartans are facing a Yellow Jacket offense that can beat you in many ways, whether it's running or passing the ball. David Robinson and Matiroyn Easley anchor the Spartan secondary and while they'll need to keep their eyes open for the big play, Chris Hilliard, Darrell Williams and the Spartan defensive front 7 must also be effective in stopping the Yellow Jackets from running the football. With the Yellow Jackets being a balanced offense, the Spartans can't strictly sell out to stop the pass or the run.

Can the Cleburne Yellow Jackets keep rolling and spoil the homecoming festivities for Burleson Centennial? Or will the Yellow Jackets get caught looking ahead to next week's showdown with Aledo and leave Burleson with a loss? Follow me to Burleson on Friday evening to find out.

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