



LOUD & PROUD

The Best Student Section in 3A, District 6, South State High School
 ▶ staff writer david ducote

Since 1947, St. Andrew's has paved a way of excellence in all facets of life, whether it is in the classroom, field, stage, gym, or in the stands. The SA student section, or "InSaint Asylum," has been a source of pride for athletes since the beginning of the school's creation.

The "InSaint Asylum" holds a special place in the hearts of the coaches, administrators, parents, and, most importantly, athletes. It provides an inexplicable energy to the game that keeps the atmosphere lively and enthusiastic. The section gives the players an extra boost of confidence and something to play for.

"Every game [the student section is] not all you play for, but it's definitely a big part of what the team plays for," Senior Football Player Spencer Wallace said. "And personally the student section helps a lot because y'all give me and the whole team confidence. Whenever I'm in the student section, I try to do the same thing for the guys I'm cheering on. It's really something special about St. Andrew's."

The student section yells various chants for two main purposes: to motivate the players of their own team or to get into the heads of the opposing team.

"A lot of the chants we cheer are traditions that have been passed down from year to year," Senior Spirit Leader Julia Farley said. "We sometimes try to get into the other team's heads or hype up our own players, anything to give our team the advantage."

The rowdiness of the student section used to be appreciated and loved throughout the SA family, but as of late the administration has been trying to

cancel them. They used to be able to stand against the fence at the football field, until this year. Currently, they are being forced to cheer from the bleachers with the exception of seniors. Yet, several of the seniors choose to partake in Psycho Chefs as opposed to participating in the student section, leaving cheerleaders with few people to actually cheer to. The students are told that they cannot stand on the fence because it blocks sidewalk traffic.

"They probably don't understand why they need to move," Spirit Coordinator Erik Snyder said. "We're told it's [for] wheelchair accessibility, but the concrete ends just after the student section."

In addition to the football restrictions, the administration has also banned certain chants, such as the "ball five..." and "push it" chant. With all these new restrictions the students seem to feel like they are less of a factor in the game.

"It's hard for the cheerleaders to lead the crowd when [the students] aren't engaged," Snyder said. "The football players also feed off of the atmosphere... At home games they are asked to move six feet back and it's a notable difference. It's almost like there's a disconnect."

Regardless of the new boundaries forced onto the students, they are still going to come out and support.

"I know we've got all these new rules now, but I'm always going to come to the game to cheer my guys on," Junior Avery Thomas said.

A TALE OF TWO SEASONS

Saints Football Season: District Preview

▶ staff writer nolan turner

DISTRICT SCHEDULE

SEP 29 MCLAURIN

OCT 06 VELMA JACKSON

OCT 13 MAGEE

OCT 20 RALIEGH

OCT 27 CRYSTAL SPRINGS

HOME ● AWAY ●

they have also changed their playing style. With a new, offensive-minded head coach, the Saints have changed from a run-dominant play style with a more explosive and exciting pass-first offense.

"[The offense] has the potential to score 40+ points a game," Senior Wade Montjoy said. "The new play style suits us better because it allows us to use multiples passing routes to confuse the other teams as opposed to trying to run in the same place all the time."

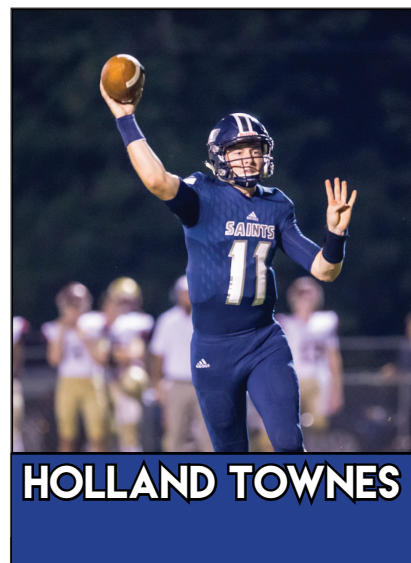
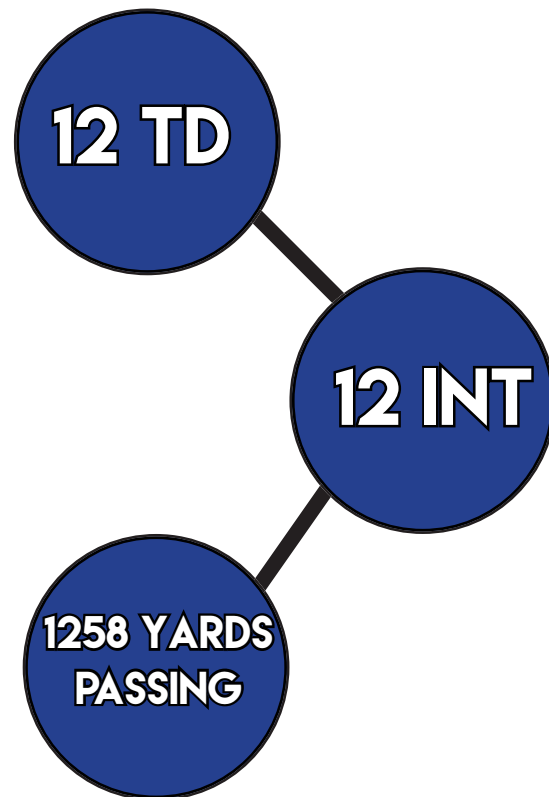
As for the defensive side of the ball, the Saints are well equipped with a scheme that veteran defensive coordinator Dan Roach has been running since the start of his coaching career: With the athletes the SA Football squad will be going up against in district play, they will need a few players to step up and bolster the squad defensively.

"Come district play, some players who will step up will be Junior AJ Leflore and Senior Dickson Ray," Junior Holland Townes said. "They are two hardworking guys that are essential to our defense."

In Nichols' first year, the team heads forth into district play with a new mindset for his team.

"It's really a tale of two seasons," Head Coach Nichols said. "You have the first part, which is non-district, where you are trying to perfect and master your scheme, and then district play where every game matters."

The Saints open district play at home against McLaurin and then go on the road to take on two of the toughest opponents in all of 3A football: Velma Jackson and Magee. They then return home to play one of the best football teams in the state in Raleigh, who reached the South State Finals last year. With the help of the new innovative schemes that were created by new Head Coach Nichols and the experience of 15 seniors, the Saints feel they are more prepared than ever to compete and succeed in district season this year.



HOLLAND TOWNES

WHAT DOES IT REALLY MEAN TO BE A WINNER?

▶ overall editor parker grogan

Imagine you're a high school football player. You've worked hard all summer in preparation for the season, and you've put in so much work this week every day after school. You wake up Friday morning, ready to compete and represent your school. The big game is on your mind all day. The school day ends, and finally, it's your time to shine. You step onto the field, and all you're thinking about is how well you can play and how much you can do to help your team. You play the best game you've ever played—you intercept the ball, make a 40-yard reception for a touchdown, and sack the quarterback! Your great performance led the team to victory; you inspired your teammates to work just as hard as you were working, and you couldn't be happier for the team victory. You get to the pep rally the next Friday, hoping to be recognized in front of the school for your exceptional playing the week before, just as players have been in the past few years; however, you are sorely disappointed when you aren't recognized in any way—you receive no reward, no honor, no incentive to continue working hard. This is exactly how the SA football players have felt ever since 'Player of the Week' was taken away midway through last year's season. The tradition has continued to be disbanded for the 2017 season as well, making it seem like 'Player of the Week' will never return to the campus of St. Andrew's.

Head Football Coach Jonny Nichols, a recent addition to the St. Andrew's community, was not here for the initial discontinuation of 'Player of the Week,' but he did admit that he did not want to continue the practice for the 2017 season.

"It was mentioned to me at the beginning of the year that St. Andrew's, in the past, had recognized a few players each week for playing exceptionally well, but I decided not to partake in this tradition, because in a sport like football, it's hard to pick one player to recognize for playing well when, in reality, in order for one player to look good, other players have to contribute," Nichols said. "For instance, the quarterback may get the credit for making a great play, but he wouldn't have been able to make a good throw without good blocking by the offensive line. Thus, it's hard to pick one player to give all the credit to when it takes a lot more than one person to make a play."

Nichols' argument that team sports do not need to glorify individual athletes makes sense, and by choosing to eliminate individual glorification, Nichols is bringing the team together. Even though football is a team sport and, thereby, the motivation of individual glorification should not be a good reason to perform well, several football players believe the 'Player of the Week' honor was a recognition that ought to continue.

"It enrages me [that 'Player of the Week'] was taken away," Senior Brooks Lacoste said. "I, as a sophomore, remember the feeling of getting recognized for my playing ability—it made me feel like I was accepted and needed on the team."

To some players, this idea of unity that the 'Player of the Week' tradition supported, created a sense of division within the team. Several football players believe that this sense of disunity is the reason the honor was taken away initially.

"The rumor is that seniors complained because younger athletes were getting recognized more than them, or that younger kids complained because older kids were getting recognized more than them," Lacoste said.

The alleged division created by the 'Player of the Week' award seemed to be between different age groups, even though the award is one based on merit. This idea brings up a larger argument—should older athletes start over younger ones? SA football players have an answer to this question as well.

"If you're good, you get rewarded; it should have nothing to do with age," Lacoste said.

Several coaches admitted, though, that they did not know why the award was taken away last year, so suspicions of complaining may or may not be a cause. Many football players, regardless of the reasoning for the honor being taken away, believe the tradition should continue in the St. Andrew's community.

"The school promotes hard work when it gives students individual recognition; the school honors students for scholarly accomplishments on awards days, so the school should also honor individuals for sports," Senior John Chain said.

"Students and players are more likely to perform better if they are rewarded for their hard work, and the praising of certain students and athletes only encourages other individuals to work harder so they, too, may receive recognition," Senior Ethan Chevalier said. "I think the purpose of the 'Player of the Week' honor was to motivate individual players and give those who stood out a well-deserved reward. Thus, I believe it should still be around for the sake of promoting healthy competition—something all good teams need to thrive."

Exceptionalism, while some people find it exclusive and polarizing, encourages students and athletes, alike. Even though being a student is an individual activity, unlike being a football player, which is obviously a team activity, students still feel as though both activities merit reward for the sake of the continuation of excellence. In other words, if students are rewarded for doing well, they will continue to do well; if they are rewarded for being average, they will continue to be average.

BEING A WINNER

a cartoon by
 ▶ staff writer david ducote



THIS MONTH IN SPORTS

VOLLEYBALL

The SA volleyball team has an overall record of 9-10, yet they have attained a strong district record of 7-0. This past month, the girls had big wins against Velma Jackson High School (3-0), St. Joseph Catholic School (3-0), Pisgah High School (3-0), and Yazoo City High School (3-0). The team has had a winning streak for the past week within the last month will face the Northwest Rankin Cougars and the St. Joe Bruins to conclude the games played in September. Volleyball will start playing in October with a game against the Clinton Arrows.

CROSS COUNTRY

So far, the team has only participated in one meet at Clinton High School. Girls' Captain Elizabeth Scott and Boys' Captains Jack Archer and John Spencer Jones led the team through some difficult, muddy conditions. Their next meet is the St. Andrew's Invitational at the Gray Center in Canton, Mississippi on September 30th. Senior Elizabeth Scott finished the last meet with the best time for the girls and Junior Luis Flores completed the race with the quickest time for the boys. Both teams expect to finish this season as well as they did last year.

FOOTBALL

The SA football team maintains an overall record of 3-2 and a district record of 0-0 thus far. The Saints had a great win at the beginning of the season against Pisgah High School, winning the game 43-19. The team persevered to win against the Hartfield Hawks on September 22nd. The football players will conclude its September play with a game against McLaurin at home on Friday, September 29th, and the first game in October is against Velma Jackson High School at their place. Hopefully, the team will continue to play well as the season starts to come to a close.