

Chargers end memorable season with loss to Oak Grove

By Jake Kamman
sports editor

For the second year in a row, the Oxford Charger football team went head to head with the Oak Grove Warriors for the title of 6A state champion. The Chargers went into the game as reigning champions. However, this year's matchup ended much differently with a tough 29-28 loss to the Warriors. A 2-point conversion by the Warriors late in the 4th quarter cinched the title for the opposing team.

During the game, the four Charger touchdowns were scored by senior tight end Kortlen Wilfawn, senior tight end Alec Vaughn, junior running back Omar Howell and senior wide receiver Dekyren Johnson. Johnson finished the game with 192 all-purpose yards.

"We made it that far even when everyone predicted us not to," senior wide receiver Alex Childers said. "We over achieved and even though it wasn't the result we wanted we still gave it everything we had and have no regrets. Everyone had respect for each other's back on and off the field."

According to senior captain and starting kicker Jack Tannehill, the Chargers are well bonded due to the tight senior class and the four captains Jamari Sims, Vaughn, Tannehill,

and Wilfawn keeping everyone in check.

"I think the strong suit for the senior class is leadership, determination, and work ethic," Tannehill said. "I think all the hard work we've done in the dark is really coming into the light and we've got the younger guys buying into it too."

Throughout the season, the coaching staff has made sure to keep the players away from COVID-19 and ensured the team is ready each and every week.

"I'm happy that we didn't get shut down, I was proud of the guys being responsible and staying away from crowds," senior offensive lineman Bryson Barksdale said. "It really showed that we are one big family. We watched out for one another just so we could make it to state and it was amazing."

Since there are some different guidelines and rules for this year with COVID-19, the team got very close and was like a family all season long, according to senior wide receiver Jay Wortham.

"This coaching staff does a very phenomenal job at getting us ready week by week," Wortham said. "I think the bond we have on this team is a big reason we've made it this far. We couldn't make any of this happen without being a family first."

After winning state last year, head coach Chris Cutcliffe and the chargers looked to repeat, along with the Chargers winning 24 straight games dating back to last year, finishing the season 12-1.

"I believe the key to making a run in the playoffs is continuing to improve throughout the season," Cutcliffe said. "I've been proud of the way our team has practiced, worked in the weight room, and worked in the meeting room to continue improving. Our senior class has done a great job in a leadership role on our team. This group has come a long way from a leadership perspective from their freshmen year until now."

According to Barksdale, despite how sad it was to play in many seniors' final football game, the un-

breakable relationships created on the team were more important than any win.

"What I'm going to miss about being on the football team is all the laughing we did," Barksdale said. "It was never a dull moment with us because we knew that we were all brothers and brothers stick together through good times and bad times."



Photo Courtesy of Molly Cat Tannehill

(Top L to R) Sophomores **Margaret Roland, Dorothy Grace Daniels, Alyssa Cambell, Ginny Ross Fair** and **Anney Lewis** sit in the stands at the championship game. (Bottom L to R) Sophomore **Catherine Bianco** stands with seniors **Alex Kipping, Addie Grafton** and **Sally Kate Dabney**.

Boys' Soccer team anticipates successful season with new head coach Crane



Photo Courtesy of Bruce Newman

Sophomore **Hope Blount** waves to the stands as her teammates perform stunts behind her at their showcase before the state championship.

By Kortlen Wilfawn
staff writer

The Oxford Soccer team has started this season 6-1, starting off strong with a few more games until district play in about a month. Senior Captains Coker Scott, Alex Mobely, and Christian Boudreaux, along with Junior captain Aiden Belk, all help out

in helping the chargers win games and succeed as a team to hopefully win the state championship.

"I think we are a very very good team this year." Senior defender Eli Solinger said, "This year we have the most depth that we have ever had. We have an almost all senior defense which includes me, Alex Mobley, Christian Boudreaux, and sophomore Andrew Atchley. I am really proud of how much Andrew has stepped up this year. He is a great player that we really needed on the field. We are very confident that we can beat anyone in the state. I really do

think that we have a chance this year and I would put all my money that we get there."

This year's season is very different from years in the past with Covid-19 coming into play. Every sport has their own regulations and rules on how the guidelines must be followed, including the soccer team.

"We aren't hanging out as

much out of soccer practice." Coker Scott said. "We don't get to all hangout in the locker room before the game. Wearing masks on the school bus. Small things that make the season a little different."

Even with it being a not normal season, the chargers have one goal this year, and that is to win the State Championship and bring the trophy back to Oxford.

"The key to getting to state is being able to play as a team." Solinger said "Pass around teams instead of one guy just taking it himself. Every single guy in our starting line up could go play college soccer if they wanted to. When I say that I am trying to imply that every player is super talented. But we have to be able to play as a team. In the past we would have one super fast guy at the top at forward who we would pass to and he would take it and sometimes it would work and sometimes it wouldn't."

Hunter Crane recently moved from being the girls soccer coach last year and the years prior to being both the head girls and boys coach this year.

"The good coaching by Hunt-

er Crane makes this team a great team and will be sad to leave this soccer team next year." Scott said. "The main thing I have learned that having the correct mentality throughout the season is a big part of winning games. If you warm up poorly then you will have a bad game. If everyone goes into the game with the correct mindset then it should be a win."

The senior class players have been playing together most of their lives and going from practice every day to not seeing each other at all next year is going to be tough for the players.

"It seems like yesterday I was a freshman." Solinger said. "High school went by so quick. Something that I tell the younger guys is that high school goes by quick, soccer goes by quick. No matter how boring your classes are or how bad practice is one day you have to be able to make the most of it because it will go by and you won't even know. I am really gonna miss all the guys. Especially all the seniors. We have all been playing together since we were around five years old. It will definitely be hard not see those guys