

Lake Okeechobee News **Fall Football**
Preview

Featuring:

**Clewiston Tigers • Glades Central Raiders • Glades Day Gators
Moore Haven Terriers • Okeechobee Brahmans • Pahokee Blue Devils**



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Cooler weather is always welcome after the hot summer sun here in south central Florida, and even though our fall temps are more like a smoldering summer in other parts of the country... it still means one thing:

FOOTBALL SEASON IS HERE!

With some reclassifications in place impacting the 2019-2020 season and rivalries renewed, the communities around Lake Okeechobee will not disappoint to deliver some good, old-fashioned pigskin match-ups!

The classifications announced earlier this year are based on school enrollment numbers. One of the Florida High School Athletic Association's (FHSA) goals with this restructuring is to have an equal number of teams by classification, an even number of teams in each district and region and no three-

team districts.

Here are the classification highlights:

- Clewiston Tigers move down to 4A from 5A.
- Glades Central will play in 4A class region 4.
- Okeechobee remains in 6A classification but will face new teams in the district including Fort Pierce Westwood, Port. St. Lucie and South Fork.
- No change for Pahokee who remains in rural 1A class.
- Moore Haven Terriers and Glades Day Gators will share their 2A region 4 district.

LAKE OKEECHOBEE NEWS is proud to be part of capturing the upcoming season. We hope you enjoy this fall football preview!

Best of luck to all area teams!

-The Lake Okeechobee News Team

Friday Night Lights!



Raiders ready for another playoff run



The 2018 Glades Central Raiders run off the field shortly after defeating the Pahokee Blue Devils in the annual Muck Bowl.

By Richard Marion

Lake Okeechobee News

In a sea of coaching changes among lake area football teams this year, the Glades Central Raiders are sailing steady.

Head coach Jessie Hester has been with the team in his latest stint since 2017. Previously he coached the Raiders from 2008-10 and took them to the state title game twice.

It's hard to find someone with as much experience as Hester. He played for the Raiders while in high school, for the Seminoles at Florida State University while in college, was drafted in the first round of the 1985 NFL draft by the Los Angeles Raiders and spent time with the Atlanta Falcons, Indianapolis Colts, and St. Louis Rams during his career. He's also spent time coaching at Suncoast and Lake Worth High School.

Last year he led the Raiders to an 8-4 record and had Glades Central in the regional final, two games away from the state championship.

Along the way the Raiders pulled off a massive upset against Booker T. Washington (BTW), scoring 16 unanswered points in the second half. Two 2018 seniors connected to put the game out of reach of Booker in the third quarter. Glades Central quarterback Davius Richard hit receiver Odieu Hilaire on an out route near the goal line to go up 18-10. Booker would score another touchdown with three minutes left in the fourth quarter, but the ensuing two-point conversion failed and the favored Booker squad found themselves leaving the play-

offs unexpectedly early.

Although they fell short in the pursuit of a state championship, the Raiders were able to bring home a different trophy. Glades Central came out victorious in the 2018 Muck Bowl against their rival Pahokee Blue Devils. The Raiders have now won the Muck Bowl twice in the last three years. Coach Hester has been able to beat Pahokee a combined six times as a player and coach for the Raiders, while only losing twice.

The Raiders took advantage of a slow start by the Blue Devils to go up 22-6 by halftime. That lead proved to be all they would need for the night as Pahokee could muster a rally.

The over 30-year long rivalry between the two schools has made the Muck Bowl has one of the most famous high school games in the nation.

This year the Muck Bowl will be played at Glades Central. The last time the game was played there in 2016 the Blue Devils came away with a 27-14 victory.

New Pahokee coach D.J. Boldin last faced the Raiders as a player with the Blue Devils back in 2004. Although Pahokee would go on to win the state title that year, they couldn't secure the Muck Bowl trophy as Glades Central won 25-20.

Glades Central opens the season with a string of home games in 2019, facing Boca Raton, Wellington, Palm Beach Lakes and Atlantic.

The Raiders kickoff against Boca Raton at 6 p.m. on Aug. 23 at Glades Central High School.



Special to the Lake Okeechobee News/Keya Holmes of FLYY PHOTOS
Frankivious Rolle poses with the 2018 Muck Bowl trophy. The Raiders will be attempting to repeat as Muck Bowl champions this year.

Glades Day looks to take the next step



Lake Okeechobee News/Richard Marion
A.J. McPhee did a little bit of everything for the Glades Day Gators in 2018.

By Richard Marion

Lake Okeechobee News

The Glades Day Gators have advanced to the playoffs for the last three years, but this year they're hoping they can finally take that next step into the state championship.

The Gators last won the state title back in 2010, before that winning in 2009 and 2006. But since then, Glades Day hasn't been able to make it back to the championship.

Earlier this year Gators coach Eric Pitts stepped down to spend more time with his family after leading the program for eight years. Pitts was promoted after former Gators coach Pete Walker initially left to coach at his alma mater in Clewiston.

Replacing Pitts will be longtime assistant coach Zach Threlkeld. Threlkeld is a true Gator with deep ties to the school. He played as quarterback during the team's 1996 season which saw them advance to the state championship and has been an assistant with the program for 16 years, including those Gators' state championship football teams in 2006, 2009 and 2010.

Threlkeld also served as the athletic director for the school last year and will retain those duties this year as well.

The new head coach will have plenty of talent to help him in his inaugural year.

Returning for his senior year will be A.J. McPhee. McPhee did everything the Gators have asked and then some over the last two years. Last year he won Big Lake Athlete of the Week honors twice for his performance in games against Jupiter Christian and First Baptist Academy.

The performance against First Baptist Academy was particularly impressive because it came in the playoffs. In that game, McPhee had a total of 320 yards on offense and six touchdowns with 132 of those yards coming on the ground and 188 passing yards. The touchdowns were split evenly between running and passing with three each. In addition to those offensive numbers, while playing defense McPhee returned an interception for another touchdown early in the first quarter of the game, bringing his total touchdown count for the day to seven.

Coach Pitts praised his player after the game for his all-star performance.

"That was some Brett Favre kind of stuff," said Pitts with a laugh. "After taking a hit as a quarterback he would have to get back up and play on defense against the Lions' best wide receiver. He's just a tough-minded guy and he keeps getting better every week."

One thorn that has been in the Gators' side for the past two years has been the

Moore Haven Terriers team. The Terriers have been able to do just enough to stay ahead of the Gators the past three times the teams have met, including sending them home early during the 2017 playoffs. Last year Moore Haven got their first ever win in Belle Glade when they beat the Gators 22-21 in a nail-biter. No matter who wins when the two teams meet again on Sept. 13, it's guaranteed to be an entertaining game.

The Okeechobee Brahms are back on the Gators schedule for the first time since

2015. Okeechobee head coach Ty Smith praised the Gators for their stadium and the atmosphere they have on game day.

"There's a little bit of history there between our two schools being around the lake," said coach Smith. "I love playing over there. The atmosphere is always great down in Belle Glade and I love how enclosed the stadium is. It's just an exciting place to play a football game."

The Gators will open the 2019 season against Benjamin at 7 p.m. on Aug. 23.



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Special to the Lake Okeechobee News/AI Corzo
 Glades Day defensive tackle Shannon Stacey lays out for the sack before the quarterback can escape.



Lake Okeechobee News/Richard Marion

The Glades Day Gators have made back-to-back playoff appearances.



Lake Okeechobee News/
 Richard Marion

Glades Day graduate Stefano Napolitano made plays for the Gators on both sides of the ball last year.

Good Luck, Belle Glade Teams!

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Okeechobee Brahmans



With some more experience under their belt, the Okeechobee Brahmans are feeling confident heading into their 2019 season.

Lake Okeechobee News/Richard Marion

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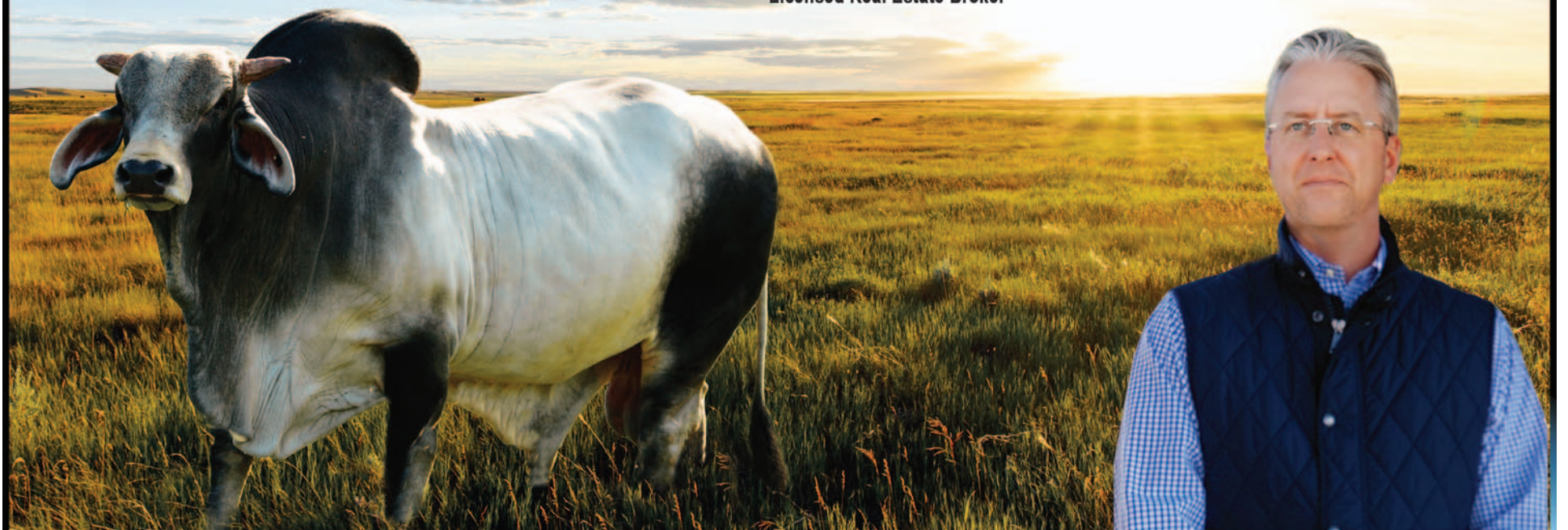
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Brahmans feeling confident in 2019

By
**Richard
Marion**

Lake Okeechobee News

Okeechobee High School Brahmans coach Ty Smith spent the first week of practice in the 2019 school year dealing with the same problem a lot of other lake area coaches were going through. The weather is just not cooperating.

Florida High School Athletic Association rules state schools must wait at least 30-minutes after lightning is seen or thunder heard before allowing players on the field. Consecutive days of badly timed afternoon thunder storms have left football coaches looking for ways to get their teams ready for the fast approaching season.

"We're spending some time doing film study, taking mental reps," explained Smith. "We were able to get in a lot of work last week. But this week we haven't been able to get outside. We were in the cafeteria doing as fast of a run through as we could offensively and defensively."

Smith is preparing to begin his second year as head coach of the Brahmans. After a rocky start in 2018, coach Smith admits he is feeling much more confident in the role heading into 2019.

"There's a lot of things I was panicking about last year that I'm not so much worrying about headed into our first games this season," Smith confessed. "It's a much easier

transition this year. And Chris (Branham) told me it would be that way once I got one year under my belt. There were things I liked and didn't like after that first year and some things I was able to fix. One of the biggest things this year has been our practice tempo. We've done a lot of filming at practice so that instead of just telling players what they're doing wrong, we can go in and show them as well."

When longtime Brahmans coach Chris Branham left the program in 2018 to coach at Toombs County in Georgia, Smith was also given the opportunity to make the move up north. But he declined, choosing instead to stick with Okeechobee and the Brahmans.

Okeechobee senior Veyon Washington turned heads last year with his speed and play-making ability, and all signs point to him improving in 2019. Washington is one of those players who does it all, last year he spent time at quarterback, running back, wide receiver and cornerback for the Brahmans.

Smith says he has also been impressed with freshman running back/linebacker Michael Burgarelli, who has already earned a starting position on the varsity team. The Brahmans will be getting back two players they lost to knee injuries last year, Oscar Longoria and Matt Beard, both in their senior year.

"Some of the guys returning this year are veterans," said Smith. "They played last year as a junior, but it was their first year on varsity. So now that they have that varsity

experience the game shouldn't be as fast as it was last year for them. We're constantly talking about playing fast, whether that is offense or defense. We tell our kids that we're not looking for anyone else to come in here and make a difference. We want everyone on our team to be able to make a difference not only on the team but in our community and in our town. We're sold on our players and our kids. We just want them to buy in and be sold on their selves."

Okeechobee will kick off their regular season by hosting John Carroll Catholic at 7 p.m. on Aug. 23 at Okeechobee High School.



Lake Okeechobee News/Richard Marion
The Okeechobee Brahmans lineup against Jupiter in the kickoff classic.



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Varsity cheerleaders: front row, left to right: Yajaria Jones, Juliana Sheldon, Kayleigh Crum, Itzel Guerra, Alisa Wingfield, Zara Vozella, Taylor Gibson; back row: Skye Roberts, Leah Hunter, Ganessa Garcia, Emma Baird, Simone Washington, Talasia Rowe, Elizabeth Smith, Rhiannon Dyer

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OKEECHOBEE BRAHMANS VARSITY FOOTBALL TEAM SCHEDULE

Date	Day	Opponent	Site	Time
8/23	Friday	John Carroll	HOME	7:00
8/30	Friday	Martin County	Away	7:00
9/6	Friday	Moore Haven	HOME	7:30
9/13	Friday	South Fork	Away	7:00
9/27	Friday	Sebastian River	HOME	7:00
10/4	Friday	Seminole Ridge • Homecoming	HOME	7:00
10/11	Friday	Port St. Lucie	Away	7:00
10/18	Friday	Westwood • Senior Night	HOME	7:00
10/25	Friday	Glades Day	Away	7:00
11/1	Friday	Clewiston	Away	7:30



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8/29	Thursday	South Fork	HOME	6:00
9/5	Thursday	Martin County	Away	6:00
9/12	Thursday	Moore Haven	HOME	6:00
9/26	Thursday	Lake Placid	Away	6:00
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Junior Varsity cheerleaders: front row, left to right: Shelby Wooten, Yonteria Stallworth, Priscillia Rodriguez, Skyler Varnadore, Asharia Stallworth; back row, left to right: Taylor Mccraine, Aaliyah Baez, Madison Hilliard, Aracelis Ramos, Harley Davis, Sophia Tanguma.

Special to the Lake Okeechobee News/Rebecca Harvey

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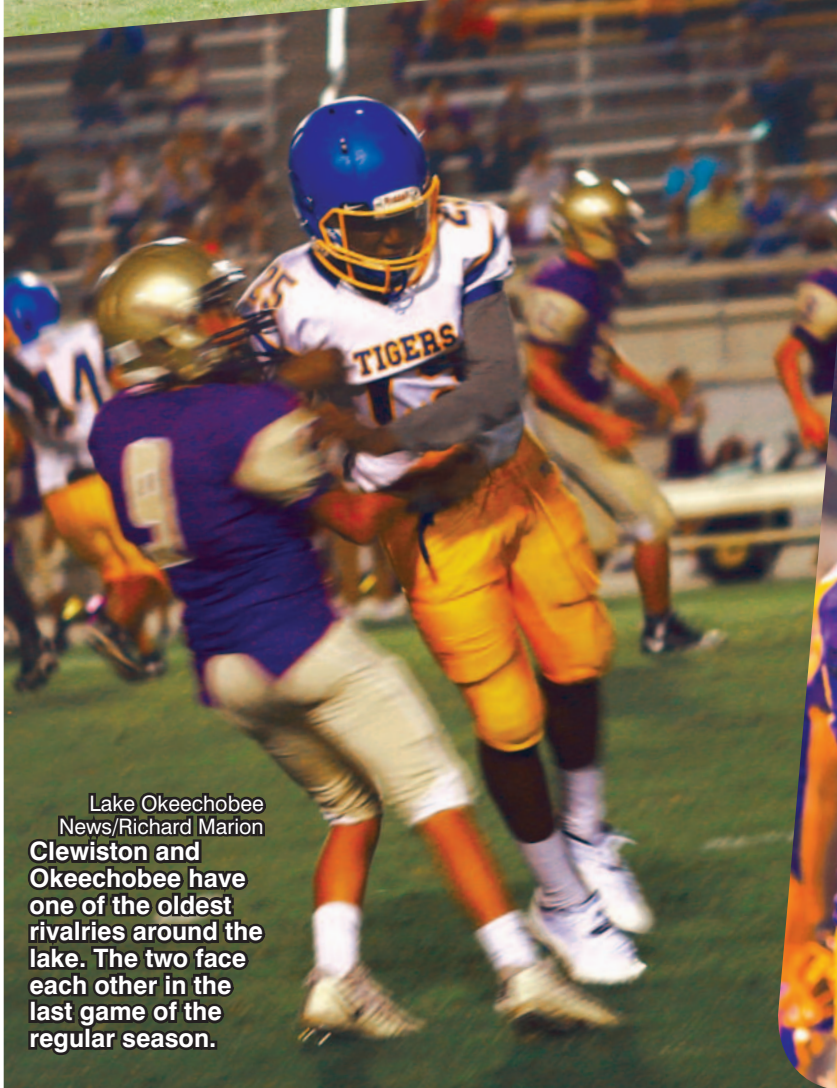
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Clewiston Tigers ready for their comeback



Special to the Lake Okeechobee News/CHS
Head coach Pete Walker says the 2019 Tigers varsity football team is a good mix of both new, young players as well as seniors.



Lake Okeechobee News/Richard Marion
Clewiston and Okeechobee have one of the oldest rivalries around the lake. The two face each other in the last game of the regular season.



Lake Okeechobee News/Richard Marion
Clewiston quarterback Chasman Ware was a standout on offense for the Tigers last year.

By **Richard Marion**
Lake Okeechobee News

Supporters of the Clewiston High School Tigers football team will see a familiar face on the sidelines of Cane Field for the 2019 season.

Pete Walker is back as the head coach of the Tigers this year, making this the third time he has taken on coaching responsibilities with the program. Walker previously coached the Tigers with stints in 2002 and 2013.

Walker also played for the Tigers during his high school years and was a part of the great 1982 team that tied for the state championship that year. During his last run with the team from 2013-2016 the Tigers had a combined record of 32-13-0. He has also won three state titles while coaching for Glades Day.

"I started missing it," said Walker of why he decided to come back in 2019. "I coached for 25 years and I really got burnt out. During those 25 years I gave everything I had, and after that it was time to step away and take a break. I think that was the best thing I could've done, because it made me realize that I missed having a platform to make a difference. I love the game of football. The timing just worked out right. They asked me to come back to Clewiston and I was feeling ready so I made the move."

The Tigers have had a busy offseason this summer.

A portion of the team competed in a 7-on-7 tournament hosted at the University of Miami back on June 8. Despite fielding a young team at the tournament the Tigers opened the event with three back-to-back wins and earned the number one seed. Clewiston beat Royal Palm 24-7, then crushed Dunbar 32-0 before going on to win 28-14 against Miami Southridge.

"We have a bunch of young kids that are going to be good football players," said Tigers assistant coach Jackie Garrett shortly after the tournament. "They are working hard this summer and getting better."

Garret gave praise to the freshman quarterback Hakeem Holmes for his performance in the tournament. Garret says Holmes throws the football as well as anyone he has seen. Another young player, wide receiver Oran Singleton, has already drawn rave reviews from the University of Miami for his speed and route running.

"Things are going good so far," said Walker of the early practices so far. "We have a lot of young guys in there with a good mix of seniors. The morale and work ethic has been good. The kids are doing everything we ask them to do."

Clewiston coaches brought in motivational speaker R.V. Brown to deliver a message to the team as they prepare for the 2019 season. Walker called Brown "the best of the best" and said he spoke to the kids about work ethic, character and to treat your fellow teammates like they're your family.

The Tigers open up the 2019 season with a district match-up against Avon Park on Aug. 23 and a Saturday home game against Monsignor Pace on Aug. 31. They'll be trying to avoid a repeat of last season when they opened the year with two back-to-back losses.

Monsignor Pace gave the Tigers one of those two opening losses last year, winning 30-10.

The bulk of Clewiston's away games occur during the middle of the season, with the Tigers getting to play two of their final three games of the regular season in Clewiston.

"We're going to take things one game at a time and try to get better every week,"

Walker said of his goals early in the season. "Like I said we have some young guys in the mix so we'll be working on fundamentals early and trying to make sure we do everything right. We want to get better and win as many football games as we can. We have a lot of tough football teams on our schedule. There's not going to be too many breathers on there. We have to play up a little bit, but that is fine with us. I don't mind that at all."

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Terriers prepared to continue their recent success



Lake Okeechobee News/Richard Marion
Terriers offensive linemen learn their assignments at a Aug. 13 practice. The offensive line has been crucial to the Terriers' success in the last two years.

By Richard Marion
 Lake Okeechobee News

Moore Haven New Terriers coach Brent Burnside is using his first few weeks of practice to get his team in the best condition to repeat their back-to-back playoff appearances.

"There's not a lot of evaluation at this point, really just trying to get them in condition this first week," explained Burnside after his team's first day back on the field. "We got in everything that we needed to get done so it was a pretty good first day."

Moore Haven has been able to put together two back-to-back successful years. In 2017 the program had its first-ever undefeated regular season and last year they finished with an 8-1 regular season record that saw them host their third home playoff game in school history.

Burnside also released a statement ahead of the first practice on social media.

"This is an honor for me to work at a school that focuses on developing these young men to succeed, not only on the playing field, but in life after high school," read the statement by Burnside. "We have the opportunity this year to make history and we will need everyone's support as we will be facing a tough schedule that includes some first time opponents."

One of those games against a first-time opponent will see the Terriers travel to Orlando to face the Shiloh Christian Saints from Springdale, Ark. The Saints made it all the way to the Arkansas state semi-final last year and should be a tough test for the scrappy Moore Haven team.

But despite the many new teams the Terriers will face in the up-coming season there are still a few familiar faces and old rivalries that the team will look forward to. One of the more exciting games in recent years has been when the Terriers and Glades Day Gators

meet up for their annual lake area battle.

The Terriers have beaten the Gators three times in their last three meetings, including once in the playoffs. But each of those games has been a wild, back and forth affair often coming down to the final few seconds.

"We've gone through our schedule as a staff and that Glades Day game scares me every year," said Burnside. "They jump up on us every year and somehow we find a way to get ourselves back and come out with the victory. That's a group that wants to beat Moore Haven badly and you can see it when they are out there, they leave it all out on the field."

Glades Day nearly pulled off the win during their last match-up on Oct. 3 last year at home in Belle Glade. The Gators offense led by quarterback A.J. McPhee marched down the field and set up for what would've been a game-winning field goal, but the attempt sailed wide right.

That crucial miss gave Moore Haven the victory and the Terriers their first away win over the Gators in Belle Glade in 20 years.

Moore Haven will also be making the trip up to the top of the lake to face the Okeechobee Brahms this year. It'll be the first time the two teams have faced each other since 2016 when the Brahms won in a 45-7 blowout. But that was a much different Okeechobee team than we last saw in 2018.

Last year the Brahms were more likely to be on the losing side of a blowout than on the winning side. Both teams appear to be coming into the new season with wildly different stories and momentum. Moore Haven will be looking to sustain the success they've found in recent years while Okeechobee will look to rebound after going 0-10 in 2018. It'll be interesting to see how the two team stack up to each other when they meet in early September.

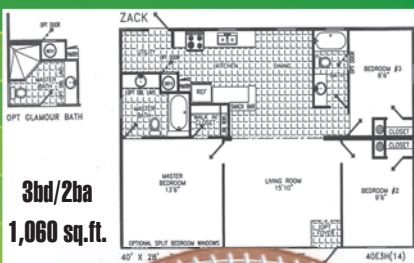
The Terriers will open the 2019 season on Aug. 23 when they host Atlantic at 7 p.m..





Lake Okeechobee News/Richard Marion
The Moore Haven Terriers (in black) are ready for another exciting season.

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Lake Okeechobee News

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Blue Devils ready to take hard road to state championship



The 2018 Pahokee Blue Devils enter the field at Anquan Boldin stadium in Pahokee. Photo provided by Ronaldo Visual, which can be found by visiting [facebook.com/Ronaldovisuals](https://www.facebook.com/Ronaldovisuals).

By Richard Marion
Lake Okeechobee News

Every year the Pahokee Blue Devils take the field there's only one goal in mind, a state championship.

While other teams might be happy at just the prospect of making a deep playoff run, in Pahokee it's simply expected.

The program dominated the 2000s, winning five state championships from 2003 through 2008. Newly hired Pahokee coach D.J. Boldin not only wants to bring his alma mater back to the promise land.

"The expectation of the city is always state championship," explained Boldin. "As a head coach you don't even have to mention that because it's just a known expectation. I am expecting us to have a great season."

Boldin brings a wealth of experience to the team. In 2004 as a senior in Pahokee Boldin helped the Blue Devils finish with a record of 14-1 and brought home the state championship. He attended college at Wake Forest where during his senior year he led the ACC with 81 receptions and 848 yards receiving 3 touchdowns. After graduating college Boldin played in Canadian Football League, spent time as an

offensive assistant with the San Francisco 49ers, offensive coordinator Middle College High School in Memphis and co-defensive coordinator and passing game coordinator St. Benedict at Auburndale in Memphis.

Pahokee finished with a 6-7 record in 2018 and was knocked out in the regional final by Hawthorne. The team had a roller coaster year of high and lows in 2018. Pahokee lost a heartbreaker against Seminole Ridge after the game tying extra point was blocked in the final seconds of that game and fell just short against the then unbeaten Vero Beach Indians in a game that had wild back and forth momentum swings.

But even with a tough schedule or a last second emotional loss you won't catch the Blue Devils with their heads down, Boldin preaches adversity as a path to greatness.

"With our schedule every game is a game of the week," said Boldin. "I believe we are playing three state championship teams from last year and I believe seven out of the ten teams have played and or won state within the last three years. So that should tell you the strength of our schedule and opponents. However, I want Pahokee football to be great and this schedule is the

only path to greatness."

That tough schedule for the Blue Devils starts early and doesn't let up. Pahokee opens the season on Aug. 23 at home against University, who made it all the way to the state semifinal last year where they lost by one point. The week after that they host the 2018 4A state champion Raines Vikings. That's one way to start the season off with a bang. Like Boldin says, every game will be a game of the week.

Another state championship is a goal that everyone in Pahokee expects, but Boldin says it's just as important to him to make sure the kids he coaches are becoming better people on and off the field, as well as making sure his seniors have a pathway to college.

"Most importantly I want my kids to become better football players, students and community advocates more than anything," concluded Boldin. "In a perfect world I want all of my seniors to have full ride college scholarships."



Lake Okeechobee Area Football Schedules

CLEWISTON TIGERS

Date	Opponent	Site	Time
8/23	Avon Park	HOME	7:30
8/31	Miami Pace	HOME	7:30
9/6	LaBelle	Away	7:30
9/20	Lake Wales	Away	7:30
9/27	Port St. Lucie	HOME	7:30
10/4	Immokalee	Away	7:30
10/11	Cardinal Newman	Away	7:30
10/18	John Carroll • HOMECOMING	HOME	7:30
10/25	Pahokee	Away	7:30
11/1	Okeechobee	HOME	7:30

GLADES CENTRAL

Date	Opponent	Site	Time
8/23	Boca Raton	HOME	6:00
8/30	Wellington	HOME	7:00
9/6	Palm Beach Lakes	HOME	6:00
9/13	Atlantic	HOME	6:00
9/20	Palm Beach Gardens	HOME	7:00
9/27	Cocoa	Away	7:00
10/4	Dwyer	Away	6:30
10/11	Monsignor Pace	Away	7:30
10/17	Park Vista	Away	6:00
11/2	Pahokee • RIVALRY GAME	HOME	2:00

GLADES DAY GATORS

Date	Opponent	Site	Time
8/23	Benjamin	HOME	7:00
8/30	Village Academy	HOME	7:00
9/7	Berean Christian	Away	7:00
9/13	Moore Haven	Away	7:00
9/27	King's Academy	Away	7:00
10/4	Lakeland Christian	HOME	7:00
10/11	First Baptist Academy • SENIOR NIGHT	Away	7:30
10/18	Westminister Academy	HOME	7:00
10/25	Okeechobee	HOME	7:00
11/1	St John Paul II Academy	HOME	7:30

MOORE HAVEN TERRIERS

Date	Opponent	Site	Time
8/23	Atlantic	HOME	7:00
8/30	Shiloh Christian Saints	Away	7:30
9/6	Okeechobee	Away	7:00
9/13	Glades Day	HOME	7:00
9/27	Community School of Naples	Away	7:30
10/4	Oasis	Away	7:00
10/11	Lake Placid • HOMECOMING	HOME	7:30
10/18	Frostproof	HOME	7:30
10/25	First Baptist Academy • SENIOR NIGHT	HOME	7:30
11/1	Labelle	Away	7:00

OKEECHOBEE BRAHMANS

**SEE PAGES 10 & 11 FOR THE
OKEECHOBEE BRAHMANS
FOOTBALL SCHEDULE**

GAME ON!



PAHOKEE BLUE DEVILS

Date	Opponent	Site	Time
8/23	University	HOME	7:00
8/30	Raines	HOME	7:00
9/6	Dillard	HOME	7:00
9/13	Dwyer	HOME	7:00
9/20	Palm Beach Lakes	Away	7:00
9/27	Trinity Christian Academy	Away	7:30
10/11	Chaminade-Madonna	HOME	7:00
10/18	Seminole Ridge	HOME	7:00
10/25	Clewiston	Away	7:00
11/2	Glades Central • RIVALRY GAME	Away	2:00



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3. From curbside, load your bike onto the rack, fitting the wheels into the designated slots. Each slot is clearly labeled.
4. Finally, raise the support arm over the front tire to secure the bike. The support arm should be resting on the tire.

How To Unload Your Bike:

1. When departing the bus, remind the bus operator that you are removing your bike, and leave through the front door.
2. When unloading your bike, raise the support arm off the tire. Move the support arm down out of the way.
3. After lifting the bike out of the rack, return the rack to the upright position if there isn't another bike in the rack.