



# NEWSLETTER

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## ONLINE TICKETS

Online tickets for TSSAA championship events are available via GoFan.com. Member schools can sell tickets electronically during the regular season! For more information, contact [pnoles@huddleinc.com](mailto:pnoles@huddleinc.com).



## 2019 USHERS IN SECOND HALF-CENTURY OF PLAYOFFS

Tennessee high school football begins anew this week with the kickoff of its second season, aka the TSSAA State Football Playoffs.

And the 2019 edition of the playoffs, which will crown nine state champions in Division I Classes 1A-6A and Division II A, AA and AAA, marks the 50th anniversary -- and 51st season -- of TSSAA's first-ever batch of playoff champions.

"You can make an argument that there's too many classifications, but one thing I remember so distinctly, and I remember Mr. (Gill) Gideon (former TSSAA executive director) talking about this, when schools met to discuss whether to add in the region runner-up in the playoffs you can imagine the real reluctance by schools," said Ronnie Carter, who served as TSSAA Executive Director from 1986-2009. "Back then, who had ever heard of four weeks of playoffs? But they're also caught in a dilemma because of what it is doing to schools in the regular season.

"There was a principal at a Regional Meeting in Knoxville, and I wish I could remember his name, but he got up and said, 'I was not an athlete, and I didn't coach, so I don't understand sports real well. But I've been a principal in three high schools and I know what athletics does to a school and I know it just makes a school better. In particular, I know schools with a good football year gets school going better; there are fewer problems, less trouble in the hallways and the bathrooms and so I'm gonna urge us to vote for sending the runner-up team.' I've never forgotten that explanation."



1969 CLASS AA CHAMPIONS - LOUDON HIGH SCHOOL

Now, the top four teams from each region oppose the top four teams from a corresponding region, with hosting privileges going to the higher-seed team. Seeding reigns supreme until the third and fourth round, when hosting rights are predetermined on a rotational basis. The 1969 playoffs boasted 12 teams across three classifications: A, AA and AAA. By 1972, there were eight teams advancing to postseason from each class, and it grew again in 1985 to send 32 teams - from still three classifications. In 1993, the TSSAA expanded to five classifications and the first-ever 6A State Championship was won by White Station High School of Memphis in 2009.

The BlueCross Bowl State Championships are celebrating a decade of being hosted at Tennessee Tech's Tucker Stadium since 2009, with previous classics being held on the campuses of both Middle Tennessee State and Vanderbilt.

Carter remembers a time when any kind of football playoff wasn't a sure thing, but clearer still recalls the formation of a mutually beneficial partnership with Nashville's Junior Chamber of Commerce to boost the prominence of the Clinic Bowl, predecessor to the modern BlueCross Bowls.

## DISTINGUISHED SERVICE RECOGNITION

The first impact on young people came not in America but in the North African country of Morocco.

There, Joe Galloway, U.S. Navy seamen first class, served at least three concurrent roles: serviceman, player-coach for one of the elite base squads and, foreshadowing more than four decades helping lead and shape young people, youth coach in the late 1960s and early '70s.

"I started coaching little kids in Morocco when I was stationed there, and I just enjoyed it," said Galloway, an 2019-20 TSSAA Distinguished Service Award recipient. "When you're doing something where you look happy and enjoy it, and children see that, it's attractive to them."

Galloway's nearly four-year stint in the Navy likewise is the genesis of a philosophy that Galloway carried with him throughout his career as a record-setting coach at Lookout Valley High School.

"You know what helps? Learning to get along with people from all different places," Galloway, also a former Chattanooga-area board of education member, said. "You get in the military and you meet folks from everywhere and see the importance of communication – not just in education but it helps everywhere in life, marriage and family.

"Just be kind to people and try to get along. If you can do that, people want to be around you. And nobody needs people being kind to them and taking care of them more than kids."

In his many years at Lookout Valley, Galloway coached baseball, golf and volleyball, but is best known as the school's longtime girls' basketball coach.

Galloway's own children have also carved out a life in athletics. His daughter, Kristen Clouch, is head coach of Lookout Valley's girls' basketball team; another daughter, Katie Burrows, is head coach of the Chattanooga Mocs women's basketball team. His son and daughter-in-law, Keith and Jennifer Galloway, set the boys' and girls' basketball programs in motion when Hardin Valley Academy opened near Knoxville in 2008.

Still helping Kristen at Lookout Valley, Galloway tries to carry with him a lesson first absorbed at an early-1980s TSSAA meeting.

"To me, the TSSAA leadership has always done an incredible job, and I've always appreciated what they've done. A lot of times they're in a no-win situation and there's always two sides to it," said Galloway, nearing his 47-year-anniversary with wife, Cheryl, a staple at the Lookout Valley scorer's table as the team's bookkeeper throughout her husband's career. "But years ago, and I've never forgot this, the TSSAA used a slogan to be instilled in kids, 'Just Do What's Right.'

"That covers such a great area of everything you want to talk about. Doing what's right, at least making the effort to be in a positive mood. I first heard that in a TSSAA fall meeting in Chattanooga and I never forgot it. I think that's the best thing they've ever come up with."



## TENNESSEE TITANS MR. FOOTBALL AWARDS TO BE HELD DEC. 2

The Tennessee Titans Mr. Football Awards will be presented to the top football players in nine classifications of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association on Monday, December 2, 2019, at Nissan Stadium in Nashville. For the 18th consecutive year, the top kicker in the state will be recognized with a Mr. Football Award, regardless of classification.



This is the 35th year that the Mr. Football Awards have been presented to Tennessee's best high school football players. A Mr. Football trophy will be presented to the winners of each category. A Mr. Football plaque will be presented to the other two finalists in each category. The other semi-finalists will each receive a certificate.

More than 400 people, including the 30 finalists, their families, coaches, school administrators and members of the media from all parts of the state, are expected to attend the 2019 luncheon.

Mike Keith, play-by-play voice of the Tennessee Titans, will emcee the awards presentation. A live videostream of the awards will be provided at [www.titansonline.com](http://www.titansonline.com).

### 2019 Tennessee Titans Mr. Football Finalists

DIVISION I, CLASS 1A Hunter Ensley, Huntingdon Ronto Tipton, South Pittsburg Holden Willis, Greenback	DIVISION I, CLASS 6A Bryson Eason, Whitehaven Conner Murphy, Blackman Lincoln Pare, Houston
DIVISION I, CLASS 2A Cooper Baugus, Peabody Aaron Swafford, Meigs County Terry Wilkins, Fairley	DIVISION II, CLASS A Kevin Davis, Trinity Christian Kemari McGowan, MTCS Rube Scott Rhea, Fayette Academy
DIVISION I, CLASS 3A Grey Carroll, Alcoa Donoven McCallister, Upperman James Moore, Stratford	DIVISION II, CLASS AA Austin Hill, ECS Dietrick Pennington, ECS Nick Semptimphelter, BGA
DIVISION I, CLASS 4A Tim Coutras, Nolensville Will McDonald, Livingston Acad. Ty Youngblood, Greeneville	DIVISION II, CLASS AAA Elijah Howard, Baylor Jabari Small, Briarcrest Omari Thomas, Briarcrest
DIVISION I, CLASS 5A Spencer Briggs, Gallatin Ja'sean Parks, Beech Elijah Young, South-Doyle	KICKER OF THE YEAR Luke Akers, Ravenwood Paxton Perry, Brentwood Academy Zeke Rankin, Alcoa

## COVER: FOOTBALL PLAYOFF MEMORIES

"The gentlemen, Charlie Warfield and Scooter Clippard, made the proposal and then leave, and I said to Mr. Gideon, 'They can't do this. Number one, for the impact it's gonna have on schools. They're used to hosting these games,'" Carter recalled. Prior to 1982, all rounds of the state playoffs — including the championship game — were hosted by member schools. "So basically we took the greatest gates in all those years, AAA, AA and A, took that figure and went higher than that because we had to be able to show schools they would be able to do much better financially. Then again, we both looked at each other and said, 'They can't do this. Too much money.' But we meet again, showed it to them, they looked at each other and said, 'We're in' and they commit."

Warfield remembers the meetings prior to the 1982 season and a robust membership role for Nashville's Junior Chamber playing a key role.

"The thing the Junior Chamber had, one, we had good people with good planning. Membership was about 600 people and very active," Warfield told the TSSAA. "What we could bring to the table was organizational skills, but we also had a lot of people who could show up to help with concessions, programs, ticket sales, and it was a big-time event for us.

"As Ronnie told Mr. Gideon, he didn't think we could pull it off. We raised a good bit of money from program sales just for the state championships, because it had been going on for so long. We had the ability from a human standpoint to reach out and get the money to make it work."

Warfield's group also had the wisdom to combine celebrity power and an additional event: the Clinic Bowl Run. The honorary chairperson in 1982? None other than Sarah Ophelia Colley Cannon. AKA, Minnie Pearl.

"Scooter's family had known Minnie Pearl, whose name is Ms. Cannon, so Scooter went and asked if she would participate and she was our chair," Warfield said. "We had a Clinic Bowl Kickoff Dinner and she was our dinner speaker, as I remember it. I don't remember for sure but I want to say she was there at the game. She was really active with us and was very helpful."

Then, in 1982, the inaugural year of this new partnership, the TSSAA and Clinic Bowl got what perhaps at the time was the ideal matchup: Gallatin versus Lincoln County, a pair of Class AAA titans.

"In AAA, we end up with Gallatin playing Lincoln County and it ends up going into overtime; Lincoln County beats Gallatin, and the place (Vanderbilt Stadium) is about full," Carter recalled. "That proved the football championships at the central site was a great idea. It stays like it is with the Clinic Bowl until eventually all the championships move to Murfreesboro by 2005 and then on to Cookeville in 2009. But that first game was what establishes the central site, having all the championships in one place. That 1982 game, that's what kicks big."

The rest? Well, it's history. But before we go, a bevy of media from across the state of Tennessee share their fondest memories of the TSSAA State Football Playoffs.

### **John Varlas, Daily Memphian**

I think for me the game I'll always remember is Whitehaven winning its first-ever state title in 2012, 36-35 over Maryville in overtime. Mark Dodson (who should have won Mr. Football that year; it went to Jalen Hurd instead and I'm still sore about that one) ran for 306 yards and scored all five touchdowns.

On the game-winning two-point conversion, Whitehaven lines up in the old smokestack-I for probably the only time that season and Dodson sweeps it in untouched for the win. Cue wild celebrations with Whitehaven fans storming the field. That's the game I'll always remember.



2012 CLASS 6A CHAMPIONS - WHITEHAVEN HIGH SCHOOL

### **Maurice 'Mo' Patton, Columbia Daily Herald**

I think Columbia's 2010 win over Hendersonville in the 5A finals, just hours after one of their kids had died of cancer, was one of those stories that transcends sports. In 2015, MBA vs. Brentwood Academy in double overtime was crazy for the cold and the talent on the field.

### **Murphy Fair, MurphyFair.com**

The state championship in 1989 was referred to by many as the "Ice Bowl." The first game of the day featured DCA vs. Bruceton-Central. When everyone got to the stadium there was ¼ to ½ inch of ice on everything. . .the field, the bleachers, everywhere. I distinctly remember Ronnie Carter, who was Executive Director at the time, out there on the field with a snow shovel trying to help clear the field of the ice. Everyone from Ronnie to numerous Junior Chamber volunteers on down were out there with hammers and shovels trying to break up the ice so that a high school football championship game could be played.

### **Tom Kreager, Tennessean/USA Today Network**

I was covering the 2012 Class 6A semifinal game at Siegel when QB Brent Stockstill hobbled through the game against Maryville. Even with only one good leg, Stockstill threw for 373 yards and four touchdowns in a 47-43 loss.

(continued on next page)

## COVER: FOOTBALL PLAYOFF MEMORIES

### **Stephen Hargis, Chattanooga Times Free Press**

In 2000, Red Bank made one of those magical runs where the team was inspired to give a little extra for their coach, Tom Weathers, after his wife had passed away just before the season from cancer. Shortly before she passed, Mrs. Weathers wrote a letter to the team saying how proud she was and how much they all meant to Coach Weathers and to go out and play hard. A different senior would read the letter before every playoff game and, as you can imagine, it was pretty emotional in the locker room each time. During warm-ups before the 5A title game (they were about to play Riverdale at MTSU) it starts to snow and keeps snowing for pretty much the whole game, blanketing the field. It just added something extra to the atmosphere of the game and the thing that stands out to me more than anything was watching Red Bank players laying flat on their backs making snow angels as they were celebrating winning the championship.



2000 CLASS 5A CHAMPIONS - RED BANK HIGH SCHOOL

### **Jesse Smithey, 5StarPreps.com**

2005 was the first year of a new classification cycle, and somehow Livingston Academy wound up in a region with the likes of Austin-East, Fulton, Catholic, Scott, Anderson County and Kingston, despite Livingston Academy being a good 100 miles away from most of their new league foes.

And while Livingston Academy showed well in the 2005 regular season and played tight games with Catholic, Fulton and Austin-East, they still wound up finishing 5-5 (3-3 in the region). No one, including me at the time, gave them much of a chance in the playoffs. I personally watched Livingston Academy's then-QB Wilson Cates lead a heroic charge in the final minutes against Carter just to fend off first-round elimination.

But then, momentum happened. Livingston Academy beat Austin-East, shocked Catholic, and outlasted Notre Dame by two scores in the semifinals.

And as I walked into MTSU's Floyd Stadium on the afternoon of Dec. 3, 2005 to cover a game that night, I heard the crescendo of crowd roars by Livingston Academy fans as they enjoyed the final plays of their 28-13 win over Lipscomb in the 3A state championship game. Incredible and unthinkable.

### **Seth Butler, Newport Plain Talk**

In 1997, Coker County started 0-6 but won three of last four to get into the playoffs, including a goal-line stand in the must-win season finale. The turnaround happened when they played a freshman running back named Bubba White.

The first round game was at Tennessee High. The team was down 7-6 late in the game when Tennessee High punted. The snap went over the punter's head and he booted it through the back of his own end zone. Coker County won, 8-7 with the safety. We went to Daniel Boone the next week and gashed them with the freshman.

So a 3-7 team made the quarterfinals and hosted a home playoff game the next week. They lost to the Witten Brothers (Jason and Shawn) and Elizabethton.

### **Steve Wilmoth, TriCitiesSports.com**

Greeneville 35, Sullivan South 28, 2OT - a 2008 Class 4A Quarterfinal Game at frigid, FRIGID, Burley Stadium in Greeneville.

The game was an epic two-overtime thriller with three lead changes and neither side leading by more than seven points. Tied at 21-21, a late game-winning South FG attempt was blocked. South scored first in the initial overtime on a Fletcher four-yard run. Greeneville lost three yards in its first play in overtime, but Hall kept the Greene Devils' season alive by finding Ryan Fillers on a fourth down pass, who leaped high in the back corner and legend has it somehow managed to find the end zone on the way down. The PAT send the contest to a second overtime.

Hall scored on Greeneville's first play of the second overtime. South running back Taylor Fletcher's second-down catch of a short pass from quarterback Bradley Davenport ended just short of the goal line. With two downs to cover the remaining three feet, a third extra session seemed inevitable. However, two straight bursts into the center of line by Fletcher were turned away, giving the Greene Devils their first semifinal berth since 2000.

### **Jim Thompson, CoachT.com**

Speaking of the Clinic Bowl, one of my earliest memories of football is traveling with my family to the 1964 Clinic Bowl. Lawrenceburg and Glenclyff had both gone 10-0 that season and were invited to play in Nashville. I was only 11 or 12 years old at the time, growing up in Lawrenceburg.

The town rented a train, a whole passenger train, to make the trip and so a lot of us rode the train up to Union Station in Nashville and then buses over to Dudley Field for the game.

The Glenclyff quarterback was Bubba Dudley. There were a lot of good players on those Lawrenceburg teams, but I'll never forget Lew Heller who was one of the stars that year. The papers called him "Lightning Lew."

The game that day ended in a 7-7 tie, but that train was awesome.



### MaxPreps becomes official TSSAA partner for sports statistics

Beginning in the 2019-20 school year, the TSSAA will recommend that coaches use the MaxPreps platform to submit scores and statistics after each game to accurately track team and student-athlete accomplishment and encourage coaches to utilize the MaxPreps Teams app as a team management tool.

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### Board of Control conducts November meeting in Hermitage

The Board heard an update on the recent fall sport tournaments events in golf, volleyball, girls' soccer, cross country and the upcoming cheer/dance and state football championships.

The Board voted to remove the restrictive probation in boys' basketball for both Westwood and Fairley that was placed on their respective boys' basketball programs for the 2019-20 school year due to an unsportsmanlike incident last season.

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### Member schools convene at 2019 Regional Meetings

Regional Meetings were held across the state in November, bringing together member schools to discuss legislative proposals and elect representatives to the Board of Control and Legislative Council.

Eighty-two percent of member schools had an administrator present for the meetings (355 of 431). The best attended meeting was the East Regional Meeting where 126 of 145 member schools were in attendance.

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### More than a football experience at Maryville

Maryville High School hosted a football event for special needs students --- complete with customized T-shirts, play sheets, rosters, team chaplain Roger Murphy as the public address announcer and more for students in the Maryville City Schools district.

It was the experience of a lifetime for most everyone in attendance in October, where storied Shields Stadium was the venue for perhaps its most unique football event.

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