

FORECAST

*Lorain & Medina County
High School
2022 Football*

*Keystone's
Gideon
Lampron*

*2021 Lorain County
Golden Helmet Award Winner*

*Medina's
Drew Allar*
Medina Gazette MVP



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ABOUT THE COVER

Kristin Bauer, **The Chronicle-Telegram**
Rocco Nuosci, **WEOL AM930 & 100.3FM**

Another season of football has arrived for Lorain and Medina counties, along with some new players in key roles and fresh faces in coaching positions. However, before looking ahead to the 2022 season forecast, there are some great players to mention from the 2021 season who will be continuing their athletic careers in college.

Keystone High School graduate Gideon

Lampron is the third Wildcat to win the Golden Helmet award over the past decade. He joins C.J. Conrad (2014) and former teammate Jacob Shackelford (2019).

Lampron was a dominant player for Keystone, running for 1,228 yards and 20 touchdowns and catching 22 passes for 311 yards with one touchdown. Defensively, Lampron was a quick and explosive linebacker for the Wildcats, recording

132 tackles (24 for loss) as well as three interceptions and one sack. Lampron is continuing his athletic career at the University of Dayton this fall.

Medina High School graduate Drew Allar was the 2021 Gazette Football MVP and 2021 Ohio Mr. Football, awarded by the Ohio Prep Sportswriters Association. During the 2021 season, Allar completed 4,444 passing yards and 48 touchdowns – the most of any Division I quarterback in Ohio. Allar led the Bees to a regional final last year on top of an undefeated regular season.

Allar will be heading to Penn State to join the Nittany Lions football program. Those in Happy Valley are eagerly awaiting Allar's Penn State debut.

"He'll not only lead the offense, but eventually, he will be one of the leaders of the football program there," Medina coach Larry Laird said. "He's just got what you call the 'it' factor."

With Lampron and Allar heading off to college, the 2022 Wildcats and Bees will have some big shoes to fill with new players adapting to these roles, as will several other area teams throughout Lorain and Medina counties. Fans can expect an action-packed 2022 season and postseason with many surprises.

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THE FORECAST FALL 2022 PREVIEW

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High School Football

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Coverage for all games starts at 6:30 PM
Gridiron Clash on AM930, 100.3FM and WEOL.com Stream 1

RADIO AND STREAM 1

AUGUST 18

Amherst @ Valley Forge

AUGUST 19

Elyria @ Elyria Catholic

AUGUST 25

North Ridgeville @ Valley Forge

AUGUST 26

Medina @ Avon

SEPTEMBER 2

Midview @ Elyria Catholic

SEPTEMBER 3 • 1:00 P.M.

Lorain @ Elyria
coverage begins at 12:30 P.M.

SEPTEMBER 9

Avon @ Avon Lake

SEPTEMBER 16

Keystone @ Wellington

SEPTEMBER 22

Buckeye @ Parma

SEPTEMBER 23

Midview @ Avon Lake

SEPTEMBER 30

Wellington @ Columbia

OCTOBER 7

Black River @ Keystone

OCTOBER 14 & 21

TBA

STREAM 2

AUGUST 19

Rocky River @ Midview

AUGUST 26

Sandusky @ Lorain

SEPTEMBER 2

Firelands @ Vermilion

SEPTEMBER 9

Clearview @ Brookside

SEPTEMBER 16

Olmsted Falls @
North Ridgeville

SEPTEMBER 23

Elyria @ Olmsted Falls

SEPTEMBER 30

Westlake @ Elyria Catholic

OCTOBER 7

Midview @ North Ridgeville

OCTOBER 14 & 21

TBA

Medina County Match-Up STREAM 3

AUGUST 19

Cloverleaf @ Buckeye

AUGUST 26

Olmsted Falls @ Brunswick

SEPTEMBER 2

Cloverleaf @ Black River

SEPTEMBER 9

Black River @ Columbia

SEPTEMBER 16

Strongsville @ Medina

SEPTEMBER 23

Mentor @ Brunswick

SEPTEMBER 30

Mentor @ Medina

OCTOBER 7

Medina @ Brunswick

OCTOBER 14 & 21

TBA



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AMHERST COMETS

2021 Record: 0-10 (0-7), 8th in SWC

Key Players: Sr. Christian Heckman, QB; Sr. Cam Gendics, WR; Jr. Ross Auvil, DL; Sr. Braden Carpenter, DL

Coach Kenny Fritz wants to see progression during his second season. The Comets were winless a season ago, but Amherst fans can expect change in 2022. According to Fritz, "I really enjoy the way this team is coming together this offseason, as young men and as a unit." Senior quarterback Christian Heckman will take the snaps once again with receiver Cam Gendics to carry the ball. Braden Carpenter and Ross Auvil will return to the defensive line.

8/18 @Valley Forge
8/26 @Buckeye
9/2 North Olmsted
9/9 North Ridgeville
9/16 @Midview
9/23 @Berea-Midpark
9/30 Avon Lake
10/7 @Olmsted Falls
10/14 Elyria
10/21 @Avon



DAVID RICHARD/ CHRONICLE

Avon's quarterback Sam Detillio runs for a touchdown on Friday, Oct. 29, 2021.



ANGELO ANGEL/ CHRONICLE

Amherst's Torre Weatherspoon tries to gain more yardage against Elyria on Friday, Oct. 15, 2021.

KRISTIN BAUER/
CHRONICLE

Avon's
coach
Mike Elder.



AVON EAGLES

2021 Record: 12-3 (6-1), 1st in SWC

Key Players: Sr. Sam DeTillio, QB; Jr. Jakorion Caffey, RB; Jr. Luke Hamilton, OL; Sr. Gavin Ehrhardt, LB

Last season marked the fifth straight Final Four appearance for Avon, with Akron Hoban standing in the way once again. However, this won't stop coach Mike Elder's group from getting fired up for another season. Elder is 160-28 in 15 seasons at Avon. Junior running back Jakorion Caffey exploded on the field in 2021 and already has a Power 5 offer under his belt. Junior offensive lineman Luke Hamilton is in that same Power 5 watchlist and worked out at Ohio State's training camp over the summer. Senior quarterback Sam DeTillio returns after throwing more than 1,400 yards with 22 touchdowns during the 2021 regular season. Lastly, there is senior linebacker Gavin Ehrhardt, who is yet another talented player in the starting lineup for the Eagles.

8/19 @Stratford (SC)
8/26 Medina
9/2 @Glenville
9/9 @Avon Lake
9/16 Elyria
9/23 North Ridgeville
9/30 @Olmsted Falls
10/7 Berea-Midpark
10/14 @Midview
10/21 Amherst



KRISTIN BAUER/
CHRONICLE

Avon Lake's
coach
Matt
Kostelnik.



AVON LAKE SHOREMEN

2021 Record: 7-4 (4-3), 4th in SWC

Key Players: Sr. Matthew Stuewe, WR; Sr. Jeremy Dzik, QB; Sr. Avery Viancourt, DE

The Shoremen turned some heads last season after a 4-0 start that included a 30-24 win over crosstown rival Avon. Unfortunately, Avon Lake's 2021 season ended quickly after a first-round playoff loss. However, coach Matt Kostelnik is hoping for seasonlong success in 2022. An experienced group of core players is returning, starting with sure-handed senior receiver Matthew Stuewe. Tossing Stuewe the ball will be senior quarterback Jeremy Dzik, who is aiming to be one of the area's top passers in 2022. Senior defensive end Avery Viancourt also is returning to the starting lineup this season after finishing second in Lorain County last year with 11 regular season sacks.

8/19 @Strongsville
8/26 Brecksville
9/2 St. John Baptist (NY)
9/9 Avon
9/16 @Berea-Midpark
9/23 Midview
9/30 @Amherst
9/30 @Elyria
10/14 Olmsted Falls
10/21 @North Ridgeville



LEFT

KRISTIN BAUER/ CHRONICLE
Avon Lake's Matthew Stuewe catches a pass while guarded by Avon High School's Chase Myers on Friday, Sept. 10, 2021.

RIGHT

RUSS GIFFORD/ CHRONICLE
Cloverleaf's Cade Cass brings down Black River's Tyler Mrakuzic on Friday, Sept. 3, 2021.



BLACK RIVER PIRATES

2021 Record: 8-4 (5-2), 3rd in LCL

Key Players: Sr. Tyler Mrakuzic, WR/DB; Jr. Eric Groesser, QB; Sr. Charlie Wells, RB/LB

Fans in Sullivan are getting ready for another year of Pirate football. Black River once again is led by coach Kyle Clark, who is entering his fifth season at the helm. Last year's 8-4 record is one Clark believes the Pirates can improve upon throughout the 2022 season. Senior receiver and cornerback Tyler Mrakuzic, first team All-Ohio in 2021, holds single-season school records, including 47 receptions and 778 receiving yards. Junior Eric Groesser is continuing his mission to play every position on the field and will be starting off the 2022 season as quarterback after kicking and playing tight end last season. Groesser holds the school record for the longest field goal (48 yards).

8/19 @Hillsdale
8/26 @Northwestern
9/2 Cloverleaf
9/9 @Columbia
9/16 Clearview
9/23 Brookside
9/30 Oberlin
10/7 @Keystone
10/14 Firelands
10/21 @Wellington



BROOKSIDE CARDINALS

2021 Record: 4-5 (3-4), 5th in LCL

Key Players: Jr. Alex Toth, QB; So. Nick Arra, QB/LB; Sr. Michael Gomes, RB

"Consistency" is Brookside coach Scott O'Donnell's word for the 2022 Cardinals. The program is returning a lot of talent as players try to compete at the top of the Lorain County League. A quarterback competition between Alex Toth and Nick Arra is something fans will want to watch this season, along with running back Michael Gomes, who is one of Lorain County's top runners. The Cardinals return four starters on both the offensive and defensive lines, and there is unexpected depth at the receiver and defensive back positions.

8/19 @Wickliffe
8/26 Cuyahoga Hts
9/2 Chagrin Falls
9/9 Clearview
9/16 Columbia
9/23 @Black River
9/30 @Keystone
10/7 @Firelands
10/14 Wellington
10/21 Oberlin



BRUNSWICK BLUE DEVILS

2021 Record: 6-5 (4-1), 2nd in GCC

Key Players: Sr. Chase Buchner, LB; Sr. Troy DiFranco, DT; Sr. Branyan Nichols, RB

The Blue Devils are reloading with new starters after graduating several seniors last season. Senior linebacker Chase Buchner returns as the enforcer on defense. Up front, senior defensive tackle Troy DiFranco will be tasked with handling the opponent's run game, while senior running back Branyan Nichols returns on offense as the leader of the backfield. Senior offensive lineman Dylan Cobb will be paving the way for Brunswick on the ground in the Blue Devils' tough Greater Cleveland Conference schedule. Coach Mark Pinzone knows competing with a young team presents several challenges, however he is confident the team will find success with the "next man up" mentality.

8/19 @Cleveland Hts
8/26 Olmsted Falls
9/2 @Highland
9/9 @Waite
9/16 Euclid
9/23 Mentor
9/30 @Solon
10/7 Medina
10/14 Hudson
10/21 @Strongsville



LEFT

KRISTIN BAUER/ CHRONICLE

Brunswick's David Hamrick (1) carries the ball and is brought down by Elyria High School's Jayden Boddy (88) and Isaiah Johnson (12) on Friday, Sept. 11, 2021

RIGHT

KRISTIN BAUER/ CHRONICLE

(Right) Clearview's Tyler Bockwich carries the ball while Scott High School's Amonte Thompson trails behind to tackle Bockwich on Friday, Aug. 27, 2021.



BUCKEYE BUCKS

2021 Record: 8-4 (3-0), 2nd in GLC

Key Players: Sr. Todd Allen, OG/DL; Sr. Nolan Martin, WR/DB; Sr. Brandon Hayer, FB/OLB

After winning the Great Lakes Conference East last season, Buckeye is looking to take the next step as a program. Coach Greg Dennison knows he has a young team, many with varsity experience. However, the 2022 Bucks team will need to lean on the experience of their returning starters. Senior offensive and defensive lineman Todd Allen returns and will be integral to controlling the line of scrimmage on both sides of the ball. Allen claimed the Division II wrestling state title for the 285-pound weight class this past winter. Seniors Brandon Hayner, linebacker, and Nolan Martin, defensive back, will be playing defensive positions behind Allen. Junior quarterback Casey Murray will control the offense behind what Coach Dennison says is a stout offensive line.

8/19 Cloverleaf
8/26 Amherst
9/2 @Copley
9/9 North Olmsted
9/16 Valley Forge
9/22 @Parma
9/30 @Normandy
10/7 Lakewood
10/14 @Holy Name
10/21 GLC Match-Up
TBD

KRISTIN BAUER/
CHRONICLE

Clearview's
coach
Mike Collier.



CLEARVIEW CLIPPERS

2021 Record: 0-9 (0-7), 8th in LCL

Key Players: Sr. Cameron Carreras, OL; Sr. Derrick Jones, OL; Sr. Shawn O'Hern, RB/LB

The Clippers were unable to win a game last season, however coach Mike Collier is expecting a much-improved squad in 2022. The players will begin the season with some excitement as they get ready to play in their newly renovated home stadium: Tom Hoch Field. Clearview wants to win the war in the trenches this season and can do so with returning senior offensive linemen Cameron Carreras and Derrick Jones. Senior Shawn O'Hern has a huge role to play this year too, playing both offense and defense as running back and linebacker. Ultimately, Clearview is looking to stay competitive within the Lorain County League this year. (Made move from D-IV to D-V this offseason)

8/19 Parma
8/26 @Scott
9/2 Smithville
9/9 @Brookside
9/16 @Black River
9/23 Columbia
9/30 Firelands
10/7 Wellington
10/14 @Oberlin
10/21 Keystone



CLOVERLEAF COLTS

2021 Record: 4-6 (2-4), 6th in MAC

Key Players: Sr. Tommy Price, OL/DL; Sr. Caleb Goode, OL/DL; Sr. James Nespeca, OL/DL

Competing at the top of the Metro Athletic Conference is the name of the game for coach Justin Vorhies and the Colts in 2022. They're coming off a 4-6 season and their third playoff appearance in program history, but winning the battle up front is something that needs to happen this year to remain competitive in the conference. There are three returning seniors on the offensive and defensive lines with Tommy Price, Caleb Goode and James Nespeca. Vorhies notes the Colts will be relying on outstanding senior leadership both in the locker room and on the field.

8/19 @Buckeye
8/26 Keystone
9/2 @Black River
9/9 Ravenna
9/16 @Field
9/23 Streetsboro
9/30 Woodridge
10/7 @Norton
10/14 Coventry
10/21 @Springfield



DAVID RICHARD/ CHRONICLE

Columbia's Marco Cirigliano gets by Tigers' defender Vincent Woods for a first down in the second quarter on Saturday, Nov. 13, 2021.

KRISTIN BAUER/
CHRONICLE

Columbia's
coach
Jason Ward.



COLUMBIA RAIDERS

2021 Record: 11-2 (6-1), 2nd in LCL

Key Players: Jr. Marco Cirigliano, RB; Sr. Carter Kalamasz, QB; Sr. Hayden Garrow, DL; Sr. Carter Peabody, DL

You cannot talk about Lorain County League football without talking about Columbia. The Raiders are back under coach Jason Ward, who enters his 17th season with the program. Columbia is coming off an 11-win season, which is the most in school history. Ward's team also won two playoff games in 2021 – something the Raiders had never accomplished before. However, the team is yearning for more in 2022. Running back Marco Cirigliano returns after rushing for more than 1,300 yards and 30 touchdowns last season. Quarterback Carter Kalamasz will take the reins with just 10 games of starting quarterback experience under his belt. Defensively, Hayden Garrow and Carter Peabody look to be anchors for the Raiders' line.

8/19 @Independence
8/26 Vermilion
9/2 @Northwestern
9/9 Black River
9/16 @Brookside
9/23 @Clearview
9/30 Wellington
10/7 @Oberlin
10/14 Keystone
10/21 Firelands





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KRISTIN BAUER/
CHRONICLE

Elyria's
coach
Devlin
Culliver.



ELYRIA PIONEERS

2021 Record: 6-5, (3-4) 5th in SWC

Key Players: Sr. Jaden Gilbert, LB; Sr. Isaiah Johnson, LB; Sr. Jasir Lucky, RB/DB

The Pioneers' six wins last season were the most since 2015. The Pioneers made the jump from the Greater Cleveland Conference to the Southwestern Conference in 2021, making play more competitive and geographically friendly. Senior All-Ohio honorable mention Jasir Lucky returns to the secondary, after posting a three-interception and two-defensive touchdown performance against Midview last season. A pair of powerful senior linebackers are back as well in Isaiah Johnson (second team All-Ohio) and Jaden Gilbert (third team All-Ohio).

8/19 @Elyria Catholic
8/26 @Bedford
9/3 Lorain
9/9 Berea-Midpark
9/16 @Avon
9/23 Olmsted Falls
9/30 @North Ridgeville
10/7 Avon Lake
10/14 @Amherst
10/21 Midview



KRISTIN BAUER/ CHRONICLE

Elyria's Jasir Lucky (3) carries the ball as Avon's Austin Mitchell (1) and Amin Abdul (73) go in for the tackle on Friday, Sept. 17, 2021.



AARON JOSEFCZYK/ CHRONICLE

Elyria Catholic's Levi Ellis hurdles over Buckeye's Marshall Kaymen on a run in the first half on Friday, Sept. 20, 2019.

KRISTIN BAUER/
CHRONICLE

Elyria
Catholic's
coach
Brian Fox.



ELYRIA CATHOLIC

2021 Record: 11-3 (2-1), 5th in GLC

Key Players: Sr. Levi Ellis, RB; Sr. Tony Grasso, LB; Sr. Kellen Amador, OL; Sr. Travis Merrill, DL; Sr. Aidan Kneppshield, DL

Panthers coach Brian Fox has his program in a great spot with plenty of playmakers returning this season. Senior running back and 2021 first team All-Ohioan Levi Ellis returns and is 1,900 yards away from passing Al McKinney (1985) as Elyria Catholic's all-time leading rusher. Senior linebacker Tony Grasso, another first team All-Ohio selection, is looking to build off a standout season in 2021 which included 22 tackles for loss, six sacks, two interceptions and three defensive touchdowns. Kellen Amador, senior captain and 2021 All-GLC selection, will lead the offensive line. Additionally, Travis Merrill and Aidan Kneppshield will be a difficult task for opponents to go up against on the defensive line. (Made move from D-V to D-IV this offseason)

8/19 Elyria
8/26 @Perkins
9/2 Midview
9/9 @Holy Name
9/16 @Rocky River
9/23 Fairview
9/30 Westlake
10/7 @North Olmsted
10/14 Bay
10/21 GLC Match-Up
(TBD)



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CHRONICLE

Firelands' coach Ryan O'Rourke.



FIRELANDS FALCONS

2021 Record: 5-5 (4-3), 4th in LCL

Key Players: Jr. Jimmy Aunspaw, QB; Sr. Weston Strader, RB; Sr. Shane Stitchick, OL; Sr. AJ Dunn, OL; Sr. Conner Rogers, OL; Jr. Collin Adkins, OL; Jr. Tristan Born, SS

Firelands coach Ryan O'Rourke, who is in his sixth year with the Falcons, hopes his team can be a force in the Lorain County League. There will be a new face at quarterback in junior Jimmy Aunspaw, who last season started on defense as a linebacker for the Falcons, but O'Rourke expects the transition to signal-caller to be smooth. Senior running back Weston Strader is returning after coming off 15 touchdowns his past two seasons. Four of five starters are back on the offensive line, including Shane Stitchick, AJ Dunn, Conner Rogers and Collin Adkins. Defensively, junior safety Tristan Born looks to lead a stout Falcons secondary. (Made move from D-IV to D-III this offseason)

8/19 Edison
8/26 Rocky River
9/2 @Vermilion
9/9 Wellington
9/16 Oberlin
9/23 @Keystone
9/30 @Clearview
10/7 Brookside
10/14 @Black River
10/21 @Columbia



HIGHLAND HORNETS

2021 Record: 11-3 (6-1), 2nd in Suburban League - American

Key Players: Sr. Lukas Stiles, RB/LB; Sr. Creed Hill, S; Sr. Andrew Lurtz, QB

The Hornets are expecting success in 2022 as the team is coming off two playoff victories against Waite and Anthony Wayne and a record-setting 11-2 season last year. Highland returns several key players this season, including senior Lukas Stiles in the backfield. Stiles was selected third team All-Ohio last season and will be a player to watch. Senior safety Creed Hill is back after earning first-team Suburban League honors last season. The Hornets are led by coach Mike Gibbons, who enters his eighth year at Highland.

8/19 @Berea-Midpark
8/26 North Royalton
9/2 Brunswick
9/9 @Tallmadge
9/16 @Barberton
9/23 Roosevelt
9/30 Revere
10/7 @Cuyahoga Falls
10/14 @Aurora
10/21 Copley



LEFT

ANGELO ANGEL/ CHRONICLE
Firelands' Weston Strader (6) is swarmed by Wellington's defense while carrying the ball on Friday, Sept. 10, 2021.

RIGHT

KRISTIN BAUER/ CHRONICLE
Keystone's Ryne Shackelford carries the ball and evades being tackled by Columbia's Elijah Goodman on Friday, Oct. 15, 2021.

KRISTIN BAUER/
CHRONICLE

Keystone's coach Don Griswold.



KEYSTONE WILDCATS

2021 Record: 9-2 (7-0), 1st in LCL

Key Players: Sr. Ryne Shackelford, WR; Sr. Konner Rodick, QB

"Cat Country" is roaring to go for another year of Keystone football. Coach Don Griswold and company are coming off a 9-2 season after falling in a regional title game in 2021. There are some heavy hitters who graduated from the program last season, but Griswold is looking to reload this season. Senior speedster, track star, wide receiver and Purdue-commit Ryne Shackelford is as good an athlete as any in Lorain County. If senior quarterback Konner Rodick can continue to improve under center, the Wildcats' offense should be on point. Griswold wants to see weekly improvements while letting the Friday night results sort themselves out. (Made move from D-IV to D-V this offseason)

8/19 Northwestern
8/26 @Cloverleaf
9/2 Lutheran West
9/9 @Oberlin
9/16 @Wellington
9/23 Firelands
9/30 Brookside
10/7 Black River
10/14 @Columbia
10/21 @Clearview



KRISTIN
BAUER/
CHRONICLE

Titans'
coach
Damion
Creel.



LORAIN TITANS

2021 Record: 1-10 (1-5), 6th in LEL

Key Players: Jr. Joseph Wyatt, QB/DB; Jr. Rico Anderson, WR/DB; Jr. Noah Smith, Y/LB

Lorain's focus in 2021 was reestablishing the football program after missing the previous season due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Coach Damion Creel has high expectations for this young team and expects the Titans to compete towards the top of the Lake Erie League. Junior Joseph Wyatt will take the snaps for Lorain's offense, while juniors Rico Anderson, John Salamon and Noah Buchanon will return as both offensive and defensive playmakers. Additionally, juniors Evan Hricovic, left tackle, and Julius Manning, defensive tackle, also return for the Titans' defense.

8/19 @Ravenna
8/26 Sandusky
9/3 @Elyria
9/9 Bedford
9/16 @Cleveland Hts
9/23 @Maple Hts
9/30 Garfield Hts
10/7 @Shaker Hts
10/14 Medina
10/21 Shaw



MEDINA BEES

2021 Record 13-1 (5-0), 1st in GCC

Key Players: Sr. Brennan Schramm, WR; Sr. Jacob Nunn, DL; Sr. Jesse Rahe, LB
Medina coach Larry Laird's goal is to continue the Bees' success into the 2022 season. There are several new players, but Laird is hopeful. As always, he wants his Bees to win the opener, be at the top of the conference, make the playoffs and win the state championship. Junior Danny Stoddard will be stepping in as quarterback, replacing Penn State bound Drew Allar. First-team All-Ohio senior wideout Brennan Schramm is back and hungry for more postseason success after knocking on the door to the state final four in 2021. Schramm had over 1,300 receiving yards and caught 14 touchdown passes last season. The offensive line also will be a strong point for the Bees with seniors Evan Feora and Patrick Gillespie returning.

8/19 Harding
8/26 @Avon
9/2 @Wadsworth
9/9 Stow
9/16 Strongsville
9/23 @Euclid
9/30 Mentor
10/7 @Brunswick
10/14 @Lorain
10/21 Solon



THOMAS FETCENKO/ CHRONICLE
Midview's Marc Reed makes a pass while playing North Ridgeville on Friday, Oct. 8, 2021.

THOMAS FETCENKO/ CHRONICLE
Avon Lake's Sam Fedders tackles Midview's Mason Kucera on Friday, Sept. 24, 2021.

RON SCHWANE/ GAZETTE
Medina's Drew Allar carries the ball on Friday, Sept. 24, 2021.

ANGELO ANGEL/
CHRONICLE

Midview's
coach
Luke Beal.



MIDVIEW MIDDIES

2021 Record: 3-7 (3-4), 6th in SWC

Key Players: Sr. Marc Reed, QB; Sr. Mason Kucera, RB/WR; Sr. Dylan Sees, OT

The Middies had to overcome a lot in 2021 with key injuries early in the season and falling in close games. Coach Luke Beal's team now has the challenge of finding a way to win those games in 2022. Seniors Marc Reed, quarterback, and Mason Kucera, running back and wide receiver, will carry the offensive load again this season. There are three new offensive linemen, along with other new faces at key positions. With just five returning defensive starters, Beal will rely on returning seniors Dylan Sees, tackle, and R.J. Lambert, defensive tackle, to lead younger players.

8/19 Rocky River
8/26 Strongsville
9/2 @Elyria Catholic
9/9 @Olmsted Falls
9/16 Amherst
9/23 @Avon Lake
9/30 Berea-Midpark
10/7 @North Ridgeville
10/14 Avon
10/21 @Elyria



NORTH RIDGEVILLE RANGERS

2021 Record: 3-7 (1-6), 7th in SWC

Key Players: Sr. Mason Worcester, WR; Sr. Connor Costin, WR; Sr. Evan Monter, CB
Coach Bryan Morgan's goal is continued improvement for the Rangers this season. Morgan is entering his second season at the helm after transitioning from coaching the boys basketball team. The Rangers return 22 letterwinners to the 2022 program, with senior receivers Mason Worcester and Connor Costin leading the way. Defensively, senior cornerback Evan Monter will lead the line. According to Morgan, "We expect to be better this year, but will be tested by our youth. It will be another season to learn and get better as a program. We have some guys that can make things interesting."

8/19 @North Olmsted
8/25 @Valley Forge
9/2 Normandy
9/9 @Amherst
9/16 Olmsted Falls
9/23 @Avon
9/30 Elyria
10/7 Midview
10/14 @Berea-Midpark
10/21 Avon Lake



LEFT

THOMAS FETCENKO/ CHRONICLE
Oberlin's Jazele Grady carries the ball as Columbia's Carter Peabody goes in for a tackle on Saturday, Sept. 12.

RIGHT

KRISTIN BAUER/ CHRONICLE
North Ridgeville's Evan Monter carries the ball as Avon's Chase Myers goes in for the tackle on Friday, Sept. 24, 2021.



OBERLIN PHOENIX

2021 Record: 2-8 (1-6), 7th in LCL

Key Players: Sr. Isaac Thompson, DE; Sr. Jordan Parker, ATH; Jr. Isaiah Jones-Smith, ATH

First-year coach Dominique Goodwin has one goal for the Phoenix this season: Bring excitement back to the Oberlin football program. To make Friday nights exciting again, strides needed to be taken to develop talent on the team. One of the leading forces is senior tight end and defensive end Isaac Thompson. Thompson earned his spot on the 2021 All-Ohio third team. Senior Jordan Parker and Junior Isaiah Jones-Smith also will be making plays on both sides of the ball for the Phoenix. Freshman quarterback Drew Walter is another player to watch as he is tasked with leading the Oberlin offense.

8/19 Plymouth
8/26 @Lutheran East
9/2 Brooklyn
9/9 Keystone
9/16 @Firelands
9/23 @Wellington
9/30 @Black River
10/7 Columbia
10/14 Clearview
10/21 @Brookside



VERMILION SAILORS

2021 Record: 1-9 (0-5), 6th in SBB - Bay

Key Players: Sr. Tyler McCale, SB/OLB; Sr. Hayden Valenti, RB/OLB; Sr. Dylan Willard, C/DE

Everything is new for the Sailors this season. Coach Bill DiFucci will be in his first year as head coach after being an assistant coach for the program, and Vermilion fans will see lots of new players in key roles, too. DiFucci said he wants to see week-to-week improvement, noting "expectations are being better than we were the day before." Tyler McCale, Hayden Valenti, Dylan Willard, Malachi Howell, Owen Kyser, Keegan Frey, Troy Jackson, Aaron Mathis, Cohen Mooney and Beau Benesh are players for fans to watch this season.

8/19 @Margaretta
8/26 @Columbia
9/2 Firelands
9/9 Scott
9/16 Lutheran West
9/23 Oak Harbor
9/30 @Port Clinton
10/7 @Huron
10/14 @Edison
10/21 Willard



WADSWORTH GRIZZLIES

2021 Record: 3-7 (2-4), 5th in Suburban League - National

Key Players: Sr. Luke Fischer, QB; Sr. Jared Pasco, OL; Sr. Maverick Blackburn, LN

The Grizzlies have high expectations for their 18 returning starters in 2022. Wadsworth was competitive in 2021, but the Grizzlies have a bear of a nonleague schedule ahead of them and even more challenges in the Suburban League National Division. The team returns several offensive players, some returning from injuries after last season. However, the Grizzlies will have some big shoes to fill in replacing defensive end Conner Frisby and defensive back Skyler Kries, who will both continue their athletic careers in college. Frisby will play football at Walsh University this fall and Kries will play baseball at Cuyahoga Community College in the spring. Coach Justin Todd leads Wadsworth and is entering his seventh year with the Grizzlies.

8/19 @Barberton
8/26 @Wooster
9/2 Medina
9/9 @Brecksville
9/16 Hudson
9/23 Nardon
9/30 @Stow
10/7 Austintown-Fitch
10/14 North Royalton
10/21 @Twinsburg



THOMAS FETCENKO/CHRONICLE

Wellington's CJ Polen passes against Black River on Friday, Oct. 22, 2021.



DAVID RICHARD/CHRONICLE

Columbia's quarterback Andrew Champagne rushes for a touchdown past Wellington's CJ Polen on Friday, Oct. 1, 2021.

KRISTIN BAUER/
CHRONICLE

Wellington's
coach Rob
Howells.



WELLINGTON DUKES

2021 Record: 4-7 (2-5), 6th in LCL

Key Players: Sr. C.J. Polen, QB; Sr. Nathan Patfield, RB/LB; Sr. Josh Nocella, CB/RB

Coach Rob Howells has continued to grow the Dukes' football program from 20 players in 2018 to 50 this upcoming season. The standard of play also is on the rise for Wellington after coming off a competitive 2021 season that landed the Dukes in the playoffs. Some late-game mistakes cost Wellington a number of close games last year, however the team is looking to find ways to win those games this season. Senior quarterback C.J. Polen returns and will be someone the Dukes heavily lean on. According to Howells, "We have a lot of competition at major positions and a young group of incoming sophomores that have been pushing and competing with upperclassmen for those spots. How we manage summer, training camps and fall as a team will determine how well we do."



Wellington

8/19 @Western Reserve
8/26 @Mapleton
9/2 Plymouth
9/9 @Firelands
9/16 Keystone
9/23 Oberlin
9/30 @Columbia
10/7 Clearview
10/14 @Brookside
10/21 Black River

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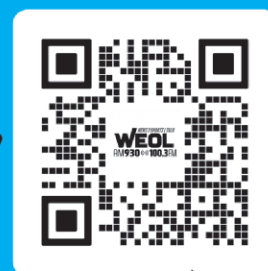
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OTHER SCHEDULES OF NOTE

Bay

8/19 West Geauga
8/26 @Lakewood
9/2 University School
9/9 @Valley Forge
9/16 Westlake
9/23 @Rocky River
9/30 @North Olmsted
10/7 FairviewHome
10/14 @Elyria Catholic
10/21 GLC Match-Up TBA

Berea-Midpark

8/19 Highland
8/26 Home
9/2 @St. Francis de Sales
9/9 @Elyria
9/16 Avon Lake
9/23 Amherst
9/30 @Midview
10/7 @Avon
10/14 North Ridgeville
10/21 @Olmsted Falls

North Olmsted

8/19 North Ridgeville
8/26 @Green
9/2 @Amherst
9/9 @Buckeye
9/16 Fairview
9/23 @Westlake
9/30 Bay
10/7 Elyria Catholic
10/14 @Rocky River
10/21 GLC Match-Up TBA

Olmsted Falls

8/19 @Chardon
8/26 @Brunswick
9/2 Norwalk
9/9 Midview
9/16 @North Ridgeville
9/23 Elyria
9/30 Avon
10/7 Amherst
10/14 @Avon Lake
10/21 Berea-Midpark

Rocky River

8/19 @Midview
8/26 @Firelands
9/2 Valley Forge
9/9 @Lakewood
9/16 Elyria Catholic
9/23 Bay
9/30 @Fairview
10/7 @Westlake
10/14 North Olmsted
10/21 GLC Match-Up TBA

St. Edward

8/19 Toledo CC
8/26 Pittsburgh CC
Tom Benson HOF Stadium
9/3 Cherry Creek
9/10 Elder
9/16 @Massillon
9/24 Rock Creek
10/1 St. Ignatius
Byers Field
10/7 Clarkson North
10/15 @Moeller
10/21 Hoban

St. Ignatius

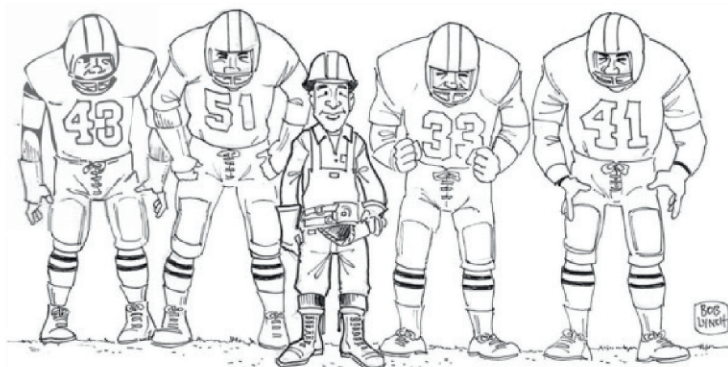
8/20 Springfield
8/27 Mentor
9/3 @Mt. St. Joseph
9/10 Euclid
9/16 @Hoban
9/23 @River Rouge
10/1 St. Edward
10/8 Moeller
10/15 @St. Xavier
10/21 Clarkson North

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Another Year of Buckeye Football

Rocco Nuosci

WEOL AM930 & 100.3FM

COLUMBUS — Fall in Ohio is something special for fans as it marks the return of Ohio State football. From the Skull Sessions at St. John's Arena, the fabled tailgates and the Buckeyes' games at Ohio Stadium, Columbus has football happening in the right way.



Rocco Nuosci

Many fans viewed last year's 11-2 season, complete with a Rose Bowl win over Utah, a disappointment after the Buckeyes fell to "That Team Up North" – Michigan. Coach Ryan Day and his staff are looking to bounce back in 2022 and get back into the national championship conversation.

Perhaps even more importantly for Buckeye fans, this includes finding a way back into the win column for "The Game," which returns home to the Horseshoe on Nov. 26. There are new players to watch this season, but plenty of top names are back in scarlet and gray as the Buckeyes set their sights on a Big Ten championship and playoff season.

Offensive Output

The Buckeyes had the most efficient offense in the country last season, averaging 7.96 yards per play. In addition to driving his new Mercedes, quarterback C.J.

Stroud will be driving Ohio State's offense down the field again. Stroud finished fourth last season in Heisman trophy voting and likely will be a candidate again after throwing for over 4,435 yards and 44 touchdowns last season.

Stroud is a traditional pocket passer, as evidenced by his negative total rushing yards last season (-20 due to sacks). However, Stroud posted the third highest completion percentage in the country in 2021 at 71.9%, setting the school record. He will be chasing other passing records this season, possibly making 2022 a historic season.

Stroud will be passing to Jaxon Smith-Njigba, the Rose Bowl MVP, who is returning to the Buckeyes without teammates Chris Olave and Garrett Wilson, who left for the NFL. Smith-Njigba had over 1,600 yards on 95 catches, which amounted to more receptions and receiving yards than both Olave and Wilson.

Marvin Harrison Jr. will be behind Smith-Njigba, hopefully seeing more consistent snaps. Julian Fleming and Emeka Egbuka will round out the receiver positions for these four five-star Buckeye recruits.

Receivers Coach Brian Hartline is showing off his recruiting skills. The Buckeyes' 1,000-yard rusher TreVeyon Henderson returns after ranking second in the nation in yards per carry last season. Miyan Wil-

liams, who prefers the moniker "Chop" over "Meatball," will back up Henderson but will get his fair share of touches.

First-year offensive line coach Justin Frye is responsible for the "big uglies" up front. Paris Johnson Jr. will make the jump to left tackle after playing right guard in 2021, and Luke Wyple and Dawand Jones are back at center and right tackle. The two remaining positions still are open heading into the season with depth as a potential issue with this group.

A Not-So-Dominant Defense

The Buckeyes' defense left much to be desired during the 2021 season. Day is looking for improvement after Ohio State ranked 51st in opponent yards per game (374.0 yards in 2021). Allowing a 42.16% third down conversion rate, ranking 92nd in the nation, won't put Ohio State at the top of the conference.

Former defensive coordinator Kerry Coombs has left the team, a move many fans felt was necessary. Day brought in Jim Knowles from another OSU – Oklahoma State – to become the new defensive coordinator.

The Cowboys' defense was dominant in 2021, ranking in the top five for sacks, tackles for loss, third-down defense, rush defense and total defense in the Football

See **BUCKYES**, 20



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2022 OHIO STATE FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

SEPT 3 | NOTRE DAME
COLUMBUS, OHIO | 7:30 PM

SEPT 10 | ARKANSAS STATE
COLUMBUS, OHIO | 12:00 PM

SEPT 17 | TOLEDO
COLUMBUS, OHIO | 7:00 PM

SEPT 24 | WISCONSIN
COLUMBUS, OHIO | TBD

OCT 1 | RUTGERS
COLUMBUS, OHIO | 3:30 PM

OCT 8 | MICHIGAN STATE
E. LANSING, MICHIGAN | TBD

OCT 22 | IOWA
COLUMBUS, OHIO | TBD

OCT 29 | PENN STATE
STATE COLLEGE, PENN. | TBD

NOV 5 | NORTHWESTERN
EVANSTON, ILLINOIS | TBD

NOV 12 | INDIANA
COLUMBUS, OHIO | TBD

NOV 19 | MARYLAND
COLLEGE PARK, MARYLAND | TBD

NOV 26 | MICHIGAN
COLUMBUS, OHIO | 12:00 PM

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John Telich joins Rocco Nuosci at 7:20 AM on Thursday mornings for an in-depth look at the Browns

BUCKEYES from 18

Bowl Subdivision (FBS). Oklahoma State led the Big 12 in all of these categories.

This season the Buckeyes will feature a 4-2-5 defensive alignment, where Ohio State has depth up front. Senior Zach Harrison has the experience the group needs and is complimented by new talent in redshirt freshman J.T. Tuimolau.

Tyleik Williams and Taron Vincent are projected to be starting defensive tackles. All eyes are on Jack Sawyer to get his name into the mix this season as well. Juniors Tommy Eichenberg and Steele Chambers are the team's linebackers. Eichenberg set a Rose Bowl record of 17 tackles in last season's win over Utah.

Overall, the Buckeyes' defense needs to be more disruptive in 2022, creating more turnovers. Ohio State averaged less than a single interception per game last season, which is a number fans hope they do not repeat. Cornerback Denzel Burke started in all 13 games as a freshman in 2021, leading the team by defending 13 total passes. Cameron Brown, opposite of Burke, tallied seven pass deflections with only a single interception.

Returning safeties Josh Proctor and Ronnie Hickman are physical players and will be complimented by Tanner McCallister,

who may come to play a large role in the secondary after following Knowles from Oklahoma State.

Ohio State's defense let the offense down last season, and being a national championship contender rides on both sides of the ball being top notch week to week.

Don't Sleep on Special Teams

Buckeye fans love Ruggles, and not just the "Buckeye Blast" ice cream. Placekicker Noah Ruggles is a player to watch this season at Ohio State. Ruggles connected on 20 of his 21 field goal attempts last season, which puts him at a 0.952 success rate – tied for second place in the FBS. Jesse Micro, another Buckeye punter, also returns.

Smith-Njigba will be the team's punt returner this season. Emeka Egbuka will also be looking to return kicks once more after leading the Big Ten with an average kickoff return of 29 yards.

Looking at the Schedule

The Buckeyes' season starts off with a bang with Notre Dame coming to Columbus on Sept. 3. The Buckeyes have won four straight against Notre Dame and this will be Ohio State's first matchup with Notre Dame since the 2015 Fiesta Bowl, where the Buckeyes won 44-28.

Conference play will pick up at the end of September when the Big Ten schedule opens with Wisconsin in Columbus on Sept. 24. There's a tough three-week stretch in October that has the Buckeyes on the road at Michigan State, back home against Iowa then away again in Happy Valley to take on Penn State. The Buckeyes will hit a soft spot in their schedule before gearing up for their home finale against Michigan.

The season will boil down to Ohio State being able to punch their ticket to the Big Ten Championship Game while staying in the national title conversation. If the Buckeyes can make that happen, another college football playoff appearance could be in store for fans.

New-Look Big Ten

The Big Ten Conference is going to grow once again in 2024 with the additions of USC and UCLA. Both schools are leaving the Pac-12 Conference, citing better game times and talent recruiting potential. Though there are two seasons left until this monumental shift in the college football landscape, this leaves many wondering if there will be other conference changes.

Contact Rocco Nuosci at rnuosci@weol.com or follow him on Twitter at [@noush9602](https://twitter.com/noush9602).

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Scott Petrak
The Chronicle-Telegram

BEREA — A star-studded offensive line? Check.

The best running back tandem in the NFL? Check.

Arguably the most dangerous pass rusher in football? Check.

One of the deepest and most talented secondaries in the league? Check and check.

A dual-threat quarterback capable of lifting a team to Super Bowl contention? Check to see if he's eligible to play.

The Browns have built a well-rounded roster strong at several key positions and traded for three-time Pro Bowl quarterback Deshaun Watson to take them to the next level. The Browns ended a 17-year postseason drought in 2020 and won a wild card game in Pittsburgh, then went

8-9 in a regression last season and gave up on quarterback Baker Mayfield, the No. 1 pick of the 2018 draft.

Cleveland's decision-makers knew acquiring Watson, who was accused by more than two dozen women of sexual misconduct during massage therapy appointments, would alienate a chunk of the fan base but deemed the difference he'd make worth the backlash and negative headlines. The plan only works if he's on the field.

Watson, 26, was suspended by independent arbitrator Sue L. Robinson for the first six games. The NFL was immediately undecided if it would use its right to appeal to lengthen the suspension — possibly to the entire season.

Jacoby Brissett, 29, is set to replace Watson for however many games he misses.

See **BROWNS**, 22

2022 CLEVELAND BROWNS SCHEDULE



SEPT 11	CAROLINA PANTHERS	1:00 PM	NOV 13	MIAMI DOLPHINS	1:00 PM
SEPT 18	NEW YORK JETS	1:00 PM	NOV 20	BUFFALO BILLS	1:00 PM
SEPT 22	PITTSBURGH STEELERS	8:15 PM	NOV 27	TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS	1:00 PM
OCT 2	ATLANTA FALCONS	1:00 PM	DEC 4	HOUSTON TEXANS	1:00 PM
OCT 9	LOS ANGELES CHARGERS	1:00 PM	DEC 11	CINCINNATI BENGALS	1:00 PM
OCT 16	NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS	1:00 PM	DEC 17/18	BALTIMORE RAVENS	TBD
OCT 23	BALTIMORE RAVENS	1:00 PM	DEC 24	NEW ORLEANS SAINTS	1:00 PM
OCT 31	CINCINNATI BENGALS	8:15 PM	JAN 1	WASHINGTON COMMANDERS	1:00 PM
BYE			JAN 7/8	PITTSBURGH STEELERS	TBD

GAMES LISTED IN ORANGE ARE AWAY

BROWNS from 21

Brissett is 14-23 as a starter in the NFL but has shown he's careful with the ball, throwing 36 touchdowns to 17 interceptions.

That will be a necessary skill as the Browns try to tread water, or better, without Watson.

"The No. 1 job of the quarterback is to control the game, I don't care what nobody says," linebacker Anthony Walker Jr. said during training camp. "I think all the good quarterbacks can say they are a game manager. Most quarterbacks you want to be a game manager and you want your playmakers to make plays for you. He does that. He gets his guys the ball in space."

Coach Kevin Stefanski, who's entering his third season and was NFL Coach of the Year in 2020, will rely on a running game featuring an athletic line and backs Nick Chubb and Kareem Hunt and a defense with stars predicting domination.

Mayfield, who was traded to Carolina in July for a midround draft pick in 2024, twice publicly criticized Stefanski's play calling last season, and the pressure is on Stefanski to prove his passing scheme works and he can win with the quarterbacks of his choosing.

That'd be easier with Watson, who led the NFL in passing yards in 2020. But the Browns knew Brissett would be needed during a suspension and trust him to keep them in playoff contention until Watson returns.

"Size, arm strength and decision-making," Stefanski said of Brissett's strengths. "He has a very good way about him. Very, very intelligent. A very good leader. Has the ability to make plays on the practice field, help in the meeting room and be accountable throughout the weight room."

"He just does all of the right things."

"It feels good that you have that trust amongst the organization," Brissett said. "I'm excited for the opportunity. Extremely confident in myself and my abilities."

Two-time All-Pro end Myles Garrett leads a defense that ranked fifth in yards allowed last year and returns nine of 11 starters. Garrett had a franchise-record 16 sacks last year, 12 in 2020 and is determined to be the NFL's Defensive Player of the Year.

He vowed the defense won't let Watson's absence sabotage the season.

"We're going to hold ourselves to a higher standard no matter what happens and our defense is going to do what we do," Garrett said. "Last time I heard, they can't win if they don't score points."

"The offense always needs our best, so it's not going to change when he's not on the field or he is on the field. We're always going to do our very best and execute how we know we should."

Second-year linebacker Jeremiah Owusu-Koramoah is a playmaker on the second level, and the secondary boasts cornerbacks Denzel Ward, Greg Newsome II, Greedy Williams and rookie Martin Emerson Jr. and safeties John Johnson III and Grant Delpit.

The defense played its best over the final seven games last season and would take another jump if it can consistently create takeaways. The Browns managed only 13 interceptions and six fumble recoveries last season, ranking 21st in the NFL in turnovers forced.

"That is what we live and breathe. That is in our DNA is we want to take away the football," defensive coordinator Joe Woods said. "We have not done as good of a job the previous two years. We greatly have to improve that because that is one of the major categories that you have to note, if not the most important category, when it comes to winning games."

Special teams is the final piece of the puzzle — the Browns need to win on the margins to flourish without Watson, and the kicking game becomes critical as the

season reaches January — and got an extreme makeover in the offseason.

Pro Bowl returner Jakeem Grant Sr. was signed as a free agent, licker Cade York was drafted in the fourth round and Corey Bojorquez and Joseph Charlton are battling to be the new punter. Rookie kickers are fickle, but York was the best one in the draft and has strong self-belief.

That's a theme in the locker room.

"I don't think nobody on our team, period, is lacking confidence," Walker said. "And that's the camaraderie that we've built, the trust and belief within the franchise, Kevin and Joe and all those guys just to believe in what we've got going and the guys that we have in the locker room."

"We're not lacking confidence anywhere, and that's not to be arrogant, but that's just to say we understand the work that we have to put in and we're putting in that work now so that on Sundays we can go out and execute. So when you have a lot of guys with that confidence and Jacoby another confident guy you add into that mix, yeah, it should be good."

And even better if and when Watson's allowed to play.

Contact Scott Petrak at (440) 329-7253 or spetrak@chronicle.com.

Like him on Facebook and follow him @scottpetrak on Twitter.



Scott Petrak

Editor's Note: The Browns football preview story contained information and reporting up to the time of publication on Wednesday, Aug. 3. Visit BrownsZone for updates and additional content from The Chronicle-Telegram and Medina Gazette Browns writer Scott Petrak.

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