

2019 SOLLENBERGER'S AZ

# FOOTBALL

PREP MAGAZINE

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TRAILS

ST. JOHNS' MORGAN  
8 WINS FROM NEW  
COACHING RECORD

+ WHERE DOES LOADED  
**2020**  
**SENIOR**  
CLASS RANK? +

RETRACING CHANDLER'S  
**1949 TITLE**



OPEN DIVISION  
FOOTBALL  
STATE CHAMPIONS  
2019-2020

RANKINGS, REGION PREVIEWS AND MORE



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**SEPT. 13**

Pusch Ridge  
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Red Mountain  
vs. Westview

**SEPT. 27**

Willow Canyon  
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**OCT. 11**

Bradshaw Mountain  
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**OCT. 18**

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## New Championship Leads To New Cover Look



By Jose Garcia  
azpreps365.com

Hello.

If you've seen the back issues of the Sollenberger's AZ Football Prep Magazine, you probably noticed the change to this year's cover.

We took a different approach this year because of the introduction of a new crown, the Open Division. Some of the state's top returning players usually grace the cover.

That's one of the things the Sollenberger is known for, and that tradition will continue. This year, we just wanted to highlight one of the biggest shifts in the Arizona Interscholastic Association's football championship history.

The best eight big schools will compete during the Open Division tournament each year.

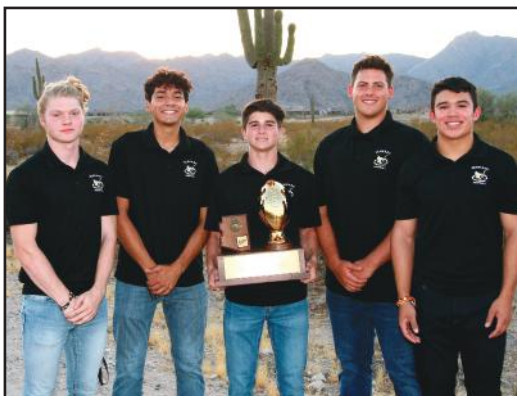
In this year's Sollenberger, azpreps365.com's Les Willsey details how the Open Division teams will be selected and why the Open Division was introduced. Also in the magazine, there's a story on a team that's celebrating its 70th state championship anniversary this year.

The story on the 1949 Chandler Wolves was written by Barry Sollenberger. He originally published the story on the 1949 Wolves in 1999, six years before Sollenberger, an AIA historian and high school sports walking encyclopedia, passed away.

This year is also big for Arizona high school football because of all the talent in the 2020 senior class. azpreps365.com dug up some of Sollenberger's all-state collections of elite Arizona senior classes, going as far back as the 1920s.

In the magazine, we published the classes that stood out, and there are plenty. Speaking of plenty, there's a lot more to read in this year's special edition of the Sollenberger, which was first published in 1971.

We can't wait for one of the more highly anticipated seasons to begin.



The 2019 Sollenberger's AZ Football Prep Magazine is designed and published by Kukulski Brothers. Special thanks to Brian Bolitho, Frankie Acosta, Brian Lukas, Seth Polansky, David Kukulski, Andy Kukulski, Matt Kukulski and Pam Kukulski for their efforts with this publication. The staff writers are Jose Garcia, Andy Morales and Les Willsey of azpreps365.com. Intern Stephen Perez also contributed stories. The Sollenberger cover was designed by Daniel Navarrette. We also want to thank Verrado's football program for helping us with the cover photo shoot near its campus. Verrado High football players Austin Bilski, Jose Gomez, Cameron Coronado, Blake Gamez, Logan Gingg and Dillon Hanson held the trophy during the photo shoot. The cover photo is courtesy of Steve Paynter of paynterpics.com.





## New Season Unveils Open Division Championship

By Les Willsey  
azpreps365.com

The Arizona Interscholastic Association adds a new wrinkle this season to its 60th year sanctioning football state championships.

That wrinkle — approved by the AIA's executive board in January — is an Open Division tournament.

It's no secret there's been little to no mystery the last several years who would win the respective 6A, 5A and 4A football conferences titles. Many fans wait with bated breath for prognosticators top-10s in July/August when there has essentially been no need — 6A Chandler (three-peat in progress), 5A Centennial (repeat and three titles in four years) and 4A Saguaro (four-peat in progress and eight titles in nine years this decade) are heavy favorites for the next year seconds after stepping off the field with their most recent title trophy. There will still be state champs crowned in the six existing conferences — 6A, 5A, 4A, 3A, 2A and 1A.

The hope is the Open Division will fuel renewed intrigue and perhaps make more competitive the 6A, 5A and 4A conference title chases. The Open Division is set up to feature eight teams, based on a separate ratings system from the regular power-ranking format that identifies the 16-team fields in 6A, 5A and 4A.

Only schools in 6A, 5A and 4A are eligible to compete in the Open Division. The eight teams competing in the Open Division will be identified by a computer program taking into account all games a team plays, including out of state contests with a strength of schedule component and a 14-point cap on margin of victory (hence no rewarding of lopsided victories).

A top-15 ranking for the Open Division will be posted on azpreps365.com following the fifth week of the regular season. The power-ranking system that identifies the 16-team fields in 2A-6A and 12 teams in 1A will continue to be used and post at the same interval.

Open Division playoff play will have three weeks of competition. Participants receive a week off after the regular season ends (Nov. 1).

The first playoff date for Open Division games is Friday Nov. 15. Open Division semifinals follow the weekend of Nov. 22-23.

The finalists get another week off with the Open Division title game set for Dec. 7 along with the 6A final. The 4 and 5A finals will be played the day before.

The championship sites for the 2019 state tournaments,



**Who will lift the Open Division trophy for the first time?**  
(photo by Steve Paynter of paynterpics.com)

including the Open Division, have not been determined yet.

Had the Open Division bracket existed last year with the ranking system that will be in place, the qualifiers would have been in order: Centennial, Chandler, Pinnacle, Williams Field, Salpointe Catholic, Perry, Highland and Saguaro. That breaks down to four 6A schools, two 5A schools and two 4A schools.

Seven of the eight were semifinalists or better in their respective conferences. AIA executive director David Hines said the Open Division should allow for competitive games every week, which has been missing in big conferences in recent years.

Limiting Open Division qualifiers to eight teams makes



that more likely. Speaking to the lopsidedness of first-round playoff games in big school conferences in the last two seasons, the average margin of victory in 6A first-round games was 28 points (2018) and 34 points (2017); in 5A 30 points (2018) and 21 points (2017); and in 4A 21 points (2018) and 34 points (2017).

In the final games of the tournaments in 6A, 5A and 4A — quarters, semis and title game — two of the seven 6A games in 2018 were decided by a TD or less and 1 of 7 in 2017; 5A 3 of 7 (2018) and 5 of 7 in (2017); and in 4A 0 of 7 (2018) and 1 of 7 (2017).

One of the six title games — two in each conference in that span — was decided by a TD or less. The rest were no closer than a 20-point margin.

Reaction to bringing in an Open Division championship from fans has been positive as most anticipate closer games and watching elite schools match up even if it means a 4A school taking on a 6A school.

Coaches have mixed feelings on the extra championship.

Arguments against the Open Division is it cheapens the conference title races when top teams shift to the Open Division.

"How can you be called 6A champ when say Chandler is the top team in the rankings and then competes in the Open," one coach said.

Another coach said many schools jumped on board with the idea of the Open Division believing it's a wider opening for them to win a title, albeit a watered-down title.

"If you believe Chandler, Saguardo and Centennial are going to qualify for the Open Division, and it's a good bet, it removes an obstacle," the coach said. "I feel like I want to

compete against schools my size. But most 5A and 4A schools would have a tough time competing with schools like Chandler or Perry when they have close to 4,000 students. That's double the size of most 5A schools and even a portion of the 6A schools who already can't compete."

Westwood coach Kyle Ide, a Westwood product in the Jerry Loper era in the late 1980s, recalls how different but scintillating competition was when he played three decades ago.

"We were usually good enough to win state and had that expectation at the start of a season," Ide said. "So did a lot of other schools. At the same time we knew we could end up not making the playoffs. That's how competitive it was."

"That's the way it should be. But you should have a chance, not know your season is over before it begins. That prevents a lot of kids from going out for football in the first place."

Ide continues: "I think the Open Division will be a good thing, but I hope it helps lead to getting schools where they should be in the first place. That's where the focus needs to be. Schools need to start a season knowing they at least have a chance to make the playoffs. For too many schools today, that's not a reality."

Once the 2019 season concludes in December, football will be the last sport to undergo realignment for the coming two-year block.

Data from the 2017, 2018 and 2019 seasons will be used to place teams in conferences beginning 2020-2021. The goal is a trending to more competitive balance.

How effective the Open Division is will be a by product and important to how conferences look come the 2020-2021 season.

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## *azpreps365.com Staff Predicts Elite Eight*

### **JOSE GARCIA**

**Centennial  
Chandler  
Desert Vista  
Liberty  
Perry  
Pinnacle  
Saguardo  
Salpointe**

**(in alphabetical order)**

### **ANDY MORALES**

**Centennial  
Chandler  
Desert Vista  
Highland  
Perry  
Pinnacle  
Saguardo  
Salpointe**

**(in alphabetical order)**

### **LES WILLSEY**

**Centennial  
Chandler  
Desert Vista  
Highland  
Perry  
Pinnacle  
Saguardo  
Salpointe**

**(in alphabetical order)**



## 2020 Class Boasts Elite Talent; A Look at AZ's Best Ever Senior Classes



(Left) Saguaro's Kelee Ringo and Salpointe's Bijan Robinson (photos by Mark Jones of maxpreps.com)

**By Jose Garcia**  
**azpreps365.com**

Several of Arizona's high school senior football classes aged really well.

For the loaded 2020 class, it's too early to tell how well it'll mature. But there's no doubt it boasts elite high school talent.

This year's big crop of senior stars led azpreps365.com to dig through the Arizona Interscholastic Association's crates to try and compile the the state's most decorated graduating classes.

Time will tell where the 2020s will rank among Arizona's best, but that isn't keeping them from already receiving rave reviews locally and nationally. Five Arizona players are ranked in the top-100 of 247Sports' high school composite ratings.

Only football powers California, Florida, Texas — the three most populated U.S. states — and Georgia (No. 8 in population) have more top-100 players.

Arizona is now the 14th most populated state. Since 2010, the Grand Canyon state experienced a 13.54 percent growth rate and was the fourth fastest growing state of 2018, according to worldpopulationreview.com.

Credit Arizona's population rise partly for the surge of football talent. Ahead of this year's class is Saguaro's Kelee Ringo (ranked No. 9 overall by 247sports), Salpointe's Bijan Robinson (No. 22), Pinnacle's Tosh Baker (No. 60), Chaparral's Jack Miller (No. 71) and Salpointe's Lathan Ransom (No. 76).

"I have had debates with many people on this topic, including several college coaches, and I think this is as deep a class as I have seen since covering recruiting for almost 20 years," Brophy first-year coach Jason Jewell said. "The deepest positions are quarterback, offensive line and defensive back. There are multiple kids with major college scholarship offers at each one of these positions. At QB, there are kids committed to Michigan, Ohio State, NC State, Louisville and Arizona and there are another handful that have FBS/FCS offers. Look at the offensive line, where there are eight kids committed right now to Power 5 schools. Defensive back is in the same boat. And then look at the quality of players. Guys like Tosh and Kelee are ranked in the top 3-5 players at their respective position at a national level. This will be fun for me, transitioning to evaluating these guys to now having to play against them."



With 13 players in 247sports 2020 top-500, Arizona tied New Jersey for having the 11th most players ranked.

When it comes to the parade of previous stars in the state, throw out the rankings, because many of them became household names.

Randall McDaniel. Terrell Suggs. Darren Woodson. Danny White.

Those NFL legends also graduated with some of Arizona's most talented high school senior classes. After accumulating the best classes, these were the Arizona years that stood out to [azpreps365.com](http://azpreps365.com):

2012, 2011, 2007, 2001, 1987, 1986, 1982, 1979, 1972, 1964.

Which one is the best?

That's up for debate. But there's no denying that, like this year's senior class, this state has produced some great talent despite not being as big others.

### **LEADERS OF THE 2020 AZ PLAYERS RANKED BY 247SPORTS**

CB Kelee Ringo, Saguaro  
RB Bijan Robinson, Salpointe  
OL Tosh Baker, Pinnacle  
QB Jack Miller, Chaparral  
S Lathan Ransom, Salpointe  
DE Jason Harris, Higley  
OLB Damian Sellers, Saguaro  
QB Chubba Purdy, Perry  
CB Jacobe Covington, Saguaro  
RB Darvon Hubbard, Willow Canyon  
QB J.D. Johnson, Pinnacle  
WR Brenden Rice, Hamilton  
OL Noah Nelson, Williams Field

### **BLASTS FROM THE PAST AZ SENIOR CLASSES**

**2016:** N'Keal Harry (Chandler, New England Patriots first round pick); (Byron Murphy (Saguaro, Arizona Cardinals).

**2015:** Christian Kirk (Saguaro, Arizona Cardinals), Brian Lewerke (Pinnacle, Michigan State QB), Bryce Perkins (Chandler, University of Virginia QB), Emanuel Gant (Tempe) First Arizona QB to reach 10,000 career passing yard mark.

**2014:** Kyle Allen (Desert Mountain, NFL QB); Mark Andrews (Desert Mountain, NFL tight end); Jalen Jelks (Desert Vista, drafted in 7th round in 2019); Luke Rubenzer (Saguaro) State record setting QB.

**2013:** Devon Allen (Brophy) Track star; Ryan Finley (Paradise Valley) Bengals QB.

**2012:** Andrus Peat (Corona del Sol) Guard for Saints; D.J. Foster (Saguaro, AZ Cardinals); Paul Perkins (Chandler, NFL RB); Blake Martinez (Canyon del Oro) NFL high 286 tackles the past two seasons; Avery Moss (Corona del Sol, NFL OLB).

**2011:** Christian Westerman (Hamilton, NFL guard); Brett Hundley (Chandler, Arizona Cardinals); Ka'Deem Carey (Canyon del Oro, former NFL RB); Reggie Gilbert (Betty Fairfax) OLB with Green Bay Packers.

**2009:** Devon Kennard (Desert Vista) LB with Detroit Lions; Taylor Lewan (Chaparral) First round pick of Titans in 2014;

Trent Murphy (Brophy) DE for Buffalo Bills; Markus Wheaton (Chandler) Played in the NFL from 2013-2018.

**2008:** Dion Jordan (Chandler) third overall pick in in 2013 by the Dolphins; Gerell Robinson (Hamilton) Considered No. 1 recruit in 2008 senior class; Jeff Locke (Mountain Ridge) Minnesota Vikings punter from 2013-16.

**2007:** Prince Amukamara (Apollo) cornerback with Chicago Bears, first round pick; Everson Griffen (Agua Fria) DE Minnesota Vikings; Cameron Jordan (Chandler) DE New Orleans Saints, first round pick in 2011.

**2006:** Brooks Reed (Sabino) DE started in 86 NFL games from 2011-2018; Kyle Williams (Chaparral) WR in NFL from 2010-14.

**2005:** Richie Brockel (Greenway) NFL tight end from 2011-15; Nick Sundberg (North Canyon) Center for Washington Redskins from 2010-18.

**2004:** Max Hall (Mesa Mt. View) Former NFL QB; Zach Miller (Desert Vista) Former NFL TE; J.J. Jansen (Brophy) Center for Carolina from 2009-18; Jon Weeks (Mountain Ridge) NFL center/long snapper with Houston since 2010.

**2003:** Mike Pollak (Corona del Sol) played seven seasons in the NFL; Marcus Thomas (Tolleson) 4A career leading rusher.

**2002:** Spencer Larsen (Highland) NFL FB/LB from 2008-13; Mike Nixon (Sunnyslope) Spent four years in Dodgers' organization, played linebacker at ASU.

**2001:** Richie Incognito (Mountain Ridge) Has started in 150 NFL games; Deuce Lutui (Mesa) Played in NFL from 2006-12; Lyle Sendlein (Chaparral) Center for Cardinals from 2007-15; Jason Shivers (South Mountain) Speedster starred at ASU; Terrell Suggs (Hamilton) 132.5 career NFL sacks.

**2000:** John Beck (Mesa Mt. View) State Player of the Year senior year after throwing 42 TDs; Marquis Cooper (Highland) NFL LB from 2004-08; Ryan Fitzpatrick (Highland) Has thrown 190 career NFL touchdowns; Tank Johnson (McClintock) Played in NFL from 2004-2010.

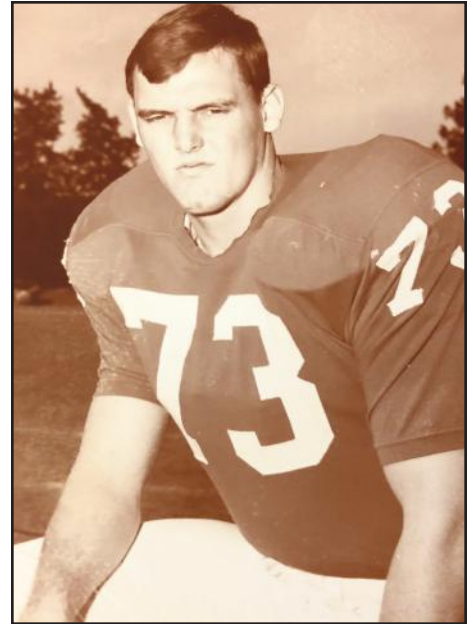
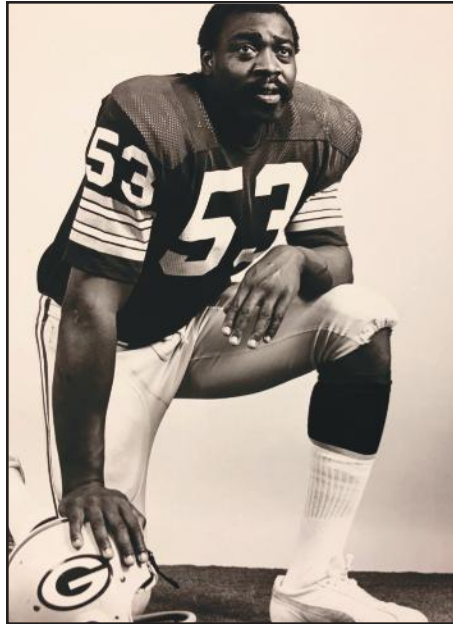
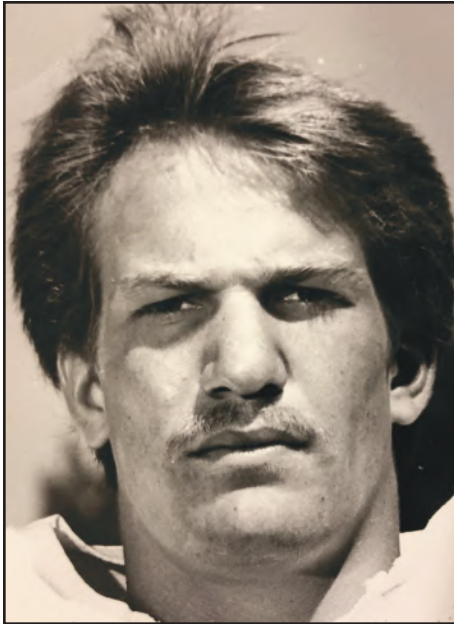
**1999:** Shaun McDonald (Shadow Mountain) NFL WR from 2003-09; Andrea Thurman (Westview) Played 11 years professionally; Bobby Wade (Desert Vista) NFL WR from 2003-09.

**1997:** Levi Jones (Santa Cruz) NFL tackle from 2002-09; Kyle Kosier (Cactus) Started 120 NFL games at G/T from 2002-11; Justin Taplin (Tempe) State 4A player of the year in 1996.

**1996:** Adam Archuleta (Chandler) Played in NFL for six seasons; Jonathan Beasley (Cactus) Gatorade Player of the Year in 1995; Mike Brown (Saguaro) NFL DB from 2000-09; Eric Johnson (Alhambra) NFL DB/LB from 2000-2005; Nick Harris (Westview) Punted in in NFL from 2001-12; Ryan Kealy (St. Mary's) Parade All-American.

**1995:** Marcus Bell (St. Johns) NFL LB from 2000-02; Trung Candidate (Central) NFL RB from 2000-03; Brian Jennings (Red Mountain) Two-time Pro Bowl selection as a special





**photos of Mountain View's Todd Shell (left), Phoenix Union's Fred Carr (middle) and Agua Fria's Bill Lueck (right) courtesy of the Arizona Interscholastic Association**

teams players; Stephen Trejo (Casa Grande) Played in NFL from 2001-04.

**1994:** Darnell Autry (Tempe) NFL RB from 1997-2000; Terry Fair (South Mountain) Played in the NFL from 1998-2005; Joe Germaine (Mesa Mt. View) Won Super Bowl ring with Rams; Robert Holcombe (Mesa) University of Illinois' career rushing leader.

**1993:** Mike Mitchell (Brophy) 5A career leader in touchdowns and rushing yards; John Tait (McClintock) Was in NFL from 1999-2008, first round pick; Kenny Wheaton (McClintock) All Pac-10 pick three times.

**1992:** Rich Griffith (Catalina) NFL TE from 1993-2000; Robert James (Maryvale) NFL LB from 2009-13; Sam Salts (St. Mary's) Co-Player of the Year senior season.

**1991:** Mario Bates (Amphitheatre) NFL RB from 1994-2000; Eddie Cade (Santa Cruz); Brian Fair (South Mountain) Basketball star also was an elite DB; Sean Harris (Tucson) NFL LB from 1995-01; Jeff Lewis (Horizon) NFL QB from 1996-2000.

**1990:** Brian Drew (McClintock) Scored 38 touchdowns senior season; Frank Garcia (Maryvale) NFL C/G from 1995-03; Jason Kyle (McClintock) Played five seasons in the NFL; Mike Scurlock (Sunnyside/Cholla) NFL DB from 1995-99.

**1989:** Michael Bates (Amphitheatre) NFL RB from 1993-2003, Olympic bronze medalist; Damon Pieri (St. Mary's) NFL DB from 1993-97; Mike Salmon (Greenway) Arizona football player of the year who starred at USC; Rob Waldrop (Horizon) Outland Trophy winner and College Football Hall of Famer; Toby Wright (Dobson) NFL DB from 1994-99.

**1988:** Kevin Galbreath (Maryvale) One of school's all-time best RBs; Eric Guliford (Peoria) NFL WR from 1993-98; Kevin Miniefield (Camelback) NFL DB from 1993-97; Muhammad

Oliver (North) NFL DB from 1992-95; Ty Parten (Horizon) NFL DE/DT from 1993-2000.

**1987:** John Fina (Salpointe) Started in 131 NFL games at tackle; Nathan LaDuke (Alhambra) Two-time first team Pac-10 safety at ASU; Darren Woodson (Maryvale) Dallas Cowboys DB from 1992-03; Phillippi Sparks (Maryvale) NFL DB from 1992-2000.

**1986:** Cleveland Colter (McClintock) All-time great safety at USC; Art Greathouse (McClintock) Formed one of the greatest in-state high school backfields with Colter; Tim Salmon (Greenway 1986) Won a World Series with the Angels in 2002; Jon Volpe (Amphitheatre 1986) All-around star running back before attending Stanford.

**1985:** Steve Belles (St. Mary's) State Player of the Year in 1984; Frank Pollack (Greenway) OL played eight seasons in the NFL; Tim Rattay (Phoenix Christian) NFL QB from 2000-07.

**1984:** Anthony Edwards (Casa Grande) NFL WR from 1989-1997; Jeff Feagles (Gerard High School) Played 11 seasons as a punter in the NFL; Rodney Peete (Sahuaro) threw 76 career NFL TDs; Anthony Parker (McClintock) Played in NFL from 1989-1998.

**1983:** Jeremy Brigham (Saguaro) Played in Super Bowl in 2003 and with the Raiders for five years; Todd Kalis (Thunderbird) NFL G from 1988-1995; Shawn Patterson (McClintock) Played with the Green Bay Packers from 1988-93.

**1982:** Byron Evans (South Mountain) Philadelphia Eagles linebacker from 1987-1988; Steve Jordan (South Mountain) Named to six Pro Bowls with the Vikings; Randall McDaniel (Agua Fria) First Arizona prep star to reach NFL Hall of Fame; Darrin Tupper (Trevor Browne) Former ASU linebacker; Danny Villa (Nogales) T/C/G started 77 games in NFL from 1987-98.



**1981:** Vance Johnson (Cholla) Played from 1985-95 with the Denver Broncos as WR; Brian Davis (Cortez) NFL DB from 1987-94.

**1980:** Mossy Cade (Santa Cruz) 6th overall pick of San Diego Chargers in 1984; Dale Hellestrae (Saguaro) Played in NFL from 1985-2001; Vai Sikahema (Mesa) Played in NFL from 1986-93.

**1979:** Riki Ellison (Amphitheatre) Started in 119 NFL games from 1983-92 and won three Super Bowls; Jeff Colter (Amphitheatre) Played in the NFL from 1984-87; Mike Freeman (Sahuaro) NFL C/G from 1984-88; Pete Mandley (Westwood) NFL WR from 1984-1990; Sam Merriman (Amphitheatre) Played with Seattle from 1983-87; Rick Neuheisel (McClintock) Former college coach was a three-sport star his senior year; Todd Shell (Mesa Mt. View) first round NFL pick by 49ers in 1984.

**1977:** Steve Doolittle (Amphitheatre) One of the best athletes to suit up for the Tucson school; John Mistler (Sahuaro) played four seasons at WR in the NFL; Mike Pagel (Washington) One of Arizona's all-time great QBs.

**1976:** Speedy Hart (St. Mary's) Played at Notre Dame and had number retired at St. Mary's; Bob Kohrs (Brophy) Pittsburgh Steelers DE/LB from 1981-85; Ron Washington (McClintock) Parade All-American.

**1975:** Frank Garcia (Salpointe) Averaged 41.1 yards per punt in NFL from 1981-1987; Mark Gastineau (Round Valley) Finished with 74 career NFL sacks; Dan Manucci (McClintock) NFL quarterback from 1979-87;

**1972:** Mike Dawson (Tucson) First round pick of NFL St. Louis Cardinals in 1976; Larry Gordon (Phoenix Union) Miami Dolphins LB from 1976-82 and 1st round pick; Harry Holt (Sunnyside) NFL tight end from 1983-87; Randy McClanahan (Moon Valley) NFL LB from 1977-92, won a Super Bowl with Raiders.

**1971:** Bob Breunig (Alhambra) One of the Dallas Cowboys all-time great linebackers.

**1970:** Benny Malone (Santa Cruz) NFL RB from 1974-79; Danny White (Westwood) Threw for 21,959 NFL career yards from 1976-88.

**1966:** Ron Jessie (Yuma) 1976 Pro Bowler with the L.A. Rams; Art Malone (Santa Cruz) NFL RB from 1970-76; Paul Ray Powell (Santa Cruz) All around star and former MLB catcher.

**1964:** Fred Carr (Phoenix Union) Green Bay Packer linebacker from 1968-1977. First former Arizona prep player to be drafted in the 1st round; Curley Culp (Yuma) NFL Hall of Famer; Bill Lueck (Agua Fria) OL played in the NFL 1968-1975, first round pick of Packers; James Dugan (Flagstaff 1964) One of the state's all-time best three sport stars.

**1962:** Dave Cahill (Tempe) Played in NFL from 1966-69; Andy Livingston (Mesa) 5-year NFL career. Scored 11 TDs.

**1958:** Floyd Hudlow (West) NFL DB from 1965-1958; Dallas Long (North) Olympic shot put champion and one of Arizona's all-time greatest athletes.

**1953:** George Greathouse (Phoenix Carver/Phoenix Union) Scored 63 career TDs.

**1948:** Gib Dawson (Douglas) One of Arizona's all-time great athletes. A member of the University of Texas' Hall of Fame and the only Texas player to ever lead the team in five different offensive categories in the same season.

**1947:** Wilford White (Mesa) ASU's first All-American. Father of Westwood legend Danny White.

**1943:** Fred Enke (Tucson) NFL QB from 1948-1954 and first University of Arizona football legend.

**1933:** Carl Mulleneaux (Phoenix Union) Green Bay Packer from 1938-46 and a Green Bay Hall of Famer.

**1930s:** Hal Prescott (Phoenix Union) Played with four different NFL teams from 1946-49.

**1920s:** Les Mulleneaux (Phoenix Union) Played with six different NFL teams in the 1930s.



***Tucson's Fred Enke (photo courtesy of the Arizona Interscholastic Association)***





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# Returning Statistical Leaders



*Notre Dame's Brock Locnikar (left) posted 154 tackles for the Saints in 2018 (photo by Darin Sicurello of maxpreps.com), while Miguel Valdovinos (right) passed for 2,441 yards and 29 touchdowns last year for La Joya (photo by Steve Paynter of maxpreps.com).*

## 2018 PASSING

Gr.	Name/School	... Passing Yards/Yds/G	... TDs/Int
Sr.	Gage Reese, Yuma Catholic	... 4,661/332.9	... 64/17
Sr.	Chubba Purdy, Perry	... 3,422/244.4	... 36/10
Sr.	Will Plummer, Gilbert	... 3,229/293.5	... 25/15
Sr.	Niko Haen, Sunnyslope	... 2,832/257.5	... 20/8
Sr.	Ben Finley, Paradise Valley	... 2,777/277.7	... 23/15
Sr.	Alex Lopez, Walden Grove	... 2,655/241.4	... 29/11
So.	Matthew McClelland, Arete Prep	... 2,559	... 31/9
Sr.	Todd Stringfellow, Ft. Thomas	... 2,445	... 25/8
Sr.	Miguel Valdovinos, La Joya	... 2,441/244.1	... 29/6
Sr.	Jack Miller, Chaparral	... 2,431/303.9	... 27/6

## 2018 RUSHING

Gr.	Name/School	... Yards/Yds/G	... Yds/C	... TDs
Sr.	Bijan Robinson, Salpointe	... 2,400/184.6	... 14.1	... 35
Sr.	Chris Weaver, Odyssey Inst.	... 2,398/218	... 8.2	... 23
Sr.	Nathaniel Smith, Paradise H.	... 2,006/200.6	... 6.9	... 18
Sr.	Kevin Daniels, Glendale	... 1,935/175.9	... 10.0	... 38
Sr.	Israel Benjamin, Saguaro	... 1,675/119.6	... 9.4	... 27
Sr.	Dominick Mastro, N. Dame	... 1,553/119.5	... 5.9	... 13
Sr.	Yakeen Baylis, MDN	... 1,541/154.1	... 6.4	... 13
Sr.	Ean Chavez, Yuma Catholic	... 1,458/104.1	... 8.3	... 24
Sr.	Joshua Maignan, Florence	... 1,439/159.9	... 8.0	... 12
Sr.	Zeke Rios, Cibola	... 1,338/133.8	... 8.5	... 20

## 2018 RECEIVING

Gr.	Name/School	... Yards Yds/G	... Yds/R	... TDs
Sr.	Marcus Libman, Pinnacle	... 1,354	... 104.2	... 15
Sr.	Jordan Lopez, Walden Grove	... 1,230	... 111.8	... 12
Sr.	Tommy Christakos, Chaparral	... 1,221	... 111.0	... 12
Sr.	Jihad Marks, Desert Edge	... 1,163	... 89.5	... 15
Sr.	Ean Chavez, Yuma Catholic	... 1,121	... 80.1	... 13
Sr.	Jaleel Walker, Cesar Chavez	... 1,054	... 95.8	... 9
Jr.	Bryan Dyson, AZ College Prep	... 1,050	... 116.7	... 11
Sr.	Dano Lopez, Bisbee	... 1,009	... 112.1	... 11
Sr.	Brandt Goodwin, Casteel/Saguaro	... 1,001	... 83.4	... 8
Sr.	Damian Ortiz, O'Connor	... 983	... 17.2	... 15

## 2018 SCORING

Gr.	Pos/Name/School	... Points	... Pts/G	... TDs
Sr.	RB Kevin Daniels, Glendale	... 268	... 24.4	... 43
Sr.	RB Ean Chavez, Yuma Catholic	... 245	... 18.8	... 39
Sr.	RB Bijan Robinson, Salpointe	... 216	... 16.6	... 36
Sr.	RB David Marquez, Trivium Prep	... 164	... 16.4	... 27
Sr.	RB Israel Benjamin, Saguaro	... 162	... 11.6	... 27
Sr.	RB Chris Weaver, Odyssey Institute	... 152	... 13.8	... 25
Sr.	RB Chance Pearson, Williams	... 150	... 13.8	... 25
Sr.	RB Zeke Rios, Cibola	... 146	... 14.6	... 24
Sr.	QB Chubba Purdy	... 138	... 9.9	... 22
Jr.	RB Alex Garrett, Williams	... 132	... 16.5	... 20

## 2018 TACKLES

Gr.	Pos/Name/School	... Total Tackles	... Tackles/G
Sr.	LB Brock Locnikar, Notre Dame	... 154	... 12.8
Sr.	LB Alaa Barakat, Peoria	... 138	... 12.5
Sr.	LB Rick Avelar, Walden Grove	... 135	... 12.3
Sr.	LB Nate Quinones, Cactus	... 132	... 11.0
Sr.	LB Braxen Tessler, Chaparral	... 131	... 11.9
Jr.	FS William Whitley, Antelope	... 128	... 11.6
Sr.	LB Cade McAfee, Benjamin Franklin	... 127	... 10.6
Jr.	LB Kellen Gibson, AZ College Prep	... 125	... 12.5
Sr.	LB Zane Lalama, Queen Creek	... 124	... 12.4
So.	DT Jose Soto, Antelope	... 123	... 11.2

## 2018 SACKS

Gr.	Pos/Name/School	... Total Sacks	... Sacks/G
Sr.	DE Brady Finnerty, Bagdad	... 17.0	... 1.4
Jr.	DE Luis Lara-Arredondo, Williams	... 12.5	... 1.3
Sr.	LB Dorian Ayala, Williams	... 12.0	... 1.5
Sr.	S Ahmed Momoh, Fountain Hills	... 12.0	... 1.1
Sr.	DT Joquarri Price, Desert Ridge	... 12.0	... 1.1
Sr.	LB Steven Dortch, Thunderbird	... 11.5	... 1.3
Sr.	DE Daniel McConnell, Superior	... 11.0	... 1.4
Sr.	LB Dalton Card, Casteel	... 11.0	... 1.2
Sr.	DL Jayvon Kimbrough, Youngker	... 11.0	... 1.1
Sr.	Nick Deaver, Greenway	... 11.0	... 0.9





*Needles (CA) will visit Phoenix Christian in late August (photo by Mark Jones of maxpreps.com).*

**By Jose Garcia**  
**azpreps365.com**

#### **Aug. 23-24**

**East Alaska at Cesar Chavez:** The East Thunderbirds of Anchorage are flying to Arizona to get a taste of the southwest during Arizona's summer. On the field, Chavez will hope to generate the same heat it brought during its 40-14 win at East in 2018. East warmed up after that loss, winning a state championship to finish 10-1. 2A's Antelope also will play a team from Alaska, as it travels to Juneau to play Juneau-Douglas on Aug. 24.

**Chandler at Liberty Nevada:** The Rick Garretson Chandler head coaching era begins out of state against a program that defeated Saguaro last year.

**Hamilton at Chaparral:** Chaparral walked off with a 36-33 OT win last year at Hamilton. More fireworks are expected this time.

**Liberty vs. Brophy at Phoenix College:** We've seen him on the sidelines of high school games since the early 2000s scouting and recruiting, but Jason Jewell is about to start a different high school sideline role. He'll make his head coaching debut with Brophy against the always tough Liberty Lions.

**Mesquite at Gilbert:** We love when the old Gilbert guard is featured. This early season matchup will pit two of the state's best gunslingers, Mesquite's Ty Thompson and Will Plummer of Gilbert, from two veteran programs. Mesquite also has a new boss, Scott Hare, who stepped down as the school's AD to don the headsets.

**Thatcher at Morenci:** The Green Machine is reloading. Time to see who three-time defending 2A champ Thatcher throws at Morenci, a team that almost shocked Thatcher last year.

**Pinnacle at Perry:** It's a rematch of a 2018 6A semifinal game won handily by Perry. Senior J.D. Johnson is prepared to continue the strong signal caller tradition of QBU, Pinnacle. On the other sideline will be Perry's Chubba Purdy, a University of Louisville commit.

**Norco California at Williams Field:** Williams Field travelled to Norco last year and lost 49-21. What a way to welcome back coach Steve Campbell of Williams Field. Campbell played on two state championship teams at Norco before his ASU days as a QB. Norco's field is named after Campbell's father, Gary, who built Norco into a power.



**Don't miss also:** Red Mountain at Desert Ridge; Casteel at Centennial; Betty Fairfax at Notre Dame.

#### **Aug. 30-31**

**Pinnacle at Mt. Pointe:** Last year, Pinnacle defeated Mountain Pointe 56-34 but lost running back Matt Goodlow for the rest of the year with a leg injury in that game. Goodlow is back.

**Needles Calif. at Phoenix Christian:** To prepare it for the playoffs last year, Phoenix Christian added Needles to beef up its schedule. Phoenix Christian lost to Needles in 2018 and also some key skill players to graduation. But PC coach Brian Cole doesn't make excuses. Next man up.

**Saguaro at Cathedral California:** Cathedral lost a state championship game last year. Saguaro hasn't lost a state championship game in a long time. This is one of the first opportunities for Saguaro to show California why the Grand Canyon State is expected to make a lot of noise locally and nationally in 2019.

**NW Christian at Yuma Catholic:** We meet again. This duel continues to move up the rivalry board, because they've played in so many close games in recent years, including last year's OT championship thriller won by NW Christian.

**Douglas at Bisbee:** This rivalry dates back to 1906, and the award to the winner is the Copper Pick.

**Don't miss also:** Notre Dame California at Desert Vista; ALA Queen Creek at Thatcher; Westview at Desert Ridge; Notre Dame at Sunnyslope; Highland at Hamilton, Williams Field at Sunrise Mountain; Chandler at Queen Creek; Snowflake at Benjamin Franklin.

#### **Sept. 5, 6, 7**

**Sandra Day O'Connor at Hawaii Campbell:** The O'Connor Eagles are flying to Hawaii to play a school that's a short drive from Honolulu. Campbell coach Darren Johnson and O'Connor coach Steve Casey are friends. Besides checking out the sights, O'Connor is also heading to Hawaii to avenge last year's 37-20 home loss to Campbell.

**California Mater Dei at Centennial:** Washington Eastside Catholic got away last year, but that won't stop Centennial from trying to reel in an even bigger fish this year — maxpreps' pre-season No. 1, Mater Dei. National powers Nevada Bishop Gorman and Florida Thomas Aquinas are some of the big fish Centennial already bagged.

**Salpointe at Desert Edge:** This game has the potential of turning into a 4A state final preview, or a pivotal game in the drive for an Open Division berth. This will be Salpointe's only regular season trip to the Valley and one of the final chances for Valley fans to see Salpointe running back Bijan Robinson, safety Lathan Ransom and crew.

**Liberty at Sunrise Mountain:** The Deer Valley Derby has become one of the must see rivalries in the state. Get there early or risk not finding a seat or standing spot.

**Arbor View Hills Nevada at Hamilton:** The home-and-away series began last year with Hamilton defeating Arbor View Hills, a

state runner-up last year, 23-17. The Nevada team has reached the 10-win mark the past five years.

**Paradise Valley at South Mountain:** Paradise Valley gunslinger Ben Finley and crew travel to see just how good South Mountain's secondary is with Devontae Ingram.

**Don't miss also:** Cactus at Ironwood; Ironwood Ridge at Millennium; Gilbert at Notre Dame; Perry at Red Mountain; Betty Fairfax at Desert Mountain; Santa Cruz at Round Valley; Cesar Chavez at Queen Creek; Saguaro vs. Faith Lutheran at Nevada Bishop Gorman

#### **Sept. 13-14**

**Phoenix Christian at ALA Queen Creek:** The small schools take center stage this week with a quartet of excellent games. The task will be tough, but 2A Phoenix Christian will try to knock off 3A state title contender Queen Creek.

**Safford at Thatcher:** This rivalry never sleeps, as only three miles separate the campuses. 2A Thatcher, which beat three 3A schools last year, needed two fourth quarter scores to defeat 3A Safford 28-20 last year.

**Pusch Ridge at Canyon del Oro:** azpreps365 will be at Canyon del Oro to broadcast this big game. A proven run game and improved o-line should help Pusch Ridge bounce back from a sub-.500 2018 season. CDO is loaded with leadership and is equipped to make a long playoff run this year.

**California JSerra Catholic at Pinnacle:** JSerra captured last year's game 42-35 and is returning ASU RB recruit Chris Street, who rushed for a season high 187 yards and three touchdowns vs. Pinnacle last year.

**Don't miss also:** Benjamin Franklin at Northwest Christian; Centennial at Cienega; Millennium at Desert Edge; Skyline at Highland; California Moorpark at Higley; Sunnyslope at Horizon; Desert Ridge at Liberty; Desert Mountain at Saguaro.

#### **Sept. 20**

**Saguaro at Chaparral:** Arizona needs more big school rivalries. Arizona needs Saguaro vs. Chaparral. The Scottsdale schools reignited their rivalry last year. Bragging rights and critical power ranking points will be on the line when they meet again.

**Peoria Liberty at Nevada Liberty:** There's a popular meme in which two Spider-Men are pointing at each other. Start attaching that meme to this matchup between the same named schools. Of course we'll be rooting for the Arizona Spidey to win the battle between two successful programs.

**Higley at Millennium:** Millennium turned heads last season when it returned to the 5A Conference with second-year coach Lamar Early. This season, expect Millennium to continue to impress with Early's son, Jalan, a two-sport star, at quarterback. Higley is reloading with more elite talent.

**Cactus at Salpointe:** Cactus only trailed 21-15 at halftime last season at home against Salpointe before Salpointe stopped turning the ball over and the Bijan Robinson Show took over in the second half.

**Red Mountain at Westview:** This East Valley vs. West Valley matchup features two perennial playoff participants. Westview is 46-0 in region play since 2010 and is shooting for its 9th consecutive region title. Red Mountain has reached the playoffs every year since 2006.

**American Leadership Queen Creek at Yuma Catholic:** A preview of the 3A final? It could turn into that with two of the conference's best quarterbacks, ALA Queen Creek's Rand Jensen and Yuma Catholic's Gage Reese, squaring off.

**Don't miss also:** Canyon del Oro at Amphitheatre; Thatcher at Benson; Sunnyslope at Betty Fairfax; Perry at Cesar Chavez; Mountain Pointe at Hamilton; Basha at Highland; Santa Cruz at Morenci; Queen Creek at Skyline; Marana at Williams Field.

#### Sept. 27

**Desert Edge at Peoria:** This game provided one of the more memorable endings in the 2018 regular season and really introduced the state's next QB freshman sensation, Adryan Lara of Desert Edge. Peoria went ahead 22-21 with 31.2 seconds. But Lara then heaved a 61-yard touchdown dagger to Jihad Marks to stun Peoria, 27-22, as time expired.

**Phoenix Christian at Round Valley:** In a toe-to-toe battle, Round Valley won an overtime nail-biter 28-21 last year on the road. The 2A title belongs to Thatcher until somebody takes it away, and Phoenix Christian and Round Valley are two of the contenders.

**Glendale at Walden Grove:** The state's leading scorer last year, running back Kevin Daniels, and his young Glendale team travel to Sahuarita to play a Walden Grove team that won a program-high eight games last year. Walden Grove is led by one of the state's dangerous duos, and they just happen to be twins, quarterback Alex Lopez and wide receiver Jordan Lopez.

**Don't miss also:** Saguaro at Arcadia; Red Mountain at Basha; Sabino at Benjamin Franklin; Gilbert at Campo Verde; Williams Field at Casteel; Desert Ridge at Chandler; Highland at Desert Vista; Mesa Mountain View at Mesa; Centennial at Millennium; Valley Christian at NW Christian; Mountain Pointe at Queen Creek; Thatcher at Santa Cruz; Sunrise Mountain at Verrado; Willow Canyon at Ironwood.

#### Oct. 4

**Perry at Chandler:** Region play is in full swing this week. In 6A, it'll open with two Premier Region teams, Perry and Chandler, that played for the 6A crown the past two years. Chandler has never lost to Perry.

**Saguaro at Desert Edge:** A non-region game that might determine which championship trophy each team will fight for, the Open Division or 4A Conference. A bunch of stars will be on the field also, including the state's top corner in this year's senior class, Saguaro's Kelee Ringo, and the top corner in the junior class, Desert Edge's Steven Ortiz.

**Arcadia at Mesquite:** It's an important power point, 4A Desert Sky Region game. Also, one of these two teams will likely battle Saguaro for first place in the region.

**Round Valley at St. Johns:** Two of the favorites in 2A will renew

one of the oldest rivalries in the state. Round Valley coach Marcus Bell played at St. Johns under current coach Mike Morgan.

**Don't miss also:** Scottsdale Christian at Arizona Lutheran; Higley at Casteel; Paradise Valley at Desert Mountain; Desert Vista at Desert Ridge; Brophy at Hamilton; Highland at Mountain Pointe; Santa Cruz at Phoenix Christian; Red Mountain at Skyline; Blue Ridge at Snowflake; Ironwood at Sunrise Mountain; Westview at Tolleson; Yuma Catholic at Valley Christian; Gilbert at Williams Field.

#### Oct. 11

**Mountain Pointe at Desert Vista:** The 22nd installment of the Ahwatukee Bowl. Last year, Desert Vista snapped a six game losing streak against its archrival with a 28-27 win. Desert Vista will head into this year's game as the likely favorite.

**Horizon at Notre Dame:** The 5A Northeast Valley Region should be very competitive this year. Notre Dame is the top-dog, but a win might put Horizon in the region's driver's seat this season.

**Valley Christian at Odyssey Institute:** From top to bottom, the Metro Region likely is filled with the most talent in 3A. Yuma Catholic is the region's reigning champ, but Valley Christian and Odyssey Institute can also qualify for the playoffs.

**Bradshaw Mountain at Prescott:** The Grand Canyon Region title preseason favorites meet. Prescott added well-respected coach Joe Kersting as the team's offensive coordinator. Prescott DE/TE Aaron Greene and Bradshaw Mountain three-year starter at linebacker Noah Shaver can pack a punch.

**Don't miss also:** Chandler at Brophy; Desert Edge at Cactus; Sunnyslope at Centennial; Benjamin Franklin at Florence; Basha at Hamilton; Verrado at Millennium; Arizona Lutheran at Santa Cruz.

#### Oct. 18

**Pinnacle at Liberty:** This has the makings of a win-and-you're-in the Open Division tournament. There's some great senior leadership up and down the roster on both teams. The winner of this game also might end up walking away with the Desert Valley Region crown.

**Perry at Brophy:** Will Brophy be in playoff contention in Jason Jewell's first season as coach? We should know by this game between Premier Region foes. Will Perry be in contention for an Elite 8 invite? We should also know by this game.

**St. Johns at Thatcher:** This can turn into a special night for 2A football and St. Johns coach Mike Morgan. If St. Johns is undefeated and wins this game, Morgan will become the state's all-time winningest coach. But it'll be a tough task to defeat Thatcher, the three-time defending champ.

**Don't miss also:** American Leadership Academy Queen Creek at Benjamin Franklin; Ironwood at Centennial; Casteel at Gilbert; Cactus at Lake Havasu; Chaparral at Mountain Pointe; Desert Ridge at Queen Creek; Mesa Mt. View at Red Mountain; Sunnyslope at Sunrise Mountain; Morenci at Round Valley; Sabino at Pusch Ridge.





*The Cactus-Peoria rivalry will resume on November 1, 2019 (photo by Steve Paynter of maxpreps.com).*

#### Oct. 25

**Glendale at Apache Junction:** What do these two have in store for us this time? Last year, Apache Junction won an entertaining affair, 53-52, allowing Apache Junction to clinch the region title.

**Pinnacle at Chaparral:** Chaparral's Jack Miller vs. Pinnacle's J.D. Johnson. It'll be the first time the senior quarterbacks will square off, and it might not be the last time after they graduate. That's because they are headed to the Big Ten Conference, Miller to Ohio St. and Johnson to Michigan.

**Queen Creek at Highland:** Queen Creek will give you a .500-plus season. It's one of the surest things in the state. It appears that Highland is headed in the same direction under coach Brock Farrel.

**Ironwood at Sunnyslope:** Centennial is the top-dog of the Northwest Region and one of the favorites to reach the Open Division tournament. But Sunnyslope, with the Haen twins, David and Nico, and Ironwood, with dual-threat QB William Haskell, can make some noise in 5A and the Northwest Region.

**Don't miss also:** American Leadership Academy at Florence; Gilbert at Higley; Desert Ridge at Mountain Pointe; Horizon at Paradise Valley; Hamilton at Perry; Pusch Ridge at Safford; Benson at St. Johns; Round Valley at Thatcher; Millennium at Willow Canyon.

#### Nov. 1

**Peoria at Cactus:** Rivalry week. This one started in 1978, and it still packs the stands. Not only will West Valley bragging rights be on the line, but a potential high berth in the 4A tournament will be as well.

**Hamilton at Chandler:** Don't count Hamilton out just yet. The Huskies might be licking their wounds after winning only three games last year, but they've got some talent on this team. But their rival, Chandler, has bull-dogged its way through the 6A in recent years.

**Williams Field at Higley:** They are six miles apart. The separation line is a canal. Take a dive into one of the state's budding rivalries. With the talent on both teams, this might turn into the biggest game in the state during the final day of the regular season. Higley will be looking for its first victory over Williams Field.

**Don't miss also:** Highland at Desert Ridge; Valley Christian at Fountain Hills; Miami at Globe; Cienega at Ironwood Ridge; Chaparral at Liberty; Yuma Catholic at Odyssey Institute; Notre Dame at Paradise Valley; Basha at Perry; Scottsdale Christian at Phoenix Christian; Desert Vista at Queen Creek; Safford at Sabino; Mesquite at Saguaro; Morenci at St. Johns; Valley Vista at Westview; Coconino at Flagstaff.

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## New Football Rule Changes For the 2019 Season



photo by Jim Willittes of maxpreps.com

**By Tyler Cerimeli**  
**Arizona Interscholastic Association**

The 2019 football season is almost upon us.

Players, coaches and officials have been working tirelessly throughout the offseason to prepare. For officials, this preparation includes studying the new football rules passed by the National Federation of State High School Associations.

Seven such rules were revised for the coming year. The most impactful rule revision is the timing of the play clock (The time the offense has to snap or kick the ball).

After many years of experimentation by multiple states, the rules committee adopted the 25 and 40 second clock as the standard for timing between plays. This change will create a more consistent time between plays from scrimmage.

The 25 second clock will still be utilized for administrative stoppages such as an official's timeouts (except for a

first down), prior to a try, and after a charged timeout. In those cases, the referee will still blow a ready for play whistle as in the past.

In all other cases, however, a 40 second clock will begin when the ball is declared dead on the previous play. When the 40 second clock is being utilized, the ball will be ready for play (the offense can snap the ball) when the game official has spotted the ball and backed away into position.

Another rule change that was approved by the NFHS was allowing state associations to develop protocol for instant replay during the postseason. For this season, the AIA, with support from coaching leadership, will be experimenting with potential protocols and procedures that could be adopted in the future.

Also, multiple rule changes were approved in order to reduce the risk of player injury. The "horse-collar" foul (grabbing inside the collar and pulling the runner to the ground) has been expanded to include the name-plate area.

Also, it is now illegal to intentionally trip the runner.

The requirements for a legal scrimmage formation have also been changed. Previously, seven players were required to be on the line of scrimmage.

For the 2019 season only five players must be on the line of scrimmage with no more than four players identified as backs. Finally, the penalty for illegal kicking and batting has been reduced from a 15 to a 10-yard penalty.

This revision makes the foul for such an action more consistent with other fouls. For those interested in registering as a sports official in the sport(s) they love, visit our website ([www.aiaonline.org](http://www.aiaonline.org)) under the officials tab or feel free to call our office at 602-385-3817 or 602-385-3818.

***Tyler Cerimeli joined the AIA as an official and tournament coordinator in July. He serves on the NFHS Rules Committee as well as on the NFHS Football Editorial Committee. Prior to joining the AIA, he was an AIA football and tennis official and the chair of the Football Officials Leadership Committee. Cerimeli graduated from Saguardo in 2008 and then earned a biological science degree from Arizona State.***



## Former Paradise Valley Teammates Drafted by Same NFL Team



**Former Chandler standout N'Keal Harry** (photo by Kevin French of maxpreps.com)

**By Jose Garcia**  
**azpreps365.com**

Two former Arizona stars from the same high school were selected in the 2019 NFL draft.

Guess the high school.  
Paradise Valley.

It probably wasn't the first choice for most guessers. pro-football-reference.com lists only one player (Steve Bush) who graduated from Paradise Valley and played in the NFL.

Paradise Valley opened in 1957 but 2019 was a big football year for the school. It was one of only 12 high schools in the nation that produced multiple NFL draft picks this year.

Former Paradise Valley teammates Ryan Finley (class of 2013) and defensive back Jordan Brown (class of 2014) have rejoined forces, as the Cincinnati Bengals drafted the duo in April. Finley was picked in the fourth round, three rounds before Brown's name was announced.



**Byron Murphy was drafted by the Arizona Cardinals** (photo by Mark Jones of maxpreps.com).

"Ryan is the smartest and most competitive player I've ever coached," said Arizona State assistant coach Donnie Yantis, Finley's high school coach. "He hates to lose. He wants to be the best at whatever he does."

During his high school varsity career, Finley threw 68 touchdown passes.

His brother, Ben, is following Finley's footsteps. Ben is about to start his final season as Paradise Valley's starting quarterback before moving to NC State, where Finley starred.

Before becoming an all-conference corner at South Dakota State, Brown was known for catching passes from Finley. He finished with 2,277 receiving yards and 26 touchdowns.

"Jordan was an athlete, coachable and always positive," Yantis said. "He competed. He was a yes, sir no, sir guy."

"Both (Brown and Finley) have great, supportive families."

**Note: Five of the 2019 NFL draftees attended Arizona high schools. That's the 8th highest amount, tying five other**





**Ryan Finley at PVHS (photo by Duane Matsen of maxpreps.com)**



**Paradise Valley's Jordan Brown (photo by Steve Paynter of maxpreps.com)**



**Former Desert Vista DL Jalen Jelks (photo by Jim Willittes of maxpreps.com)**

**states this year. Pennsylvania and Washington were two of the states tied with Arizona. (Source: nflcommunications.com).**

#### **2019 NFL DRAFT PICKS FROM AZ HIGH SCHOOLS**

**WR N'Keal Harry** (Chandler High, Arizona State) New England Patriots 32nd overall pick, 1st round

**DB Byron Murphy** (Saguaro, Washington) Arizona Cardinals 33rd pick, 2nd round

**QB Ryan Finley** (Paradise Valley, NC State) Cincinnati Bengals 104th pick, 4th round

**DB Jordan Brown** (Paradise Valley, South Dakota St.) Cincinnati 223rd pick, 7th round

**DE Jalen Jelks** (Desert Vista, Oregon) Dallas Cowboys 241st pick, 7th round

#### **AZ HIGH SCHOOLERS CHOSEN IN 1ST ROUND OF NFL**

**2019:** WR N'Keal Harry (Chandler High, Arizona State) New England Patriots 32nd overall pick.

**2015:** OL Andrus Peate (Corona del Sol, Stanford) New Orleans 13th pick.

**2014:** OL Taylor Lewan (Chandler, Michigan) Tennessee 11th pick.

**2013:** DL Dion Jordan (Chandler, Oregon) Jacksonville 3rd pick.

**2011:** CB Prince Amukamara (Apollo, Nebraska) New York Giants 19th pick; DE Cameron Jordan (Chandler, Cal) New Orleans Saints 24th pick.

**2002:** OT Levi Jones (Santa Cruz, ASU) Cincinnati Bengals 10th pick.

**2001:** TE Todd Heap (Mesa Mt. View, ASU) Baltimore Ravens 31st pick.

**2000:** RB Trung Candidate (Central, University of AZ) Rams 31st pick.

**1999:** OL John Tait (McClintock, BYU) Kansas City Chiefs 14th pick.

**1998:** CB Terry Fair (South Mountain, Tennessee) Detroit Lions 20th pick.

**1992:** OL John Fina (Salpointe, U of A) Buffalo Bills 27th pick.

**1988:** OL Randall McDaniel (Agua Fria, ASU) Minnesota Vikings 19th pick.

**1984:** DB Mossy Cade (Santa Cruz, Texas) San Diego Chargers 6th pick.

**1984:** LB Todd Shell (Mesa Mt. View, BYU) San Francisco 49ers 24th pick.

**1976:** LB Larry Gordon (Phoenix Union, ASU) Miami Dolphins 17th pick; DT Mike Dawson (Tucson, U of A) St. Louis Cardinals 22nd pick.

**1968:** OL Bill Lueck (Agua Fria, U of A) Green Bay Packers 26th pick; LB Fred Carr (Phoenix Union, UTEP) Green Bay Packers 5th pick.



*Chandler captured the 6A State Championship in 2018 (photo by Mark Jones of maxpreps.com).*

**By Les Willsey**  
**azpreps365.com**

**1. CHANDLER:** Several caveats with christening the Wolves as preseason No. 1, but until knocked out of the top perch they stay there. One is the change in head coaches from Shaun Aguano to in-house assistant Rick Garretson as Aguano departed to become an ASU assistant. Another is a new, untested varsity quarterback with the graduation of three-year starter and three-time state champ Jacob Conover. Chandler's experience on offense rests with its line - four returners and five back on defense led by linebackers Tate Romney and Malik Reed and safety/wide receiver Gunner Maldonado. Skill positions are never a problem and a matter of who and how many emerge. The schedule features two out-of-state opponents - Liberty (NV) and Capital Christian (CA). Both ventured deep in their respective playoffs with Capital falling in a title game. Premier Region foes will be the checkup for the second half of the season, but in terms of experience and tradition the Wolves have an edge over their four opponents.

**2. PINNACLE:** A new era of sorts was ushered in the second half of last season for the Pioneers at quarterback. Junior JD Johnson's time got an early start as Pinnacle fourth-year starter Spencer Rattler was not around the final six games. Johnson passed for 2,004 yards and 17 TDs in essentially six full games. He impressed enough to notch a commitment to Michigan. The Pioneers also feature star power in offensive tackle Tosh Baker (Notre Dame commit) and receiver Marcus Libman (72 receptions, 1,354 yards, 15 TD) and running back Kenji Roland (758 rushing yards, 7 TDs), so expect plenty of points to be scored as usual. Pinnacle's schedule features seven opponents out of 10 that qualified for postseason last year. The Pioneers open with Perry, which denied them a spot in the finals last November.

**3. HIGHLAND:** One play shy of upending Chandler in what would have been an astonishing trip to the 6A final, the Hawks appear established as a program that will be a perennial playoff team. Highland returns a pair of outstanding backs in Daniel Wood and Max Davis and a solid wide out in Tanner Crandall. A top offensive line needs retooling this year, but the



defensive front seven are experience and formidable. Wood, who doubles at linebacker and linemen Cooper Brown and Monai West key the front. The Hawks endured only one dud last year in a 9-1 regular season in a region loss to Mountain Pointe but still nabbed the region crown. Highland's region opener at Desert Vista on Sept. 27 is one to watch.

**4. LIBERTY:** Like Highland, the Lions are trending up and continue to be competitive wherever they are placed. They've bounced back and forth in recent years between 5A and 6A. Coach Mark Smith has fashioned consistency. Liberty is primed to make a run for the region title even without the marquee names at quarterback Pinnacle and Chaparral possess. With an offensive line heavy on experience and seven of its top eight players on that side of the ball returning, the offense is capable. Defense should be the major strength and its a good one led by senior linebacker Jace Accurso (60 tackles) and strong safety Jax Stam (59 tackles, 3 INT). Liberty gave up the fewest points among its region foes by far and limited five teams to 15 points or less. A one-point loss to Pinnacle last season was the difference in winning the region and Liberty's lone regular-season loss. Liberty's season finished with a knock-down, drag-out defensive struggle with Highland in the quarters.

**5. DESERT VISTA:** The Thunder in many ways bring the most experienced squad to the Central Region, particularly on offense. Most of that unit is intact, including nearly all the skill players and good chunk of the O-Line. The one shortcoming is depth, but coaches rarely know for sure that a player or two might blossom who isn't expected to. The Grubbs brothers - senior Tyson and sophomore Devon - teamed up for 1,446 rushing yards and 25 TDs. Along with them is senior slot Colby Humphrey (another 741 yards, 10 TDs). The region's only returning starting senior QB is Parker Navarro, who was efficient throwing for 1,568 yards and 17 TDs. Defense has capable returners, but its strength was the line last year that lost four to graduation. The Thunder sub out Carlsbad, CA to play Notre Dame of Sherman Oaks, Calif., as one of its two out-of-state games on the road on Aug. 30.

**6. PERRY:** The Pumas try to remain as one of the conference's elite teams with the last of five seasons with a Purdy quarterback. Chubba Purdy, a Louisville commit earlier in late June, amassed an eye-popping 4,600 yards and 58 TDs rushing and passing. Chubba gets a second year guiding the offense after three from older brother Brock. The array of weapons with which Chubba has to work with has ebbed with massive skill graduation from last year. Coach Preston Jones is confident a capable receiving corps will emerge led by receiving holdover Jorden Young. Scoring has not been a problem with a Purdy at the helm. Line play both on offense and defense are question marks for a school finishing runner-up each of the last two years and in the semis or better three years in a row. All concluded with losses to Chandler.

**7. RED MOUNTAIN:** Two years in and coach Mike Peterson has notched two East Valley Region titles and a pair of playoff runs - one quarterfinal and one semifinal. The Mountain Lions ran their streak of playoff appearances to 13 in a row last season. Red Mountain's returnee list is led by offensive tackle and ASU commit Ben Bray. A top two-way-underclassman returnee is junior running back-defensive back George Ramirez. Ramirez led them in tackles with 77. The Mountain Lions have good depth at running back with senior returnees Deonce Elliott (463 rushing yards, 5 TDs) and Ty McElroy (224 rushing yards, 3 TDs). Leading receiver and senior Ramses Rivera (38 receptions, 594 yards and 8 TDs) also returns. The Mountain Lions had 13 first-team, all-region selections last year -- 10 of whom graduated. The region is theirs for the taking again after dominating region foes to the tune of 10-0 the past two years.

**8. QUEEN CREEK:** The Bulldogs held their own moving up to 6A last year and may only have to do it this year before moving back down with the opening this fall of second district high school Eastmark. Joe Germaine is back as head coach after stepping aside as the offensive guru the last six years. The Bulldogs were 7-4 last season, dropping their final three games to Highland, Desert Vista and Red Mountain -- all of which reached the playoff quarters or better. There are plenty of key spots to fill from graduation, including quarterback.

**9. MOUNTAIN POINTE:** A trying year, but on the plus side in terms of wins and losses in the debut of Rich Wellbrock that resulted in a 7-5 mark. Pride fans were not used to an array of nailbiters, but several ended up happening. Three of their five losses were by a touchdown or less. Their average margin of victory in seven wins was 25 points. The schedule is loaded with a tough region slate as well as a season opener with Faith Lutheran, a strong program from Las Vegas that gave Chandler a tough game last fall. Mountain Pointe's schedule is top heavy with Pinnacle following Faith Lutheran.

**10. CHAPARRAL:** The Firebirds managed to weather their arrival in 6A by qualifying for the playoffs. The season ended abruptly in a first-round loss to Desert Vista and season finished a game under .500 (5-6). The offense features plenty of talent with the senior pass-catch duo of quarterback Jack Miller (Ohio State commit) and wide out Tommy Christakos (Cal commit) the main attraction. Christakos hauled in half of the 2,400-yards plus passing and nearly half of the TD tosses from Miller. Defensively, the Firebirds hope and need to be improved on defense, which largely will determine how good they are. Three Desert Valley Region opponents made the playoffs last year (Pinnacle, Liberty and Boulder Creek) as did freedom-game foes Mountain Pointe and Saguaro. All of those games were losses.



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By Les Willsey  
azpreps365.com

## CENTRAL REGION

### Corona del Sol

**Head coach:** Jon Beckett.

**Years as school's head coach:** 3rd year, 3-17.

**2018 record:** 1-9.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. OT Ethan Davis (6-3, 300); Sr. OT Vullnet Berisha (6-1, 190); Sr. WR Eric Brice (5-9, 170), 25 receptions, 167 yards; Sr. WR Eric Blackwell (6-1, 185), 29 receptions, 368 yards, 4 TDs.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DT Alden Moody (5-9, 230); Sr. LB Myles Sheppard (5-9, 205), 44 tackles; Sr. DB Jean Boyd (6-2, 185), 37 tackles; Jr. LB Jake Schmitt (6-2, 210), 69 tackles.

### Desert Ridge

**Head coach:** Jeremy Hathcock.

**Years as school's head coach:** 14th year, 109-51.

**2018 record:** 3-8.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. T Zach Landa (6-3, 300); Sr. T Anthony Miller (6-2, 285); Sr. G Karson King (6-0, 210); Sr. C Jordan Erick (6-0, 250); Jr. T Dante Smith (6-1, 280); Sr. G Traegan Heslop (6-0, 200); Jr. QB Austin Kolb (6-5, 195), 604 passing yards, 4 TDs; Sr. WR Aiden Lee (6-2, 200), 26 receptions, 328 yards, 2 TDs; Sr. WR Andrew Chino (6-2, 175), 16 receptions, 300 yards, 2 TDs.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DL Colton Weier (6-1, 200), 39 tackles; Sr. DE Joquarri Price (6-2, 215), 77 tackles, 12 sacks; Sr. DE Michael Savarino (6-3, 188), 34 tackles, 4 sacks; Sr. LB Koby Hathcock (5-11, 200), 43 tackles; Jr. LB Avantae Barrett (5-11, 200), 62 tackles; Sr. S John Butler (5-10, 170); Sr. DB Keagan Miller (TBA); Jr. DB Jared Nichols (6-1, 163), 55 tackles; Sr. K Brock Edwards (TBA).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Experience and speed.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Experience, speed and physicality.

**2019 expectations:** Winning season. Region championship and in the hunt for state title.

### Desert Vista

**Head coach:** Dan Hinds.

**Years as school's head coach:** 18th year, 136-74.

**2018 record:** 10-2.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB Parker Navarro (6-1, 200) 1,568 passing yards, 17 TDs, 5 INT; Sr. RB Tyson Grubbs (5-11, 195), 678 rushing yards, 12 TDs; Sr. WR Elijah Ervin (6-2, 190), 34 receptions, 657 yards, 8 TDs; Sr. SB Colby Humphrey (5-11, 185), 741 rushing yards, 10 TDs, 11 receptions, 220 yards, 2 TDs; Sr. TE Braeden Belnap (6-3, 225); Sr. OL Eddie Weigl (6-2, 304); Sr. OL Myles LeBlanc (6-2, 276); Sr. C Aiden Dodd (6-1, 252); So. RB Devon Grubbs (6-0, 185), 768 yards rushing, 13 TDs.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. SS Zack McGinnis (6-0, 185) 35 tackles; Jr. DB Taron Thomas (5-10,



Les Willsey  
azpreps365.com

## Grubbs Breakout Junior Year Different Than Expected

### Desert Vista RB Returns With Appreciation From Truncated Season

photo by Darin  
Sicurello of maxpreps.com

Make no mistake, Desert Vista's Tyson Grubbs ached the second half of last season.

Part of it was the physical nature of his season-ending foot injury sustained in September. The other part was not being able to use his ample ability at running back to help what turned out to be the Thunder's best season since 2011 (a state title campaign).

Grubbs was well on his way to a 1,000-yard rushing season (678 yards and 12 TDs when he went down) in a Sept. 21 region game vs. Highland. It was Desert Vista's fifth game of what finished a 10-2 campaign and quarterfinal appearance.

The injury didn't require surgery, but with therapy for a broken bone in the second metatarsal of his right foot and a torn ligament, he missed seven weeks. The mishap opened the door for younger brother Devon and fellow junior Colby Humphrey in the Thunder backfield.

Desert Vista's ground game didn't waver.

"The way Tyson responded to being out and being there for freshman brother Devon who took up the slack was something to see," Desert Vista coach Dan Hinds said. "Tyson was into games as if he was playing in them. And he worked hard to rehab. If we had won our quarterfinal game he was cleared to play the next week. He was there in every way possible."

What was supposed to be a breakout season on the field in Tyson's junior year (it was even if shortened), broke out in another way.

"It was tough sitting out," Tyson said. "But at the same time I loved it. I was glad my brother could step in and fill my shoes with the other guys. I thought a few times about what might have been. What I might have been able to do in what should have been a breakout year. Watching (Devon) and my teammates kept my mind off not playing for the most part. It kept me involved."

Tyson in anxious to pick up where he left off last season. He averaged 151 yards rushing per game in the 4 1/2 games he played. So far the school most after his services appears to be Utah State.

He's hopeful more will become interested when he returns to the field.

"I'm going to be looking at schools with good academics," Grubbs said. "I know I won't be able to play football all my life, so I need to make a good choice when the time comes."

Tyson recently returned from playing football for a U.S. team in Australia that competed with opponents from New Zealand and Australia.

"It was full contact," Grubbs said. "I felt I was ready, and I am ready for the season to start. As a team we want to prove we can compete with all the other teams. Any of them whether its 6A or the Open Division. For me I want to be able to say at the end of this season, I made an impact on the field."

170) 31 tackles.

**Also keep an eye on:** Jr. DB-SB Troy Allen (5-9, 165); Jr. OL-DL Luke Pavlina (6-3, 250); Sr. SS-SB Colton Grover (5-9, 172).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** One of top rushing teams in 6A last year. All running backs return. QB and top 2 receivers return. Three of five linemen return plus tight end.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Solid returners and great young kids coming up.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Developing a defensive line. Graduated front four from 2018.

**2019 expectations:** Should be solid.

## Highland

**Head coach:** Brock Farrel.

**Years as school's head coach:** 3rd year, 19-6.

**2018 record:** 11-2.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. RB Daniel Wood (5-10, 205), 598 yards rushing, 8 TDs; Sr. WR Tanner Crandall, (5-11, 175), 43 receptions for 449 yards, 3 TDs

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. OLB Wood, 82 tackles, 10 sacks; Jr. DL Cooper Brown, (6-1, 225), 33 tackles, 4.5 sacks; Sr. DB Ja'Sean Lee (6-0, 189), 32 tackles; Sr. OLB Robert Kingsford (5-11, 205), 42 tackles, 2 INT; Sr. DL Monai West (5-10, 217), 40 tackles.

**Also keep an eye on:** Jr. RB-LB Max Davis (5-11, 180), 433 yards rushing, 4 TDs; Sr. WR-DB Zach Schroeder (6-2, 175); Jr. OL Noah Boone (6-2, 265), Jr. ILB Kam Cullimore (5-10, 190), 13 tackles; Sr. DL (transfer) Jackson Tewalt (6-2, 260), Jr. DL Colton Ellsworth; Sr. TE Tyson Rohner (6-6, 202) Sr. DL Kyle Olson (6-1, 200); So. QB Gage Dayley; (5-9, 152); Jr. FS Ammon Allen (6-3, 180).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Running back by far. Two RB's who averaged 9.8 (Wood) and 8.3 (Davis) yards per carry.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Defensive line. Multiple returning starters and all-region- all-state players.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Offensive line, quarterback and defensive backs.

**2019 expectations:** We have come to expect to compete with anyone in the state. That has not changed. We have to find new play makers, as we graduated a lot of talent and maybe the best OL in Highland's history. Confident in our team's resolve and our coaching staffs ability to get our team ready to compete.

## Queen Creeek

**Head coach:** Joe Germaine.

**Years as school's head coach:** 4th year, record 34-5 (2010-2012).

**2018 record:** 8-3.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. RB Jace Bond (5-9, 180), 611 rushing yards, 10 TDs, 31 receptions for 380 yards, 1 TD; Sr. OL Adam Bowcutt (6-1, 240), Sr. RB Dayson Coleman (5-11, 195), 357 rushing yards, 2 TDs; Jr. TE Isaia Glass (6-5, 255), Jr. Skill Trey Reynolds (6-2, 230), 347 passing yards, 1 TD, 6 INT, 227 rushing yards, 8 TDs.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. Keshawn Calip (6-1, 185), Sr. DB Yohann Djassa (6-0, 180), Jr. DL Glass, 38 tackles; Sr. LB Zane Lalama (5-11, 225), 124 tackles; Jr. LB Reynolds, 55 tackles, 3 sacks.

**Also keep an eye on:** So. QB Devin Brown (6-1, 180), Jr. OL Derrik Brown (6-4, 280), Sr. OL Gus Campbell (6-1, 240), Jr. WR Colby Garvin (6-5, 200), Sr. K Zane Kaupe (5-10, 200), Sr DL/OL Thomas Sattler (6-2, 245), Jr. DB/WR Hunter Barth (6-2, 190).

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:**

The graduation of key players on both sides of the ball. We will have quite a few new faces stepping into key spots. Looking forward to seeing the identity our team develops as we approach the season.

**2019 expectations:** We hope to play disciplined, tough, fundamentally sound football.

**REGION NOTES: Mountain Pointe** finished 7-5 last season, the first with coach Rich Wellbrock calling the shots. Three of the Pride's losses were by a touchdown or less and they managed a playoff berth. Wellbrock has fashioned a 99-54 record over 13 seasons as a head coach at Tolleson, Desert Edge, Basha and Mountain Pointe. Wellbrock and staff need to find a new quarterback, but return a skill player in senior wide receiver Dominique Davis (55 receptions for 952 yards and 10 TDs). Senior linebackers Rashion Hodge (109 tackles, 3 sacks) and Resi Shank (97 tackles) and defensive back Diamante Landrum (52 tackles, 3 INT) key the defense.

## DESERT SOUTHWEST REGION

### Kofa

**Head coach:** David Diehl.

**Years as school's head coach and record:** 2nd year, 1-9.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. OL Ramses Lopez; Jr. OL Alan Castro; Sr. RB Jamar McFarlane (5-9, 175), 614 yards rushing, 7 TDs; Sr. WR Jorey Burns (6-0, 167), 15 receptions, 164 yards, 4 TDs; Jr. WR Eben Rico (5-7, 130), 17 receptions, 186 yards; Sr. FB Jamir Ortiz.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. LB Jonathan Hernandez (5-10, 181); Jr. DE David Jasso (6-3, 212), 16 tackles; Jr. FS Diego Cancio (5-10, 165), 41 tackles.

**REGION NOTES: Cibola** is the only other school in the region as neighboring San Luis does not have a football program. For the first time in nearly two decades, the Raiders will have a new coach, Steven Fritz. Fritz was officially hired the first week of May and takes over for Lucky Arvizo, who resigned after 17 seasons as head coach in December.

## DESERT VALLEY REGION

### Chaparral

**Head coach:** Brent Barnes.

**Years as school's head coach:** 2nd year, 5-6 record.

**2018 record:** 5-6.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB Jack Miller, (6-3, 215), 2,431 passing yards, 27 TDs, 6 INT; Sr. WR Tommy Christakos (6-4, 210), 54 receptions for 1,221 yards, 12 TDs; Sr. TE Jack Helsten (6-3, 205), 26 receptions for 345 yards, 4 TDs; Sr. OL Brian Groeger (6-2, 240); Jr. RB Jared Williams (5-11, 200), 522 yards rushing, 5 TDs, 11 receptions, 119 yards.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DE Jaxon Richards (6-5, 210), 43 tackles, 10.5 sacks; Sr. NG Jace Jorgensen (6-0, 245), 30 tackles; Sr. LB Christian Bower (6-1, 205), 23 tackles, 2.5 sacks; Sr. DB Kamdan Hightower (6-1, 180), 53 tackles, 3 INT; Sr. DB Ben Eddleblute (5-11, 160), 57 tackles; Jr. DB Ashton Liddell (5-10, 165), 47 tackles.

**Also keep an eye on:** Jr. WR Max Minor (6-3, 175); Jr. OL





**Zeke Guerrero, Cibola** (photo by Mark Jones of maxpreps.com)



**Tommy Christakos, Chaparral** (photo by Kevin French of maxpreps.com)



**Tosh Baker, Pinnacle** (photo by Steve Paynter of maxpreps.com)

Sardar Azeez (6-2, 295); Jr. OL Mason Osborn (6-3, 265); Jr. LB Joey Balducci (5-11, 215); Sr. LB Cade Fredrickson (5-11, 190).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** One of the top quarterbacks in the country with skilled athletes around him to get the ball to.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Good team speed with skilled pass rushers.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Depth, size and experience behind key returning players.

**2019 expectations:** Compete for region and state championships.

#### Liberty

**Head coach:** Mark Smith.

**Years as school's head coach:** 5th year as head coach, 35-15 record.

**2018 record:** 10-2.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB Jonah Guevara (6-2, 170), 1,557 passing yards, 11 TDs, 4 INT; Sr. WR Jaiden Pina (6-0, 170), 15 receptions for 182 yards, 2 TDs; Sr. OT Temoc Sandaval (6-3, 255); Sr. OG Frank Thompson (6-3, 285); Sr. C Brian Dean (6-0, 220); Sr. OG Vincente Maestias (6-0, 240); Sr. OT Jared Crean (6-4, 260).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. LB Jace Accurso (6-1, 225), 60 tackles, 3.5 sacks; So SS Jax Stam (6-0, 185), 59 tackles, 3 INT; Sr. LB Isiah Pittman (6-0-190), 36 tackles, 3 INT; Sr. NG Grant Collins (6-1, 255), 27 tackles, 5 sacks; Sr. CB Pina, 20 tackles; Jr. CB Shane Pitts (5-11, 180); Sr. DE Luke Stephenson (6-2, 250); Sr. S Chase Putcha (6-1, 190), 19 tackles.

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. WR Gavin Guy (6-2, 185); Sr. TE Carter Hill (6-2, 200); Sr. RB Joe Forney (5-9, 180), 109 rushing yards; Sr. CB Isiah Williams (6-1, 180); Jr. QB Brock Mast (5-11, 165), 779 passing yards, 10 TDs, 1 INT.

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Offensive line and returning seven of top 8 players. Have two quarterbacks

with winning experience. Senior heavy who have played in big games.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Seventeen seniors in front seven. Strong in middle with linebackers Accurso and saftey Stam. Returning starters at every level of defense.

**2019 expectations:** Compete to be in the Open Division Tournament.

#### Pinnacle

**Head coach:** Dana Zupke.

**Years as school's head coach:** 17th year, 121-64 record.

**2018 record:** 11-2.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. OT Tosh Baker (6-8, 275); Sr. C Adam Verbalaitis (6-1, 265); Sr. TE Shane Sunday (6-3, 225), 19 receptions, 255 yards, 3 TDs; Sr. WR Marcus Libman (6-1, 180), 72 receptions, 1,354 yards, 15 TDs; Sr. RB Matt Goodlow (6-1, 200), 89 rushing yards, 4 TDs; Sr. RB Kenji Roland (5-10, 175), 758 rushing yards, 7 TDs; Sr. QB JD Johnson (6-4, 205), 2,004 passing yards, 17 TDs, 7 INT.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DT Drew Achor (6-1, 260), 52 tackles, 2.5 sacks; Jr. DT Anthony Franklin (6-4, 245), 23 tackles; Sr. DE Sunday, 24 tackles, 4 sacks; Sr. Mac Franklin (6-2, 190) 16 tackles; Sr. LB Alonzo Maya (5-11, 195), 113 tackles, 4 sacks; Sr. CB Jack Havener (5-10, 160), 33 tackles, 2 INT; Sr. S Trevor Crawford (6-0, 175), 59 tackles; Sr. S Clay Zupke (5-11, 170), 47 tackles.

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. CB Cameron Tardio (6-3, 170); Jr. RB-WR Nate Hull (6-1, 190); Sr. OL Spencer Ponce (6-1, 250); Sr. WR Cade Horton (5-10, 175).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Running back quality and depth. Receiver quality and quarterback quality.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Overall depth, team speed and experience.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Offensive and defensive line depth.

**2019 expectations:** Win first game, win region, make playoffs and win last game.

**Sandra Day O'Connor**

**Head coach:** Steve Casey.

**Years as school's head coach:** 3rd year, 7-13 record.

**2018 record:** 4-6.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. WR-RET Damian Ortiz (6-1, 185), 278 rushing yards, 1 TD, 57 receptions for 983 yards, 15 TDs; Sr. WR Alijah Galbreath (6-2, 235), 37 receptions for 492 yards, 3 TDs; Sr. WR Kody Say (6-0, 175), 27 receptions for 393 yards, 2 TDs; WR Phoenix Payton (6-1, 190), 10 receptions for 216 yards, 4 TDs; Sr. OL Ethan Christensen (6-0, 290); Jr. OL Meyer Shinsky (6-3, 260); Sr. OL Brian Rodosta (6-0, 285); Jr. WR JD Groff (6-2, 175), four receptions, 92 yards; Sr. TB Donavain Fontaine (5-4, 145), 486 rushing yards, 5 TDs, 10 receptions, 125 yards; WR Daymian Stewart (6-3, 160), 19 receptions, 303 yards; TB Reed Butorac (6-0, 180).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DE Chase Folkstad (6-0, 215), 28 tackles, 3.5 sacks; Sr. DB Chase Hanson (5-11, 175), 47 tackles, 4 INT; Jr. CB Joseph MacDonald (5-10, 165), 40 tackles; Sr. DB Ethan Ososkie (5-7, 145), 21 tackles; Jr. DB Andrew McCall (5-10, 165).

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. QB Dylan Simonton (5-10, 165); So. OL Josh Salman (6-3, 245); So. OL Izzy Guvara (6-1, 300); So. LB Brandon Craddock (5-10, 180); Sr. ATH Brian Hubbard (6-0, 175).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Skill level at wide receiver. Three returning O-linemen. Football IQ.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Secondary has tremendous playing experience. Work ethic this off-season.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Defensive front seven and quarterback.

**2019 expectations:** Make the playoffs.

**REGION NOTES:** **Boulder Creek** managed a 4-6 record during the 2018 regular season and that was good enough due to its strength of schedule to qualify for the playoffs. A lopsided loss to Chandler in the opening round made for a quick exit. The Jaguars enter 2019 with coach Tony Casarella trying to add a few more wins. Boulder Creek has piled up a 4-6 record and two 4-7 marks in Casarella's three seasons. The Jags schedule is the same as last year and figures to be just as grueling. **Mountain Ridge** is the lone team in the region that opens the season with a new coach. The Mountain Lions hired former Scottsdale Community College coach Doug Madoski to try and revitalize the program, which has struggled of late (0-10 last season) and no winning record since 2010.

**EAST VALLEY REGION**

**Mountain View**

**Head coach:** Mike Fell.

**Years as school's head coach:** 4th year, record 17-13.

**2018 record:** 4-6.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. WR Cash Clark (6-0, 170), 66 receptions, 836 yards, 7 TDs; Sr. WR Ethan Davidson (6-3-205), 34 receptions, 627 yards, 8 TDs; Sr. WR Wyatt Hayes (6-1, 180), 24 receptions 329 yards, 4 TDs; Jr. WR Tanner Johnson (5-11, 165); Sr. C Ethan Coulter (5-11, 165); Sr. G Luke Allen (6-2, 200); Sr. T Scott Bogle (6-1, 200).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** So. DE Malaki

Ta'ase (6-2, 225), 28 tackles; Sr. DE Zach Peavler (6-2, 240); 12 Sr. LB Josh Soelberg (6-1, 205), 31 tackles; Sr. LB Joey Syrek (5-10, 185), 21 tackles; Sr. CB Treagan Herlov (5-8, 150), 50 tackles, 2 INT; Sr. FS Harrison Evans (6-1, 170), 34 tackles; Jr. Nathan Dismuke (6-0, 180), 31 tackles.

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. QB Brandon Nieto (6-0, 170); Sr. RB/WR Deshaun Jackson (5-8, 155); Jr. RB Sam Kirk (5-8, 160).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Four returning wide receivers. Competition for every position. Great attitude.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Seven returning starters. Good speed and smarts. Aggressive and fly to the ball.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Physical size matching up to bigger opponents. Consistent special teams.

**2019 expectations:** Compete every down. Play as one team. Win the East Valley Region.

**Skyline**

**Head coach:** George Hawthorne.

**Years as school's head coach:** 1st year.

**2018 record:** 5-5.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. Jr. OL Christopher Despain (6-2, 300); Sr. WR William McGown (5-7, 160), 14 receptions, 297 yards, 2 TD; Sr. WR Garrett Lindley (5-7, 170), 17 receptions 344 yards, 1 TD.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. S Jaden Murray (5-10, 160), 23 tackles; Jr. S Zeke Branham (6-2, 195), 49 tackles; Sr. LB Alex Sanchez (6-1, 180), 41 tackles.

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. WR Da'kaylon Dorsey (5-9, 160); Sr. WR Corey O'Bannon (5-8, 150); Sr. WR Josiah Lacour (6-1, 145); Sr. QB Blake Roebuck (6-4, 200); Jr. QB Jack Nelson (6-4, 195); Sr. RB Tariq Deeb (5-7, 165).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** We have a lot of great student-athletes who are dedicated to getting better and are working hard towards that goal.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** We will be a high energy, disciplined defense. We will make the most of the talent we have and the size that we have. We are going to be an 11 hats to the ball hard-nose defense.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** How much will the players embrace a new culture, with new expectations, and new personalities? Will the team fully commit to winning?

**2019 expectations:** We expect to be a team that will come to practice every day and grow. We expect improvement with each down we play. Our goal for the season is to win every game we play. Anything less would be selling yourself short.

**Westwood**

**Head coach:** Kyle Ide.

**Years as school's head coach:** 3rd year, record 9-11.

**2018 record:** 5-5.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. OL Juan Pena (5-10, 220); Sr. RB Victor Sanchez (5-9, 215), 552 rushing yards, 3 TDs; Sr. WR Jonny Collier (5-10, 160), 15 receptions, 265 yards.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. LB Josh Warren (5-11, 185), 31 tackles; Sr. DL Daniel Lerman (5-10, 230), 20 tackles.

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. RB-DB Josh McClintock (5-11, 180); Jr. DE Cain Courtney (6-2, 235); Jr. OL Robert Lucero





2019 Mesa Jackrabbit Osaia Taueli (photo by Darin Sicurello of maxpreps.com)

(5-10, 245); 12 LB-RB Malakai Papalii (5-11, 170) Jr. WR-DB Jeremiah Reed (6-0, 190).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Victor Sanchez and Josh McClintock will be strong 1-2 punch running the ball. Jeremiah Reed and Jonny Collier can make plays outside.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Daniel Lerma and Cain Courtney will be solid on the defensive line. Will have a lot of speed on defense.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** We don't have a lot of experience or depth. Can some of our younger players step up and contribute on the varsity level.

2019 expectations: We want to improve every day.

**REGION NOTES:** **Dobson** is one of two schools in the region with a new coach. The Mustangs hired Bill Godsfil, who mentored Coolidge the past two seasons, including a 7-4 mark last year and a playoff berth. Dobson was 2-8 last season.

**Mesa High** boasts a new head coach, although not unfamiliar with the region, in Chad DeGrenier. DeGrenier moves over from Mesquite. He piloted Mountain View from 2011-2015. DeGrenier posted a 17-15 record in three seasons at Mesquite. Mesa was 3-7 last season. **Red Mountain** won the region title for the second straight year in coach Mike Peterson's second year at the helm. The Mountain Lions were 9-3 in 2018 and are 19-6 under Peterson. Posting a well-rounded season last year is junior running back-defensive back George Ramirez (a combined 542 yards rushing and receiving, 9 TDs). Ramirez led in tackles with 77. The Mountain

Lions have good depth at running back with senior returnees Deonce Elliott (463 rushing yards, 5 TDs) and Ty McElroy (224 rushing yards, 3 TDs). Leading receiver senior Ramses Rivera (38 receptions, 594 yards and 8 TDs) also returns. But opponents are waiting to see who emerges as the team's starting quarterback. Red Mountain has options at QB, including transfer Jalen Daniels.

## METRO REGION

### Alhambra

**Head coach:** Chris Crockett.

**Years as school's head coach:** 2nd year, 2-8.

**2018 record:** 2-8.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Jr. QB Jaden "Chico" Crockett (6-0, 155); Sr. WR/TE Tony Miller (6-5, 210); Sr. WR Isiah Sanchez (5-9, 160); JR. WR Kyron Samuels (6-0, 170); SR. OL Cesar Morales (5-10, 230); JR. OL Amarey Reid (5-11, 185); JR. OL Thomas Corniea (5-11, 200); JR. OL Logan Lebario (5-9, 190); JR. WR Evan Maldonado (5-8, 155).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** JR. CB Jaden "Chico" Crockett, 30 tackles; Sr. DE Tony Miller; Sr. FS Isiah Sanchez; Jr. OLB Kyron Samuels, 22 tackles; Jr. CB. Evan Maldonado (5-8, 155), 3 INT; Sr. SS. Jonzee Washington (5-9, 160); Sr. OLB Andy Ramirez (6-0, 180); Sr. OLB Tyrell Burns (5-9, 185).

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. WR/DB Mike Villarreal (5-9 160); Sr. RB/LB Isiah Baker (5-10, 185).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Dual-threat quarterback. Experienced wide outs. Second year of offensive system.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** All four defensive backs returning. Depth at DB.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Offensive line.

**2019 expectations:** Finish with a winning record.

### Cesar Chavez

**Head Coach:** J.R. Alcantar.

**Years as school's head coach and record:** 3rd year, 14-8.

**2018 record:** 7-4.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB Lucas Arnds (6-0, 203), 2,074 yards passing, 22 TDs, 9 INT; Sr. WR Deavon Crawford (5-10, 178); Sr. WR Jaleel Walker (6-4, 180) 1,054 yards receiving, 9 TDs; Sr. RB Tyraill Carrenthers (5-9, 175), 489 yards rushing, 7 TDs; Sr. OL Jay Martin (6-4, 255); Sr. OL Greg Down (5-11, 255); Sr. OL Rueben Madanado (5-9, 235); Jr. OL Breon Hopkins (6-3, 303).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DL Jay Martin; Sr. OLB Antwaun Winfield (6-0, 200), 87 tackles. 3 sacks; Jr. ILB Linwood Crawford (5-10, 225); Sr. ILB Mike Mendez (5-10, 210); Sr. ILB Pedro Ojeda (5-10, 200); Sr. OLB Zach Patterson (5-10, 190), 3.5 sacks; Jr. DB Jovoni Ervin (5-11, 173); Sr. DB Josh Garcia (5-10, 177), 46 tackles.

**Also keep an eye on:** Jr. DL Keon Earhart (6-4, 215); So. Tavion Dennis (5-11, 180) So. LB Daniel Serpa (5-11, 175); So. RB Xavier Marshall (5-9, 165); So. QB Xavier Castillo (6-3, 168).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Most of offense returns. Transfers Deavon Crawford and Henry Leon will add speed. Entire O-line is back.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** We have a lot of speed. Tall and long on the D-Line.



*Malik Reed, Chandler (photo by Mark Jones of maxpreps.com)*

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:**

Who takes over for our all-state RB who left. How will young defense handle the top teams. Will adding two transfer wide receivers help our offense.

**2019 expectations:** Our goal is to make the Elite 8 for a state championship. Get over the first-round hump. Be a disciplined team.

**North**

**Head coach:** Adan Mendoza.

**Years as school's head coach:** 2nd year, 3-7.

**2018 record:** 3-7.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. Luis Rojas (6-5, 190), 713 yards passing, 6 TDs, 6 INT; Jr. OL Nick Harvey (5-10, 210); Jr. OL Xavier Cuevas (5-10, 250); Sr. WR Juan Gomez (5-9, 155), 351 yards receiving, 4 TDs; Jr. RB Carter Holt (6-0, 190), 155 yards rushing, 1 TD.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DB Erik Macias (5-8, 160), 25 tackles; Sr. ATH Aaron Rojas (6-0, 180); Sr. DL Joey Cortez (6-1, 250), 25 tackles.

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. RB-LB Joe Gallagher (5-8, 160); So. DB Layne Marquez (5-9, 150).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Returning top QB, WR and RB. Young on O-line and developing well.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** We are faster and stronger as a group with players willing to attack.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Quality of depth.

**2019 expectations:** Take it a week at a time with tough schedule. Potentially get a winning record.

**Tucson Magnet**

**Head coach:** Justin Argraves.

**Years as school's head coach and record:** 8 years, 48-36 record.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. RB Gary Love (5-10, 175), 813 rushing yards, 10 TDs; Sr. OL Jacob Bracamonte (6-4, 270); Sr. OL Michael Acedo (6-2, 220); Jr. WR, Daniel Becerra (6-2, 175).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DL Michael Acedo; Sr. LB Michael Goodacre (6-1, 180), 58 tackles; Sr. LB Cesar Sanchez (5-9, 175); Sr. DB Andres Delgado (5-7, 145), 28 tackles, 2 INT.

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. K-P Mark Vargas (6-2, 170); Jr. QB Ayden Ortiz (5-10, 170); So. WR Issac Sherfield (6-2, 180).

**Strengths of offense heading into the summer:** Strong run game with Gary Love and Cesar Sanchez in the backfield. Solid core of receivers.

**Strengths of defense heading into the summer:** Front seven should help out the run game tremendously.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into the summer:** Youth. Graduated 30 seniors and will rely on many sophomores and juniors.

**2019 expectations:** Main goal is to generate strong team chemistry with the large amount of last year's freshman and sophomore class playing varsity this year. Being prepared mentally and physically for the back half of the season.



**REGION NOTES:** Maryvale tries to add an extra win or two this season after consecutive 1-9 campaigns. Maryvale's last winning season occurred in 2010 (7-3). **Trevor Browne** posted its second consecutive 3-7 season last year. The Bruins finished in the upper half of the region (third). Trevor Browne's best record this decade was a 5-5 mark in 2013.

## **PREMIER REGION**

### **Basha**

**Head coach:** Chris McDonald.

**Years as school's head coach:** 2nd year, 6-5.

**2018 record:** 6-5.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB Gabe Friend (6-2, 205) 1,838 yards passing, 18 TDs, 10 INT, 247 yards rushing, 5 TDs; Sr. ATH Micah Harper (5-11, 185), 11 receptions for 66 yards; Sr. WR Camden Mateen (5-11, 170), 31 receptions for 603 yards, 8 TDs; Sr. WR Zion Williams (5-9, 155), 21 receptions for 273 yards, 2 TDs; Sr. OL Matt Depodesta (6-1, 240); Sr. OL James Knos (6-, 250); Jr. ATH Andrell Barney (5-10, 170), 8 receptions for 76 yards.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DB Harper, 56 tackles, 2 INTs; Sr. OLB Charles Gilbert (6-1, 210), 46 tackles, 7 sacks; Jr. DB Barney, 20 tackles; Jr. OLB Caleb Jones (5-9, 185), 19 tackles.

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. OL-DL Mikey Sliskovic (6-1, 245); Jr. ATH Brayden Shambaugh (5-10, 185).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Team speed and experience at skill positions.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Team speed.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:**

Overall depth on offensive and defensive lines.

**2019 expectations:** Compete every day.

### **Brophy Prep**

**Head coach:** Jason Jewell.

**Years as school's head coach:** 1st year.

**2018 record:** 7-4.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. OT Andrew Milek (6-4, 285); Sr. OG Owen Reinhart (6-4, 290); Sr. OT Max Allen (6-3, 250); Sr. WR Regis Velez (6-4, 200), 17 receptions for 174 yards.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. LB-S Michael Diaz (6-1, 205), 70 tackles, 5 INT; Sr. DL Amadeous Coleman (6-0, 210), 38 tackles, 4.5 sacks; Sr. LB Bryce Michael (6-1, 190), 54 tackles; Sr. LB Jake Taylor (6-0, 190), 20 tackles; Sr. S Trevor Klein (5-11, 185), 27 tackles, 2 INT; Jr. S Anthony Gonzales (5-10, 175), 21 tackles, 4 INT.

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. RB Andre Eden (5-10, 190), 355 rushing yards; Sr. RB Michael Brown (5-10, 210), 314 rushing yards, 4 TDs; Jr. CB Meek Ogbonna (5-10, 175); So. CB Ben Morrison (5-10, 155); So. DL Zac Swanson (6-3, 230); So. TE Taylor Powell (6-5, 210).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Big and experienced on the offensive line and have length at the skill positions. Also have one of the more experienced linebacking crews in all of 6A.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Have one of the more experienced linebacking crews in all of 6A.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** We need to get stronger in the weight room and focus on that.

**2019 expectations:** I want our team to be competitive. We play in the toughest region in the state and went 2-2 last year

in region play. We are the third staff in three years at Brophy, so there will be a learning curve. But our kids are smart and play hard.

### **Chandler**

**Head coach:** Rick Garretson.

**Years as school's head coach:** 1st.

**2018 record:** 13-1.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. OT Alexis Castro (6-4, 290); Jr. C Tevai Neher (6-0, 290); Sr. OT Nehemiah Maglei (6-2, 305); Sr. HB Jay McEuen (6-4, 220).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. LB Tate Romney (6-2, 210); Sr. LB Malik Reed (6-2, 220); Jr. SS Kentrell Williams (5-10, 190); Sr. CB Ramone Robinson (6-0, 185); Sr. FS Gunner Maldonado (6-0, 190).

**Also keep an eye on:** Jr. QB Mikey Keene (5-11, 170); Sr. DL Brayant Jackson (6-0, 245); Sr. LB Riley Barton (5-11, 200); Jr. LB Kyler Orr (6-2, 210); Jr. DE Brandon Buckner (6-1, 245); Jr. DE Zion Maglei (6-3, 215); So. WR-SB Quaron Adams (5-8, 140); So. H-Y Nason Coleman (6-3, 200); Jr. WR Jalen Richmond (6-0, 185); Sr. RB Jaheim Brown Taylor (5-9, 185); Jr. RB Nick Nesbitt (5-9, 190); Jr. RB Rodney Clement (5-9, 185); Jr. RB Eli Sanders (6-0, 190); Jr. H-Y Eli Swope (6-2, 220); So. OL Micah Lutu (6-2, 300); So. Leo Tuituu (6-0, 300); Sr. WR Barron Miles (5-11, 180); Sr. H-Y Isaiah Collison (6-0, 200); So. CB Alfred Smith (5-9, 165); So. CB Travis Roberts (5-10, 160); So. WR Kyion Grayes (6-1, 170).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Offensive line, running backs and quarterback.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Pass rushers, linebackers and safeties.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Experience.

**2019 expectations:** Win state title.

### **Hamilton**

**Head coach:** Mike Zdebski.

**Years as school's head coach:** 2nd year, 3-7 record.

**2018 record:** 3-7.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. SE Brenden Rice, (6-3, 205), 49 receptions for 729 yards, 11 TDs; Sr. SE Kaden Hattendorf (6-2, 176); Jr. SB Zach Lewis (5-10, 170), 25 receptions, 365 yards, 2 TDs; Sr. QB Nick Arvay (5-11, 179), 1,005 yards passing, 11 TDs, 11 INT; 265 rushing yards, 4 TDs; Sr. TB Sebastian Dorman (5-9, 167), 258 rushing yards, 5 TDs; Sr. OL Finn Lecky (6-0, 267); Sr. OL Caidan Cummings (6-1, 256); Sr. OL Dylan Mayginnnes (6-5, 285); Sr. OL Ryan Castillo (6-0, 220); Jr. SE Brady Shough (6-2, 175).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DL Sam Winegarden (6-1, 210), 19 tackles; Sr. DL Alex Wielert (6-1, 210); Sr. DL Dom Hilton (6-1, 235); Sr. LB Jeremiah Trojan (6-3, 230), 72 tackles, 2 sacks; Sr. DB Isiah Blanco (5-8, 163), 16 tackles; Sr. DB Jamar Brown (6-3, 160), 60 tackles, 2 INT; Sr. DB Pierre Taylor (5-10, 160); Sr. DB Gabe Armenta (5-8, 170), 32 tackles; Sr. DB Dylan Mote (6-2, 165).

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. DB Ethan Truesdell (5-9, 165); Jr. LB Victor Zayes (6-3, 165); Jr. LB Mo Sarnowski (6-0, 210); Sr. OL Joe Lopez (6-0, 320); Sr. K Colin Fuller (6-0, 150).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Returning starters including returning quarterback. Big-time athlete in Rice. Offensive line depth.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Defensive line experience. Trojan at linebacker and depth at defensive back.



(Left) Brenden Rice, Hamilton (photo by Chris Trim of maxpreps.com) and Chubba Purdy, Perry (photo by Mark Jones of maxpreps.com)

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:**

Team speed, kicking game depth and longsnapper.

**2019 expectations:** Get better every day and focus every day.

**Perry**

**Head coach:** Preston Jones.

**Years as school's head coach:** 12th year, 80-48 record.

**2018 record:** 11-3.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB Chubba Purdy (6-3, 210), 3,422 yards passing, 36 TDs, 10 INT, 1,156 yards rushing, 22 TDs; Sr. WR Jorden Young (5-9, 165), 43 receptions, 541 yards, 4 TDs; Sr. OL Ky Lockhart (6-0, 235); Sr/ OL Hunter Scott (6-4, 250); Sr. TE Broc Lane (6-4, 225).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. LB Cole Sabetta (6-0, 210), 63 tackles; Sr. DB Tracy Franklin (5-11, 180), 61 tackles; Sr. DE Ryan Short (6-1, 215), 36 tackles, 4.5 sacks; Sr. DB Andrei Mayberry (6-1, 210), 67 tackles, 2 INT.

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Experience at quarterback. Depth at wide receiver. Conditioning.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Linebackers, our effort and coachability.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Offensive line, running back, defensive line and leadership.

**2019 expectations:** Working with a plan and purpose. Mastering assignments with great attitude and effort. Have fun and win your last game.

**SOUTHWEST REGION**

**Copper Canyon**

**Head coach:** Sean Freeman.

**Years as school's head coach:** 2nd year, record 2-8.

**2018 record:** 2-8.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Jr. WR Eddie Escamilla (5-11, 160); Sr. ATH Mitchell Brown (6-0, 155); Sr. QB Douglas Woodall (5-10); Sr. RB Russell Gray (5-8, 150); Sr. OL Bryan Marquez (5-10, 280); Sr. OL Memphis Williams (6-3, 275); Sr. WR Jesse Fernandez (5-9, 165); Sr. LS Ozzie Casillas (5-9, 165); Jr. TE Angel Sanchez (6-1, 175); So ATH Derrick Sailor (5-9, 150).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. LB Troy Moreno (5-10, 180); Sr. DL Williams; Sr. CB Fernandez; Jr. LB Sanchez.

**Also keep an eye on:** RB-LB Andreas Clark (5-10, 160); LB Reyes Rendon (5-10, 175); LB Nick Chavez (6-0, 180).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Running game will be stronger. Passing game better and more efficient.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Speed, strength, discipline and execution.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Not enough seniors. Lack of playing experience. New coaching staff. Culture.

**2019 expectations:** Compete in every game. Build a tighter bond. End with six or seven wins. Gain respect in our division.





**OL Andrew Rumary, Valley Vista** (photo by Kevin French of max-preps.com)

#### **Tolleson**

**Head coach:** Roy Lopez.

**Years as school's head coach:** 1st year.

**2018 record:** 6-4.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. RB Nelly Christan (5-8, 190), 1,240 rushing yards, 10 TDs, 11 receptions, 80 yards; Jr. QB James McElhenny (6-2, 175); Sr. OL Joseph Angelo (6-2, 270); Sr. OL Michael Martinez (6-1, 230); Sr. WR Jordan Marshall (6-1, 180); Sr. OL Miguel Solis (6-1, 220); Sr. OL Dawson Neese (6-1, 225); Jr. WR Jahaun Jones (5-11, 180); Sr. K Jose DeHaro (5-11, 180).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DB John Brown (6-0, 180), 49 tackles; Sr. DL David Manzanares (5-11, 230); Sr. LB Xavier Velasco (5-9, 190), 81 tackles; Sr. LB Damian Ruelas (6-0, 195), 14 tackles; Jr. LB Jonathon Carranza (6-0, 180); Jr. DL Rodrigo Avilez (6-0, 220); Jr. DB Donovan Bojorquez (6-0, 170); Sr. DE Robert Jackson (6-0, 195).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Team concept. Good skill players and good linemen.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Getting ready together.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** We are very young.

**2019 expectations:** Make the playoffs.

#### **Valley Vista**

**Head coach:** Josh Sekoch.

**Years as school's head coach:** 9th year, record 41-32.

**2018 record:** 5-5.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. OL Andrew Rumary (6-7, 280); Jr. WR Liam Kelleher (6-4, 200) 20 receptions for 336 yards, 6 TDs; Sr. RB Henry Brown (6-0, 190), 676 rushing yards, 8 TDs, 7 receptions, 104 yards; Sr. RB Aiden Cunningham (5-11, 180), 284 rushing yards, 3 TDs; Jr. QB Burton Delay (5-9, 160), 444 passing yards, 7 TDs, 2 INT; Jr. OL Ray Sutton (6-1, 270); Jr. OL Garrett Sutcliffe (5-10, 200); So. OL Jaden Lay (5-10, 225); Jr. WR Nygel Bridges (5-6, 130), 19 receptions, 290 yards, 5 TDs.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** So. DB Jaelen McCullen (6-3, 210); Jr. DB Vincent Thompson (6-2, 170); Jr. LB Carson Allcock (6-2, 200).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Running back, wide receiver and offensive line.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Linebacker depth.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Replacing nine defensive starters.

**2019 expectations:** Win Dysart District, Southwest Region and playoff game.

#### **Westview**

**Head coach:** Nick Gehrts.

**Years as school's head coach:** 4th year, record 22-12.

**2018 record:** 8-3.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Jr. QB Niko Vasko (5-11, 195), 332 rushing yards, 4 TDs, 428 passing yards, 6 TDs, 1 INT; Sr. OL Levyn Santillan (6-3, 260); Sr. WR Isac Hall (6-3, 180), 9 receptions, 127 yards, 3 TDs; Sr. OL Jamerea Lowery (6-3, 280); Jr. OL Sebastian Alvarez (6-2, 250); Jr. TE Johnathan Hernandez (6-2, 220).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Jr. DB D'Hayven Valentine (5-11, 170), 43 tackles, 3 INT; Jr. LB Cam'ron Granado (5-8, 180), 28 tackles, 2 sacks; Sr. DL Anthony Reder-Crowe (6-2, 250), 54 tackles; Sr. DL Vilami Fainga (6-2, 260), 44 tackles; Jr. DL Ikani Fainga (5-11, 225). Also keep an eye on: Jr. WR Roderick Sopson (6-4, 185); Jr. DB JayQuan McCain (6-0, 180); Jr. WR Jonathan Chacon (5-7, 160).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Experience up front and return of six starters.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Returning experience mostly on defensive line.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Lost nine defensive starters.

**2019 expectations:** Since 2010 we are 46-0 in region play. Seek to continue that streak and win our ninth consecutive region championship. Also want to make it to first year of the open playoffs.

**REGION NOTES:** Shadow Ridge played its first season in 6A last year and managed a 4-6 record under Bob Chappelle, who begins his fourth year at the helm. The Stallions seek an uptick in region games after going 0-5 in their first go. ... Miguel Valdovinos threw 29 touchdowns and just six interceptions for a 7-3 La Joya 2018 team that wasn't pleased it just missed the playoffs in 2018. The team hired a new coach, Devin Dourisseau.



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## History: Revisiting Chandler's 1949 Mythical State Championship Season

By Barry Sollenberger

Just before the birth of the Class 4A Conference, when the Chandler Wolves and the Tempe Buffaloes squared off each season, most games carried no more weight than any other East Valley League clash.

But it didn't used to be that way. In the 1940s and 50s, the annual matchup allowed each team the opportunity to redeem its season, if necessary.

"That was the game of the year," former Tempe coach John Zucco once said. "It was our Thanksgiving game, like the Detroit Lions and the Dallas Cowboys. That's when we played also. It could make or break your season if you beat Chandler. That was it."

The rivalry started in 1925, when the teams would travel on a truck bed and play the game on Thanksgiving Day.

Ironically, the first contest between the schools ended in a tie.

When the two schools went different ways, because of East Valley growth and declining enrollment at Tempe, they left behind some memorable games. In 1948, the Chandler Arizonan, a weekly newspaper distributed on Friday, ran the game story on the front page, even though the contest, a 13-13 tie, was played a week earlier.

The biggest game of the rivalry was played one year later, when it featured two undefeated teams fighting for the right to be called state champs. The game, played before an estimated crowd of 6,000 fans at Goodwin Stadium, on the campus of Arizona State, showcased for the last time Chandler halfback Bob Tarwater.

But the Wolves ace went out with a shoulder injury in the second period.

"It wasn't from a hard hit like you'd think," recalls Tarwater, a retired dairy farmer who still lives in Chandler. "I fell and landed wrong. It was dislocated."

Everett Worthington, a junior fullback, and Art Odom picked up the slack.

They showed their colors with key runs all night, and Odom scored twice in a 14-7 season ending triumph. The Wolves' defense muffled Tempe's Marvin Williams and Chandler was declared mythical Class B (now 3A) champs in 1949.

The Wolves coach was Clarence Skousen, who piloted Chandler through several successful seasons. Ken Knox was his assistant.

Following the season, Skousen was honored by the Arizona Coaches Association as the state's top mentor. Two Wolves, Tarwater and guard David Hampshire, earned first-team recognition on the Super All-State team.

"We had a lot of fine athletes in the school then," recalls the 93-year-old Skousen from his Chandler home. "They were good in other sports, too. Not just football."

Skousen, who played on Chandler's first football team in 1923, came back to the school in 1939 after fielding good teams in Coolidge and Thatcher.

By 1941, the Wolves had become a state power. But midway through the 1942 season he joined the Navy, leaving behind a team that lost only one game. Bob Orr and Russell Goddard filled in for Skousen during the war.

But it was the '49 Wolf Pack which topped all in Chandler's

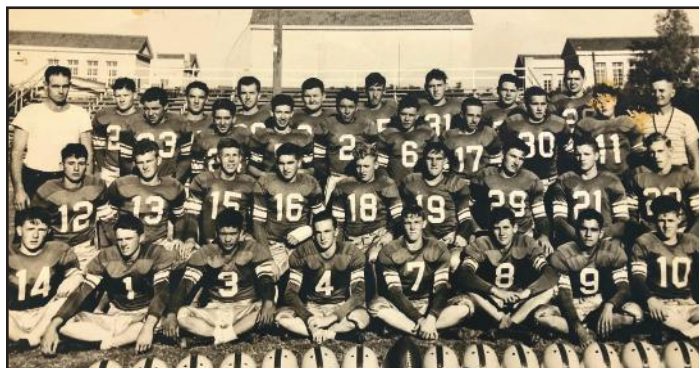


photo courtesy of the Arizona Interscholastic Association

history, going undefeated and amassing 358 points in 10 games. The key player was Tarwater, a stocky, hard working running back who scored 20 touchdowns — four on kick returns.

Besides Hampshire, tackle Floyd Johnson, end Louis Tarbart, end Rudy Serrano and Worthington were the key players. Andy Carrillo booted 34 extra points.

Tarwater, who continued his playing days at nearby Arizona State, tipped the scales at 185 pounds and was a four-year varsity player. He was known throughout the state as a dangerous broken field runner.

Hampshire, a demon on both offense and defense, ranks among the best linemen ever to don a CHS uniform. He used his 240 pounds to good advantage in blocking and tackling and won three varsity letters.

In October, Chandler fans knew the Wolves were for real after a 38-21 win over Casa Grande's explosive Cougars. The wild, see-saw game featured fleet backs and electrifying plays, especially from Chandler.

Worthington scored on a 75-yard dash. Tarwater went 80 yards on a punt return and Tarbart sprinted 30 yards with a pass interception.

The Wolves were on their way to becoming the most historic football team in Chandler history.

The Sollenberger's AZ Football Prep Magazine is named after the late Arizona high school sports historian Barry Sollenberger. In 1970, Sollenberger and publishing partner Dave Kukulski published their first Arizona preseason high school football magazine. To celebrate the 50th anniversary of Chandler High's 1949 mythical state championship, Sollenberger featured the team his magazine in 1999, when the story above first appeared.

### 1949 Chandler Wolves (10-0) season results

Chandler def. Globe 33-0  
Chandler def. Eloy 38-0  
Chandler def. Florence 20-13  
Chandler def. Ajo 61-7  
Chandler def. Casa Grande 38-21  
Chandler def. Superior 48-0  
Chandler def. Buckeye 34-12  
Chandler def. Coolidge 47-13  
Chandler def. Nogales 25-0  
Chandler def. Tempe 14-7





*Centennial, 2018 5A State Champions (photo by Darin Sicurello of maxpreps.com)*

**By Les Willsey**  
**azpreps365.com**

**1. CENTENNIAL:** Four titles in the last five years plus the dominating fashion Centennial howled to last year's 5A title with a 14-0 mark makes the Coyotes an easy conference favorite — if they end up playing for it. The Coyotes have a great shot of playing in the Open Division bracket. The Coyotes play seven teams in the regular season that made the playoffs last year. The offense is in good hands with experience at quarterback in senior Jon Morris (2,097 yards passing and 19 TDs), receivers (Dyelan Miller and Eric Haney) and three linemen. The 2018 defense was arguably as good as any the Coyotes have put on the field. It will need some re-tooling this year, but that's rarely a problem. Last year's unit allowed 102 points in 14 games (7.3 per game). The two years prior points allowed per game was just 10. Experience on the defensive side belongs with guys in the backfield like Jaden Young and Haney, who are likely to double up at running back and receiver. The defensive line returns a pair of solid players in Xavier Garcia and Derek Jodarski. The team's early test is Aug. 30 when it hosts west coast power Mater Dei

(Concord, CA). Centennial has topped Bishop Gorman (NV) and St. Thomas Aquinas (FL) in their out-of-state matchups the last two years.

**2. WILLIAMS FIELD:** The Black Hawks won the San Tan Region, an accomplishment of distinction given all six schools in the region made the playoffs. That title makes it three in a row with a 13-0 region record in that span. The school hasn't lost more than three games in a season since its varsity debut in 2008 and has made the playoffs in each of its 10 seasons competing for a conference title. There are key positions that need filling on both sides of the ball this year. On offense Williams Field figures to run successfully with four starting linemen returning — three of whom are D-I commits led by tackle Noah Nelson (Oklahoma bound). Last year's top rusher, Kendrix Lurry, fell just shy of 1,000 yards rushing (973) and struck pay dirt nine times. The big hole is at quarterback where three-year starter Zach Shepherd graduated. The defense was strong across the board last year, with as good a secondary as a team could have. That's a second area of concern since the four deep backs grabbed their diplomas.



**3. HIGLEY:** The Knights begin their ninth season guided by head coach Eddy Zubey. They've climbed the ladder in that span going from no playoffs in 2011 and 2012 to one-and-done in 2013-2015. The last three years have presented six playoff victories and three semifinal appearances. This is another year of promise, especially if the defense can improve. Top returnees include linemen Jason Harris and Jackson Solomon, deep backs Brian Lipford and Izaak Butler and linebacker Cannen Hall. Higley scored 475 points last season but surrendered 416. Giving up 32 points a game won't win many state titles. The Knights traditionally have no problem putting points on the board and will likely continue to do so with QB Kai Millner and or QB Matt Purnell. But Higley did graduate its top three rushers and top two receivers. It played many more close games last year in its move up to 5A and will have to get used to that.

**4. SUNRISE MOUNTAIN:** The Mustangs acquitted themselves well in moving up from 4A to 5A, posting an 8-4 record. Three of the losses were to 5A semifinalist Williams Field (twice by a touchdown or less) and the other by a TD to 6A Liberty. The other defeat was to Northwest Region champ Centennial in blowout fashion - nothing to be ashamed of there. Plenty of experience on the O-Line and at receiver bode well this season. Replacing talented Keegan Freid at QB is another matter. Speed and depth define the defense led by linebacker Justin Wilda (86 tackles, 5 sacks). Sunrise might be good enough to put some pressure on Centennial this year by the time the teams meet in the 2019 regular-season finale. Sunrise Mountain, however, is 0-5 against Centennial and been blanked in those meetings the last four times out.

**5. NOTRE DAME PREP:** Two state title appearances in a row and runner-up finishes each time thanks to Centennial — last year with only three returning starters albeit two outstanding ones — and the Saints and coach George Prelock are locked in as a top-10 program. Offense features three-fifths of last year's line and leading rusher Dominic Mastro (1,533 yards and 13 TD). Defense, which returned no starters in 2018, has more than half of the unit back led by linebackers Brock Locnikar and Connor Butt and secondary pieces Trey Cartledge and James Jaquint. Trying to fill the void of offensive juggernaut Jake Smith and quarterback Jake Farrell are potential stumbling blocks.

**6. PARADISE VALLEY:** "Get back to the playoffs" is the mantra of coach Greg Davis. This seems to be a year it could happen for the Trojans. After falling short of a state title in 2015 in the Division III final with Desert Edge, PV has seen all kinds of seasons of late — 13-1 heart-breaking runner-up in 2015, 2-8 (2016), 4-6 (2017) and 6-4 (2018) — none ending with a postseason appearance. PV closed within two spots of qualifying for the playoffs last year. Senior quarterback Ben Finley enters his fourth season as starter and threw for 2,777 yards and 23 TDs last season. Four other starters on offense are four-year starters as well. Several good targets are in the fold for Finley to throw to led by senior Caleb Diaz (58 catches, 766 yards and 5 TDs). The line has experience as

well. Almost half of last year's starters return on defense led by senior linebacker Andrew Hunkin (100 tackles).

**7. CASTEEL:** The Colts first three years of varsity competition yielded a 32-5 record, three playoff appearances (one a 3A state title) and last year's quarterfinal effort jumping to 5A - a 34-27 loss to Higley. Casteel reaped the benefit of having every starter or role player back last year since it was the school's first year with a senior class. They are faced with graduation losses like everyone else so 2019 will be a test in filling those gaps. Second-year coach Bobby Newcombe welcomes back six players who started or played a lot on offense and four senior starters on defense led by linebacker Dalton Card. Casteel will discover what life is like without Gunner Cruz at QB (9,383 yards passing and 100 TDs over three seasons.) If the Colts remain as competitive as they've been thus far and the region remains strong, the playoffs are likely for a fourth year in a row.

**8. MARANA MOUNTAIN VIEW:** The Mountain Lions were a young team in 2018 with a host of juniors leading the charge in a 5-5 season that saw them win the Sonoran Region title, but not make the playoffs. Last year, region champs weren't guaranteed a playoff spot so it was a must to finish in the top 16 of the power rankings. Mountain View was 20th. Double-digit starters — many of them two-way players enter their senior year for new head coach Matt Johnson, who resigned at Ironwood Ridge and latched on quickly to the opening at MMTV. Mountain View won every region game, but lost all its non-region games. Four of those teams made the playoffs - Ironwood Ridge, Higley, Casteel and Cienega. An extra win or two this year could make the difference.

**9. MILLENNIUM:** The Tigers found the going better dropping to 5A from 6A and promptly won a region title, a first-round playoff game and finished with a nifty 9-3 overall mark. They gave Notre Dame Prep a tough game in the quarterfinals, too. Millennium's offense appears will be one by committee. Coach Lamar Early is good with that. Three linemen return and son Jalan, is manning the quarterback position. Defense is the strength with seven returnees among a very athletic group. Their region was not strong overall with only the Tigers qualifying for postseason. Wins over Ironwood Ridge, Maricopa and Desert Edge - all teams who qualified for their conference playoffs - helped secure a postseason spot.

**10. GILBERT:** Coach Derek Zellner is eager to for his team to rack up a couple more wins and play as competitively as it did in its first-round playoff loss to Notre Dame Prep as a lead-in to 2019. The Tigers lost to Notre Dame 47-0 in Week 3 and then gave the Saints a tussle in a 46-30 loss the first week of November. Offensively, the line has more depth than its had in recent years and awaits a second solid season from Arizona commit Will Plummer. Plummer, the San Tan offensive player of the year last season, passed for 3,229 yards and 25 TDs. Plummer has a couple receivers back and there's promise of a ground attack to keep defenses a bit more honest. Defensively, there are a half dozen experienced returnees.

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By Les Willsey  
 azpreps365.com

## DESERT WEST REGION

### Agua Fria

**Head coach:** George Martinez.

**Years as school's head coach:** 2nd year.

**2018 record:** 5-5.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB Tre Lewis (6-0, 175), 666 yards passing, 7 TDs, 8 INT, 323 yards rushing, 6 TDs; Sr. FB Anthony Crummett-Bojorquez (5-11, 205); Sr. OL Jonathan Israel (6-2, 255); Sr. OL Isaiah Pacheco (6-0, 255); Sr. OL Carson Kennedy (6-2, 280); Sr. OL Edgar Soto (6-1, 270); Sr. OL Fidel Marquez (6-2, 290); Sr. WR McArthur Osborne (6-3, 195); Sr. WR Carter Weeg (6-0, 175), 10 receptions, 174 yards, 2 TDs.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Jr. DE Rodney Young Jr. (5-7, 180), 34 tackles, 3 sacks; Sr. DE Jalen Beard-Gray (5-7, 180), 40 tackles, 3.5 sacks; Sr. DT Justin Aletor (6-3, 240), 19 tackles, 3 sacks; Jr. LB Angel Martinez (5-8, 175), 67 tackles, 2.5 sacks; Sr. CB Isaiah Montanez (5-11, 165), 25 tackles.

**Also keep an eye on:** Jr. QB Tristen Sanchez-Clark (5-10, 165); Sr. FB Antwan Clark Jr. (5-5, 240); Sr. TE Dominic Heller (6-0, 175); Jr. OL Herman Carranza (5-11, 250); Sr. WR Kweli Lanfair (6-2, 180); Sr. RB Jalen Fuller (5-8, 165); Sr. RB Nick Murgula (5-6, 165); Jr. LB Camden Weeg (6-1, 200); Sr. CB Alejandro Vasquez (5-9, 160); Sr. DE Ramon Camarena (5-10, 200).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Quarterback and offensive line.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Team speed.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** None.

**2019 expectations:** I believe we have a very good ball club and our JV was 8-1.

### Millennium

**Head coach:** Lamar Early.

**Years as school's head coach:** 3rd year, record 13-9.

**2018 record:** 9-3.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB Jalan Early (6-4, 210), 75 yards rushing, 3 TDs; Sr. WR Larry Craft (5-9, 185), 9 receptions, 113 yards, 2 TDs; Sr. SB Kyle St. Pierre (5-8, 165), 24 receptions, 387 yards, 3 TDs; Jr. OT Mika Fuamatu (6-3, 285); Sr. OT Lee Sampson (6-3, 305); Sr. C Tommy Runion (5-10, 215).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. S Early, 28 tackles, 2 sacks; Sr. LB Daylon Storey (6-1, 195), 77 tackles, 2 sacks; Sr. LB Jamarlo Campbell (6-0, 225), 79 tackles, 2 sacks; Sr. CB Treydan Stukes (6-2, 175, 43 tackles, 3 INT; Sr. CB Kaysan Barnett (5-10, 165), 48 tackles, 7 INT; Sr. DE Sam Myers (5-10, 195), 34 tackles; Sr. SS Joseph Rosales (5-9, 165), 68 tackles.

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. LB Brandon Fondong (6-0, 185); Jr. LS Cade Marszalek (5-10, 245); Sr. RB Alex Peru (5-9, 170).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Athletic, speed and lots of different people touching the football.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Love to fly to the ball, compete, experience and know how to win.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Inexperience at some positions and depth.

**2019 expectations:** Get better every day. Win region and make playoffs.

### Verrado

**Head coach:** Shawn Copeland.

**Years as school's head coach:** 1st year.

**2018 record:** 4-6.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. OL Blake Gamez (6-3, 270); Sr. OL Kyle Noble (6-0, 210); Sr. OL Garrett Locke (6-3, 260); Sr. OL Andrew Sharp (5-10, 200); Jr. RB Logan Gingg (5-10, 170); Sr. OL Harjot Mander (6-1, 205).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. LB Kyle Noble (6-0, 210), 51 tackles, 4 sacks; Sr. DB Mateo Alicea (5-10, 160), 46 tackles, 3 INT; Sr. SS Jaden Capwell (6-2, 205), 45 tackles; Sr. DL John Nock (6-2, 230); Sr. DL David Bustamante (6-2, 250), 14 tackles; Sr. LB Conrad Gingg (6-0, 190), 76 tackles, 7 sacks; Jr. LB Austin Bilski (5-10, 165), 12 tackles.

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. K Robert Liss (5-10, 150); Jr. DB Jayden Harrington (5-11, 170).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Offensive line and running back.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Experience and size.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Quarterback, wide receivers and speed.

**2019 expectations:** Develop character and build a work ethic. Compete.

### Willow Canyon

**Head coach:** Justin Stangler.

**Years as school's head coach:** 2nd year, record 4-6.

**2018 record:** 4-6.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB Josh Ormond (6-0, 185), 1,153 passing yards, 8 TDs, 13 INT.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. LB Josiah Meek (6-0, 180), 46 tackles.

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. RB Darvon Hubbard (6-0, 205), 821 yards rushing, 9 TDs, 14 receptions, 68 yards (for Chaparral); So. OL Joseph Hill (6-1, 260); So. OL Josiah Gardner (6-1, 270); So. OL Santino Servant (6-3, 275).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Returning quarterback and running back transfer Darvon Hubbard.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Speed.

**Region notes:** Goldwater made a coaching change in late April and a month later hired veteran coach Frank Lutt to replace Doug Provenzano. Goldwater produced a 6-4 record last year and was 10-10 in two years under Provenzano. Lutt was a long-time coach at Alhambra High and has been overseas in France for the past nine months coaching club teams there. After leaving Alhambra as head coach he stayed on as an assistant and helped for a season at Carl Hayden. **Independence** posted a 3-7 record last year in coach Santiago Maldonado's sixth season leading the Patriots.

## METRO REGION

### Carl Hayden

**Head coach:** Steve Arena.

## Rudolph's Dedication Paying Off



**Tight end Jay Rudolph, Horizon (photo by Darin Sicurello of maxpreps.com)**

**By Stephen Perez**  
**azpreps365.com**

Through patience and hard work, Jay Rudolph is right where he wants to be.

Rudolph catapulted himself into arguably the state's No. 1 tight

end and received over 10 college scholarship offers since his junior season. Not bad considering that the six-foot-four, 220-pounder moved from linebacker to tight end after his sophomore year.

He caught 31 passes with 550 receiving yards and eight touchdowns in 11 games in 2018.

Jay said he appreciates the recognition, but there's still a lot to prove.

"I just try not to take it to my head," he said. "Just keep on working and know I can always improve. It shows if you put in the work, it'll pay off because that's what I did."

His work ethic as well as his versatility is what makes him stand out, he said.

"I can go out in slot, go out in receiver and I can also go put my hand down and block," he said. "It takes time to develop the blocking skill. If you just go as hard as you can, there's nothing more you can do."

What he's accomplished so far in a short time was noticed by such schools as Army, Air Force, Montana State, Northern Arizona University and Colgate.

But in July Rudolph decided to commit to San Diego State University.

"It was just a matter of talking to every school that was interested in me no matter the school, and I just wanted to hear what each of them had to say and what they had to offer," he said.

Jay's older brother, Luke, plays football at NAU and is his source of inspiration and guidance.

"He (Luke) taught me to have patience through the recruiting process and only focus on the aspects that you can control," he said. "It just helps to have someone who has been through that to go and talk to."

As for his last season of high school ball, Jay is focusing on the aspects that can continue to make him and others successful.

"I just want to be a leader for the team and take them as far as we can go," he said. "I want the younger players to look to me as someone who is always doing the right things and always working."

**Stephen Perez is a student at Arizona State and was an azpreps365.com intern this summer.**

**Years as school's head coach:** 1st year.

**2018 record:** 3-7.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. TE Jorge Navarrete (5-10, 180), 7 receptions, 117 yards, 3 TDs; Jr. OL Roberto Lopez (5-11, 160); Jr. RB Kevin Yarbough (6-2, 185).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DE Navarrete, 19 tackles, 2 sacks; Sr. FS Sebastian Flores (5-11, 160), 67 tackles; Jr. DL Lopez, 13 tackles; Jr. DL Rudy Mares (5-10, 240), 29 tackles; Jr. CB Bryce Charles (5-11, 155), 19 tackles; So. CB Andy Delgado (5-10, 140), 21 tackles.

**Also keep an eye on:** Jr. RB Roman Amaro (5-5, 150); Jr. OL Skyler Bergen (6-4, 270); Sr. DE Angel Sotelo (6-2, 165); Sr. DT Higinio Balderama (5-10, 200).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Senior leadership at quarterback. Strong understanding of offensive scheme.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Returning starters at every position group. Young secondary with playing experience.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Young players stepping up in important roles. Small senior class that needs to be all in.

**2019 expectations:** Continuing to build on successes of graduation senior class. Consistency in spring and summer workouts.

**Sierra Linda**

**Head coach:** Nate Gill.

**Years as school's head coach:** 2nd year.

**2018 record:** 1-9.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. OT Hayden Claye (6-5, 260); Sr. OT Estevan Saldana (6-2, 285); Sr. G Adrian Gutierrez (5-11, 240); Jr. C Rex Martinez (5-11, 235); Sr. WR Jude Cheno (5-11, 175); Jr. WR Jan Ruiz (5-11, 175); Sr. QB Miguel Herrera (5-10, 170).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DE Marius Joshline (6-5, 215); Sr. DE Davontae Patton (6-2, 210); Sr. LB Louis Gomez (6-2, 200); Sr. LB Wilbert DeBerry (5-10, 190); Jr. S Ruiz; Sr. SS Adrian Garcia (5-9, 185).

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. WR Ed Smith (6-2, 170); Sr. CB Dion Graham (6-0, 180); Sr. DL Ja'Leon Merriweather (6-0, 240); Sr. OL Calvin Collier (6-0, 240); So. RB Josha Berg-Nabors (5-8, 180).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Offensive line,





**Dominick Mastro, Notre Dame** (photo by Darin Sicurello of maxpreps.com)

size and experience.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Quickness and experience.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Player ownership and leadership.

**2019 expectations:** Compete every day. Have an opportunity to win every Friday. Battle through adversity. Finish. Send multiple seniors to four-year universities.

#### South

**Head coach:** Mark and Marcus Carter.

**Years as school's head coach:** 4th year, record 12-19.

**2018 record:** 6-4.

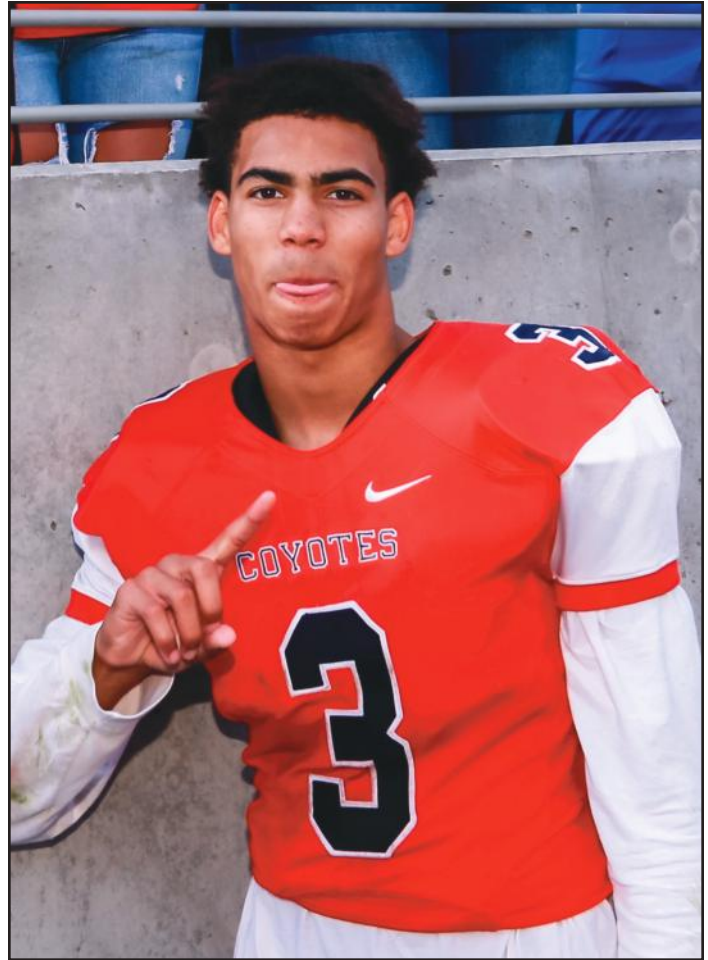
**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Jr. WR Devontae Ingram (6-1, 160), 33 receptions, 745 yards, 8 TDs; Jr. RB K' Rashee Smith (5-10, 160), 787 rushing yards, 10 TDs; So. WR Travis Gammage (5-10, 145), 36 receptions, 437 yards, 5 TDs; So. G Ricardo Lugo (5-9, 245).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Jr. DB Ingram, 37 tackles, 5 INT; Jr. LB Xavier Palmer (5-10, 180), 74 tackles.

**Also keep an eye on:** Jr. DB Amare Clark (5-9, 130); So. DB Cacey Davis (5-7, 135); So. QB Luis Manzanarez (5-10, 160); Fr. WR Jalen Huckaby (5-5); So. OL Bryan Suarez (6-0, 295).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Speed, skill positions, run and pass game.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Run stopping. Linebackers and secondary.



**Senior RB Jaydin Young, Centennial** (photo by Jim Willittes of maxpreps.com)

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Maturity and leadership.

**2019 expectations:** Win region. Finish non-region 4-1. Make playoffs.

**Region notes:** **Betty Fairfax** was 7-3 last year and won the region title, making it three consecutive years at the top. The Stampede has a new coach in tow to attempt a four-peat. Brandon Johnson, an assistant at Gilbert High the past several seasons, takes over for Dylan Winemiller, who stepped down in March.

**Central High** also debuts a new coach — Chandler Hovik — a former standout quarterback less than a decade ago at Cesar Chavez. Hovik will try to prop the Bobcats back over .500 after a 2-8 campaign. A trio of winning seasons took place prior to last year. **Camelback** also finished 2-8 last year. The Spartans haven't had a winning season since 2011 and hope to make strides toward that goal in coach Brandon McNutt's second year.

#### NORTHEAST VALLEY REGION

##### Horizon

**Head coach:** Ty Wisdom.

**Years as school's head coach:** 4th year, record 19-13.

**2018 record:** 6-5.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. TE Jay Rudolph (6-5, 220), 31 receptions, 550 yards, 8 TDs; Sr. WR Canaan Mullins (5-11, 170), 10 receptions for 118 yards, 1 TD; Sr. G Ethan Lavrusky (6-2, 200).

# Try Not to Mess with Big, Bad Bennett

By Stephen Perez  
azpreps365.com

Truth be told, not every athlete thinks they are destined to play at the next level of competition.

Cade Bennett, an offensive tackle at Notre Dame Preparatory Academy in Scottsdale, was in a similar position, not knowing how good he truly was.

That changed when he was called up to varsity midway through his sophomore season.

That is when the exposure came. Division I universities began looking, and soon after the first scholarship offer, from Syracuse University, arrived in his mailbox.

"I love the game and was kind of playing for fun and it just shocked me and turned my world upside down," he said. "No one in my family played football. It just motivates me to get better every day."

Bennett received 15 more offers, including from University of Arizona and Arizona State University.

But he announced in June via Instagram that he is headed to Oklahoma State. It can be tough to manage serious offers coming all at once.

Bennett set guidelines and questions to make his decisions easier and concise.

"I looked at the people, the players, the culture of the program and I looked to see if I would get a good degree from that school and benefit me in my life," he said. "There were some that had all that and some that don't. It was just a matter of checking off the boxes."

However, no matter how much you learn to manage the offers in front of you, it still takes a toll because of the constant need for communication between you and the universities. "They want to talk once a week," he said. "Some nights I would get home from all my workouts and by that time I have an hour of phone calls with coaches."

Despite the communication requests when the offers were flowing in, Cade increased his offseason regimen.

"I've been working extremely hard this offseason, more than I ever have," he said. "You can't get outworked now because you have that image and you have to keep that image. You have to work ten times harder than the guy next to you."

Bennett added, "I was motivated to be a starter early on. It worked out and all the offers came in. I realized the harder you work the more blessings you get."

He's already thinking about reaching another level.

"My main goal is to play in the NFL," he said. "Football is the thing made for me so I am going to do my very best and work as hard as I can to get there."

Individual statistics don't often get attached to offensive linemen.

Modern day sports are analytically driven, recognizing those who blow up the stat sheet.

"The offensive lineman is the position that doesn't get a lot of



Cade Bennett, Notre Dame Prep (photo by Steve Paynter of maxpreps.com)

credit, but they are what makes the game work," Bennett said. "I think it's the best position on the field. There's nothing better."

The 2019-2020 school year will be Bennett's final season.

Simply put, he's out to prove that it's not just about the numbers.

"I hope every time I put my hand in the dirt the defensive lineman across me knows my name, knows I'm the biggest and baddest in Scottsdale," he said. "I want people to see that and almost fear me, especially those defensive guys."

**Stephen Perez is a student at Arizona State and was an azpreps365.com intern this summer.**

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DB Mullins, 27 tackles, 4 INT; Sr. LB Ryan Alsup (6-1, 195), 43 tackles, 2 sacks, 2 INT; Sr. LB Shane Cornwell (5-11, 190), 55 tackles, 4 sacks; Sr. DL Elijah Anau (5-11, 210); Sr. DL Rudolph, 31 tackles.

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. OL-DL Kyle Lewis (6-3, 225); Jr. WR-DB Avery Lambert (5-8, 170); So. RB-LB Brian Bogardus (5-8, 190); Sr. QB Jake Martinelli (5-11, 185); Jr. OL JD Klever (6-3, 310).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Passing game will be improved.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Our front seven.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Need

some young guys to step up in key positions.

**2019 expectations:** Make a deep playoff run.

**McClintock**

**Head coach:** Corbin Smith.

**Years as school's head coach:** 3rd year, record 10-10.

**2018 record:** 4-6.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. WR Bryce Tate (6-1, 175), 15 receptions, 243 yards, 4 TDs; Sr. QB Xavier Benitez (6-0, 165), 1,848 passing yards, 10 TDs, 4 INT; Sr. OL Davieon Center (5-10, 325); Sr. TE-FB Calub Bueno (5-11); Sr. WR Estevan Fraijo (5-6, 145), 31 receptions, 460 yards, 1 TD; Jr.



RB Jaden Mason (5-6), 519 rushing yards, 4 TDs; Jr. WR Ben Roberts (5-10, 165) 7 receptions, 164 yards, 1 TD; Jr. OL Khash Saxton (6-4, 285).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. LB David Cisneros (5-11, 180), 46 tackles, 2 sacks; Sr. DB Tate, 38 tackles; Sr. DB Fraijo 55 tackles; Sr. LB Bueno, 96 tackles; Jr. DL Saxton, 37 tackles; Jr. LB Dominic Radick (5-11, 195); Jr. DL Scott Jones (5-11, 200), 29 tackles; Sr. DE Kurtis Morgan 6-1, 160); So. NG Noah Sanchez (5-8, 250); Jr. K Felipe Sanchez (5-6, 135).

#### **North Canyon**

**Head coach:** Adam Beene.

**Years as school's head coach:** 1st year.

**2018 record:** 2-8.

**Keep an eye on:** Sr. QB Olandis Sanchez (5-11, 190); Sr. DL Trajan Forrester (6-1, 240).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Leadership at quarterback position. Unselfish players.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Solid defensive line and athleticism in the secondary.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Offensive line play and completely new coaching staff.

**2019 expectations:** Be 1-0 each week.

#### **Notre Dame Prep**

**Head coach:** George Prelock.

**Years as school's head coach:** 3rd year, record 26-2.

**2018 record:** 13-1.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. G Cade Bennett (6-4, 305); Sr. C-T Spencer Roy (6-4, 225); Sr. G Jackson Wiles (6-1, 245); Sr. RB Dominic Mastro (5-9, 190), 1,553 yards rushing, 13 TDs.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. FS Trey Cartledge (6-0, 185), 83 tackles, 4 INT; Sr. LB Connor Butt (6-1, 215), 65 tackles, 2 INT; Sr. LB Brock Locnikar (6-1, 215), 154 tackles, 4.5 sacks; Sr. DE Roy, 45 tackles, 2 sacks; Sr. DE Bennett; Jr. SS James Jaquint (6-0, 185), 92 tackles.

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. QB Derek Elsholz (6-1, 210); Sr. LB Matt Malloy (6-4, 215); Jr. RB-LB JD Roberts (6-2, 225); Jr. WR-CB Sean Lehman (5-9, 160); Jr. T Max LaVoy (6-4, 265); Jr. WR Damien Owens (5-11, 165); So. WR-CB Gavin Smith (5-9, 175).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Solid run game with three offensive linemen and running back Dominick Mastro returning.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Good number of starters back, especially at linebacker. Plus a large core who did not start but received quality minutes.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** What will offense look like without graduated Jake Smith.

**2019 expectations:** Goal is to take one game at a time and focus on task at hand.

#### **Paradise Valley**

**Head coach:** Greg Davis.

**Years as school's head coach:** 6th year, record 35-21.

**2018 record:** 6-4.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB Ben Finley (6-2, 190), 2,777 passing yards, 23 TDs, 15 INT; Sr. OL Isaiah Hunkin (6-0, 230); Sr. WR Caleb Diaz (6-1, 165), 58 receptions, 766 yards, 5 TDs; Sr. WR Giovanni Haddad (6-0, 190), 24 receptions, 369 yards, 1 TD; Sr. RB Kyle Krautstrunk (5-10, 185), 52 rushing yards, 4 TDs, 55 receptions, 473 yards, 3 TDs; Sr. OL Erubiel Martinez (5-10, 235); Sr. OL Ben Lisk (5-10, 220); Sr. OL

Max Trapp (6-4, 205).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. LB Andrew Hunkin (5-11, 185), 100 tackles, 2 INT; Sr. LB Sabastian Ray (5-9, 165), 26 tackles; Sr. LB Brandon Flesher (5-10, 185), 32 tackles; Sr. DB Hunter Brown (6-1, 155), 27 tackles; Sr. DL Cesar Meraz (6-0, 270).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Five, four-year starters. Very experienced offensive line. Fourth-year starting quarterback. Varsity game experience and team atmosphere.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Key spots with four-year starters. Core linebacking group leading the path. Major varsity experience.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Defensive backs. Wide receiver spot on offense and depth.

**2019 expectations:** Get back in the playoffs. Compete for region championship. Have unmatched leadership and develop more players to create depth.

**Region notes:** **Cactus Shadows** saw a three-year run of winning seasons curtailed last year moving up from 4A to 5A. The Falcons weren't that far removed from a plus campaign finishing 4-6. **Desert Mountain** endured a tough year in 2018 dropping from 6A to 5A. The Wolves finished 3-7 in their new region. Desert Mountain hired a new coach, albeit no stranger to head coaching - Conrad Hamilton. Hamilton was hired in March and becomes the school's fourth head coach in the last six years. Hamilton has head coaching stops at North Canyon and Chaparral and was defensive coordinator at Mountain Pointe last season.

### **NORTHWEST REGION**

#### **Apollo**

**Head coach:** Aaron Walls.

**Years as school's head coach:** 1st year.

**2018 record:** 3-7.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. OL Liam Bannon (6-2, 280); Sr. OL Jacob Lee (6-3, 350); Sr. OL Besart Morina (5-11, 235); Sr. QB Donte Gordon (5-11, 228), 256 passing yards, 4 TDs, 4 INT; Sr. QB Brendon Penberthy (6-3, 175), 238 passing yards, 1 TD, 6 INT; Jr. WR Tyler Brown (5-9, 165); Jr. TE JoJo Gomez (6-4, 200).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. LB Jeremiah Voliva (5-10, 200); Sr. DE Kenneth Randolph (6-0, 225); Sr. DB Charles Njanje (5-10, 175); Sr. DL Raul Landeros (5-10, 165); Jr. DL Elias Guerrero III (6-1, 255); Jr. Abel Gashwarza (6-2, 200).

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. RB Nico Rivas (6-0, 180).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Returning offensive linemen and two quarterbacks who saw game action.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Return entire defensive line. Solid perimeter kids.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Will kids hold each other accountable and can we prepare at a level allowing us to compete in our region.

**2019 expectations:** **Become a team.** Improve on 3-7 and make playoffs.

#### **Centennial**

**Head coach:** Richard Taylor.

**Years as school's head coach:** 29th year, record 296-108-6.

**2018 record:** 14-1.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. WR Dyelan Miller (6-3, 194), 19 receptions, 318 yards 6 TDs; Sr. WR Eric Haney (5-10, 175), 24 receptions, 426 yards, 4 TDs; Sr. QB Jon

# Paradise Valley's Finley Wants to Chart Own Course

By Stephen Perez  
azpreps365.com

Family legacies run deep in football.

Already a part of one at Paradise Valley High School, Ben Finley will take that all the way to Raleigh, North Carolina in the fall of 2020.

Ben, a 6-foot-2, 195-pound senior quarterback for the Paradise Valley Trojans, committed to North Carolina State University in November 2018, where his brother, Ryan, played his college ball.

In the three seasons his brother spent with the Wolfpack, Ben went to more games than he can count and immersed himself in the culture of the college town.

"I think that was huge, being able to see the atmosphere," he said. "I'm familiar with the town and the people and the football program. It's a great program, and I think they will continue to be successful. And I just want to be a part of that."

Ryan got drafted by the Cincinnati Bengals in the fourth round of the 2019 National Football League draft.

Before that he played at NC State and also went to Paradise Valley, where he was the quarterback.

There are benefits to following the footsteps of his older brother.

"He (Ryan) was a big tool and still is now that he's in the NFL," Finley said. "I definitely feel I have a step above because of him, but it's cool to be able to turn to him when I need to."

They share the same passion for football, and although one might be older than the other, Ben and Ryan learn and developed their game similarly.

"We have in common the finesse," Ben said. "We don't really have strong arms, but if you know where you're throwing and make the right decisions you don't really need a strong arm."

Pat, Ben's father, said it's not his role to analyze the mechanics of his sons.

He just lets them go out and play the game.

However, after being through the process with Ryan, he was a little more knowledgeable when Ben continued his interest in the sport.

"He had expressed an interest in playing quarterback," Pat said. "We had him working with (former Arizona State quarterback) Rudy Carpenter. He's been a fantastic coach for Ben for a number of years and helping him understand how to play the position."

Pat added that Ben and Ryan's relationship is a normal sibling relationship, learning from each other and are supportive of each other's paths.

"(Ryan) has been a supportive brother and is there for Ben when he has questions or needs advice," he said. "He knows that Ben is charting his own path. They talk football obviously, but it's a situation where Ryan leads more by example and Ben is observant of that."

During his first three seasons at Paradise Valley, Ben collected 6,153 yards passing, 53 touchdowns and a quarterback rating of 76.8% in 29 games.

He will look to improve upon those stats in his final season but has also switched his primary focus to the mental aspects of the game.

"Biggest now is being a leader for my team," he said. "We have



**Brothers Ben and Ryan Finley (photo courtesy of the Finley family)**

60 kids out and probably 35 of them are brand new to the program. I just want to show them what Trojan football is about."

This season at Paradise Valley has Ben confident in himself and his teammates.

Their biggest goal is improving upon their 6-4 record from last year.

"I trust my guys, and they trust me and that's key to winning football games," he said. "We all know each other and we are just going to compete like we did last year and keep improving."

"Progress is all that matters."

Following an NFL-drafted sibling can be intimidating at times, but Ben wants to write his own story.

"It's funny to me, but I see it as a brotherly competition, always wanting to be better than him," Ben said. "My brother had a great experience, and so I just wanted a bit of that. But it's going to be different for me."

**Stephen Perez is a student at Arizona State and was an azpreps365.com intern this summer.**

Morris (5-10, 180), 2,097 passing yards, 19 TDs, 4 INT; Sr. RB Jaydin Young (5-11, 180), 552 rushing yards, 13 TDs, 11 receptions, 265 yards, 2 TDs; Sr. OL George Roeder III (6-1, 285); Jr. OL Caiden Miles (6-5, 284); Jr. OL Oscar Obundis (6-6, 320).

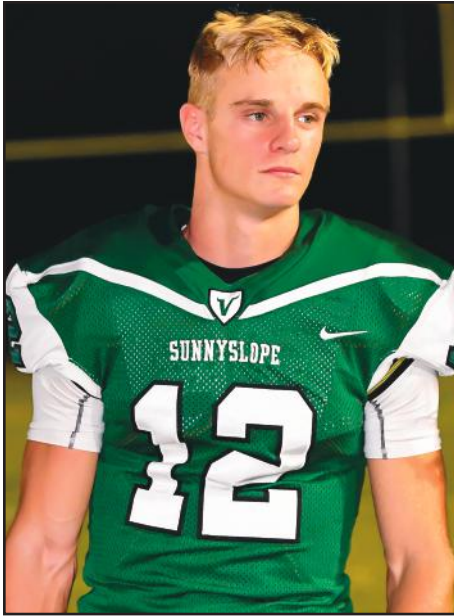
**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. S Young, 94 tackles, 3 INT; Sr. CB Haney, 16 tackles, 4 INT; Sr. DL Xavier Garcia (5-11, 241), 45 tackles, 6.5 sacks; Sr. DE Derek Jodarski (6-0, 227), 26 tackles, 2.5 sacks.

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. WR Andre Dimbiti (6-2, 170); Sr. OL-DL Andy Belomontez (6-0, 260); Sr. RB Marc Jacob (5-8, 180); Sr. K Juaquin Rodriguez (5-6, 240); Sr. DE Joe Salazar (6-2, 198).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Experience, size and strength.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Speed and football IQ.





**QB Niko Haen, Sunnyslope** (photo by Mark Jones of maxpreps.com)



**WR David Haen, Sunnyslope** (photo by Mark Jones of maxpreps.com)



**Justin Wilda, Sunrise Mountain** (photo by Mark Jones of maxpreps.com)

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Re-building the defense.

**2019 expectations:** Waiting on senior retreat.

#### **Ironwood**

**Head coach:** Chris Rizzo.

**Years as school's head coach:** 1st year.

**2018 record:** 6-4.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. WR Nate Guzman (6-0, 175), 21 receptions, 403 yards, 2 TDs; Jr. QB William Haskell (6-3, 205), 630 passing yards, 2 TDs, 4 INT, 447 rushing yards, 5 TDs; Jr. WR Elijah Sanders (5-9, 160), 252 rushing yards, 25 receptions, 427 yards, 3 TDs; Jr. OL Juwan Reid (5-8); Jr. HB-DB Sebastian Fiery-Hardimon (5-8, 155).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DL Cameron Little (5-11, 250), 41 tackles, 6 sacks; Jr. DB Fiery-Hardimon, 16 tackles; Jr. DB Charlie Wingfield (6-0, 160); Jr. DB Manuel Tinoco (5-9, 150), 14 tackles.

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Experience at quarterback. Explosiveness at wide receiver. Football IQ.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Playmaking ability in the secondary and football IQ.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Filling holes on offensive line. Finding a DL to anchor new defense. Replacing incredible talent and leader at linebacker, Stone Aguirre. How players respond to new playbook on both sides of the ball.

**2019 expectations:** All athletes earn and maintain respectable grades. Put in place staff representing standard of excellence set by school staff. Create environment that challenges athletes to perform their best academically and on the field. Make playoffs and host a playoff game.

#### **Raymond Kellis**

**Head coach:** Stephen Hogg.

**Years as school's head coach:** 2nd year.

**2018 record:** 0-10.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. WR Kyle Stills (6-0, 180), 17 receptions, 237 yards, 2 TDs; Sr. OL Jorge Castaneda (5-7, 200); Sr. OL Michael Erwin (5-11, 230).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. LB Devon Carter (5-11, 220), 43 tackles, 2 INT; Sr. DB Andy DeLeon (5-8, 130); Sr. LB Johnny Vejar (5-7, 180), 27 tackles; Sr. DE Reo Guest (6-1, 200), 26 tackles; Jr. DB Andrew Palacio (6-1, 165), 39 tackles.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Returning experience at each position group.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Re-vamped offense. Lack of experience offensively. Low participation last year, looking for improved numbers.

**2019 expectations:** Compete in every game and continue to build and improve.

#### **Sunnyslope**

**Head coach:** Damon Pieri.

**Years as school's head coach:** 9th year, record 57-31.

**2018 record:** 5-6.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB Niko Haen (6-0, 188), 2,832 passing yards, 20 TDs, 8 INT. 625 rushing yards, 5 TDs; Sr. WR David Haen (6-0, 191), 54 receptions, 973 yards, 12 TDs; Sr. OL Sam Aguire (5-11, 210); Jr. OL Dylan Shillington.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DB D. Haen, 59 tackles, 4 INT; Sr. LB Teddy Kieborz (5-9, 175), 58 tackles, 2 sacks; Sr. LB Jack Pieri (6-0, 177), 39 tackles; Sr. DL Kaden Taylor (5-9, 210), 38 tackles, 2.5 sacks.

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Returning quarterback Niko Haen and returning wide receiver David Haen.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** None.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Physicality on the offensive and defensive lines.

**2019 expectations:** Improve throughout the year. Make the playoffs.

#### **Sunrise Mountain**

**Head coach:** Steve Decker

**Years as school's head coach:** 4th year, record 29-7.

**2018 record:** 8-4.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. WR Kyle Copley

(5-11, 170), 37 receptions, 590 yards, 6 TDs; Sr. WR Nate Duran (5-11, 170), 20 receptions, 294 yards, 4 TDs; Sr. G Matt Johnson (6-1, 270); Sr. WR Jackson Underhill (5-9, 180), 9 receptions, 140 yards, 1 TD; Jr. RB Bryce Cord (5-10, 170), 355 rushing yards, 5 TDs, 17 receptions, 228 yards, 5 TDs; Jr. C Robbie Maple (6-1, 255); Jr. WR Zeke Marshall (5-9, 165), 14 receptions, 276 yards, 6 TDs; Jr. OT Mason Tamayo (5-10, 230).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DL Kaleb Parham (6-2, 265), 26 tackles, 2 sacks; Sr. LB Justin Wilda (5-11, 180), 86 tackles, 5 sacks; Jr. CB EJ Anderson (6-1, 180), 54 tackles, 2 INT; Jr. LB Owen Thomas (6-1, 190), 43 tackles, 4 sacks.

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. QB Alex Gianoli (6-2, 180); Sr. DB Jarrod Pellerin (5-11, 190); Jr. LB-RB Tommy Arnold (5-11, 205); Jr. LB Michah Scott (6-2, 190); Jr. OL-DL Cameron Hughes (6-2, 280); So. K-P Easton Black (6-2, 170).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Experience on offensive line and wide receiver.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Speed, physicality and depth.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Replacing quarterback Keegan Freid and finding new leadership.

**2019 expectations:** Compete week in and week out. See continued improvement and make the playoffs.

## SAN TAN REGION

### Campo Verde

**Head coach:** Max Ragsdale.

**Years as school's head coach:** 10th year, record 51-36.

**2018 record:** 6-5.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Jr. OL Jake Leighty (5-11, 240); Sr. OL Diego Valles (5-10, 235); Sr. WR Danny McFarland (5-9, 165), 19 receptions, 260 yards, 1 TD; Sr. WR Ryan Hutchens (6-2, 180), Sr. RB Cameron Pinion (5-8, 160), 286 rushing yards, 1 TD.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DB Chad Roderrick (5-8, 165), 53 tackles; Jr. DB Joseph Barnes (5-7, 155), 24 tackles, 2 INT; Sr. LB Jayden Fletcher (5-10, 180), 83 tackles; Sr. DB Levi McInnes (6-1, 160), 48 tackles.

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. RB Caden Calloway (5-9, 165); Jr. OL Hayden Preston (6-1, 225); Jr. DE Freddie Goodson (6-2, 180); Sr. TE-H Ameer Dalbik (6-4, 225).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Skill players.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Linebacker play.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Who will replace last year's senior-heavy team.

**2019 expectations:** Improve off last year's playoff team.

### Casteel

**Head coach:** Bobby Newcombe.

**Years as school's head coach:** 2nd year, record 9-3.

**2018 record:** 9-3.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Jr. OT Brock Dieu (6-2, 280); Sr. WR Collin Gapen (6-1, 170), 21 receptions, 445 yards, 6 TDs; Sr. WR Grady Burns, 15 receptions, 158 yards, 1 TD; Jr. RB-WR Jayce Knutsen (5-8, 170), 576 rushing yards, 9 TDs, 14 receptions, 103 yards; Sr. OL Justin Thomas (6-2, 270).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. LB Dalton Card (6-0, 220), 66 tackles, 11 sacks; Sr. NG Malachi Siquieros (6-0, 245), 45 tackles, 3 sacks; Sr. LB Jack Littleton (6-1, 210), 62 tackles 2.5 sacks; Sr. DE Mason Ross (6-1, 180), 15 tackles.

**Also keep an eye on:** Jr. WR-DB Isaiah Newcombe (6-0, 155); Jr. QB Dane Christensen (6-2, 180); Sr. QB-ATH Ben Blancas (6-



**Senior LB Dalton Card, Casteel** (photo by Darin Sicurello of maxpreps.com)

0, 170); Jr. TE-HB Dom Digian (6-0, 220); Jr. WR-FS Trent Pennington (6-3, 167).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Team centered, disciplines, high tempo, speed and execution.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Disciplined, coachable, aggressive, hard working and accountable.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Experience, size and athleticism.

**2019 expectations:** Maximize potential of every players, play as a unit and for each other.

### Gilbert

**Head coach:** Derek Zellner.

**Years as school's head coach:** 5th year, record 14-27.

**2018 record:** 4-7.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB Will Plummer (6-2, 205), 3,229 passing yards, 25 TDs, 15 INT; Jr. RB Jayloni Pizzaro (5-9, 135); SR. RB Briggs Dupree (5-8, 185), 164 rushing yards, 1 TD, 45 receptions, 465 yards, 4 TDs; Sr. C Kolbe Stuckwisch (6-4, 275); Sr. G Hayden McCall (5-10, 235); Jr. TE Wyatt Zellner (5-11, 190); Jr. TE Frank Lindfors (6-1, 196); Sr. WR Tyler Hironaka (5-9, 165), 13 receptions, 197 yards, 2 TDs; Sr. WR Blake Barnhart (6-2, 170); Sr. WR Colin Ortiz (6-3, 180); Sr. OT Jordan Mendez (6-2, 245).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DB Hironka, 45 tackles, 2 INT; Sr. T Mendez, 61 tackles; Jr. LB Daniel Fulton (5-10, 180), 55 tackles, 2 sacks; Jr. DB Anthony Yanez (5-8, 160),



## Plummer No Longer Newcomer Among Quarterbacks Gilbert Senior in Front of Line in Rugged San Tan Region

By Les Willsey  
azpreps365.com

Will Plummer always seems to be following the leader or leaders. He gets his chance to be the leader in 2019.

His brother — Jack two years his elder — fashioned a fine career as Gilbert High's quarterback (2015-2017). Last year, Will got his chance as a junior to show what he could do behind center with Jack moving on to college at Purdue.

Will was one of three quarterbacks in the highly-competitive 5A San Tan Region who didn't have a year of varsity action in the rearview mirror. Three others were veteran quarterbacks of teams that routinely advanced deep in the playoffs - Williams Field's Zach Shepherd, Casteel's Gunner Cruz and Higley's Spencer Brasch. Shepherd and Cruz won state titles with Williams Field in 2016 and Casteel in 2017, respectively.

So how did Will stack up in his debut? Good enough to help Gilbert reach the playoffs along with everyone else in the San Tan (Williams Field, Higley, Casteel, Campo Verde and Maricopa) in 2018.

Will Plummer's numbers were impressive. He completed 251 of 443 passes for 3,229 yards and 25 TDs. There were 15 picks in there, too, a number he'd like to reduce.

Plummer added 515 yards rushing, showing an ability to scramble and improvise. Given the Tigers' running game struggled, there wasn't much mystery as to what type of play was awaiting the defense.

Gilbert coach Derek Zellner couldn't have been more pleased with Will's effort, who quickly caught the attention of recruiters and committed six months ago to stay in state and attend the University of Arizona.

"He did a great job for us," Zellner said. "I was surprised with what we got from him given he moved back to quarterback and won the job spring of his junior year. He played quarterback his freshman year. With Jack ahead of him he shifted to play tight end and linebacker as a sophomore. He's as tough as nails kid. A lot like a Tim Tebow."

"Early on last year we had to reel him because he was taking too many chances with his body. We had to remind him we wanted him to quarterback for the season, not just a game or two."

Zellner is thankful three of his four and soon to be four of five seasons coaching Gilbert he's had the likes of Jack and Will Plummer leading the offense.

"They live across the street from me, which is great," Zellner said. "And they chose to go to their home school."

Will Plummer didn't mind making the position switch as a sophomore. It got him a chance to play on the varsity, although injury



Quarterback Will Plummer, Gilbert (photo by Jim Humphreys of maxpreps.com)

shortened his participation to six games that year. All along he figured on being a varsity quarterback at some point.

"I've been focused on that the last seven years," Will Plummer said. "I didn't mind switching positions. I got to play with my brother, learn the routes tight ends run. It's helped me as a quarterback."

Having Jack go through the recruiting process before him, Will Plummer kept in mind his brother's main advice.

"Make sure you stay your own person," Will said Jack told him. "Don't let other people influence your decision. Go where you think you fit. Don't worry if other people harp at you about your decision. For me I absolutely had an idea where I wanted to go. Arizona was it. Jack had a tougher time deciding at the end. I knew if I was sure about where I wanted to go I was going to make the choice right there."

20 tackles; Sr. DT Davi Solomon (5-10, 240), 25 tackles, 5 sacks; Sr. DL Garrett Budge (6-4, 245); Sr. DB Nate Smith (5-10, 165), 13 tackles; So LB Mike Elliott (6-1); So. DL Carson Bryce.

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Returning quarterback Will Plummer. Depth at offensive line. Returning experience at wide receiver. Running backs who can run and catch.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Returning experienced line. Young linebackers who played valuable minutes. Defensive backfield returns.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Who are the young players who will rise up. Can we replace production at tight end. Can we be more balanced on offense. Replacing all-state punter. More consistency in kicking game.

**2019 expectations:** Make the playoffs. Win a playoff game. Con-

tinue to improve in all phases, develop younger players and be more consistent.

### Maricopa

**Head coach:** Brandon Harris.

**Years as school's head coach:** 2nd year, record 5-6.

**2018 record:** 5-6.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. OT Michael Flood (6-4, 295); Jr. RB Mister Chavis (5-10, 175), 561 rushing yards, 6 TDs, 17 receptions, 287 yards, 3 TDs; SR. WR Ilijah Johnson (5-11, 175); Sr. G Zach Owen (6-1, 285); Jr. C Quinton Green (6-0, 245); Sr. WR Tylek Mooney (5-11, 180); Sr. G Josh Gillies (5-11, 220); Sr. TE Max Miu (6-3, 245); So. WR Merhauti

## Line Leader: Williams Field's Noah Nelson Black Hawks Present Formidable Offensive Front

By Les Willsey  
azpreps365.com

Noah Nelson has kept an open mind about what he wanted to do and be as he grew up. As an eighth-grader, football entered his consciousness with a little help and gradually took hold.

"I started playing in eighth grade," Nelson said. "Once I got into it, my mom kept pushing me. I've really learned to like it."

Here he is with his senior season at Williams Field a few weeks away and the sport it is set to be a bigger and more integral part of his future beyond high school.

Nelson, who is 6-foot-7, 290 pounds, wrapped up the recruiting process in May after his steady development 2016-2018. Nelson settled on the University of Oklahoma after a couple of visits. Other high-profile offers included Michigan, UCLA and Washington with nearly 20 offers in all.

"Once I was into my freshman year I was committed," Nelson said. "I'm super competitive. When I go after something I want to be the best at it. The coaches have helped me keep at it. They're a big part of what's happening."

Williams Field coach Steve Campbell knows he has a talent in Nelson, but has been equally impressed with how serious he took his recruiting visits.

"It wasn't just about the nice campus or the great facilities," Campbell said. "Oklahoma has a good record of getting linemen to the next level. That was something he seemed interested in. Sometimes kids overlook that. He knows what he wants."

Nelson will be the leader of a veteran offensive line for the Black Hawks. Three senior teammates return as starters this season, a huge advantage not often the case for a program.

Two of them — right guard Cooper Darling (Oregon St.) and right tackle Andrew Garcia (NAU) — are D-I commits.

Center Adam Reid is the other returning starter with senior Luke Moustis (left guard) and versatile Josh Gale returning at tight end.

"It's great to have the experience and familiarity we have with one another," Nelson said. "It can be to our advantage."

Had football not become a focal point, Nelson said he contemplated another career path.

Perhaps one that could come in play after after football.

"I've thought about being an actor," Nelson said. "You see a guy like Dwayne Johnson, the Rock. He used sports to get into other things. Who knows."



OL Noah Nelson, Williams Field (photo by Darin Sicurello of maxpreps.com)

Xepera (6-3, 225); Sr. QB Daxton Redfern (6-5, 215), 497 passing yards, 3 TDs, 5 INT.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. LB Josiah Holguin (5-8, 175), 60 tackles; Sr. DB I. Johnson, 19 tackles, 3 INT; Sr. FS Mooney, 17 tackles; Sr. CB-S Marcus Brown (5-10, 185), 19 tackles; Sr. DE Hunter Taylor (6-5, 230); Sr. FS Michael Soliz (6-1, 185), 19 tackles.

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. RB-LB Maximus Lock (5-11, 210); So. SB Jayvien Beaten-Harrison (5-8, 160).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Experience, speed and size.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Speed and high IQ-experience in secondary.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Defensive front, interior linebacking corps and depth.

**2019 expectations:** Compete, have cohesion and unity and win in the classroom.

### Williams Field

**Head coach:** Steve Campbell.

**Years as school's head coach:** 12th year, record 116-23.

**2018 record:** 11-2.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. RB Kendrix Lurry (5-11, 185), 973 rushing yards, 9 TDs; Sr. TE Joshua Gale (6-4, 200), 14 receptions, 278 yards, 4 TDs; Sr. WR Myles Taylor (6-0, 168), 25 receptions, 502 yards, 5 TDs; Sr. T Andrew Garcia (6-8, 280); Sr. G Cooper Darling (6-3, 290); Sr. T Noah Nelson (6-7, 290); Sr. G Luke Moustis (6-3, 280).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Jr. SS Logan Hall (5-11, 200), 26 tackles; Sr. LB Sam Hancock (6-0, 210), 100 tackles, 3 sacks; Sr. DE Ian Shewell (6-4, 240), 39 tackles, 4.5 sacks.

**Also keep an eye on:** Jr. DT Aaron Wolfcale-Holsten (6-2, 275); Sr. WR Cal Bergquist (6-1, 175).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Line experience. Four returning starters, three with D-I offers. Running back and receivers.

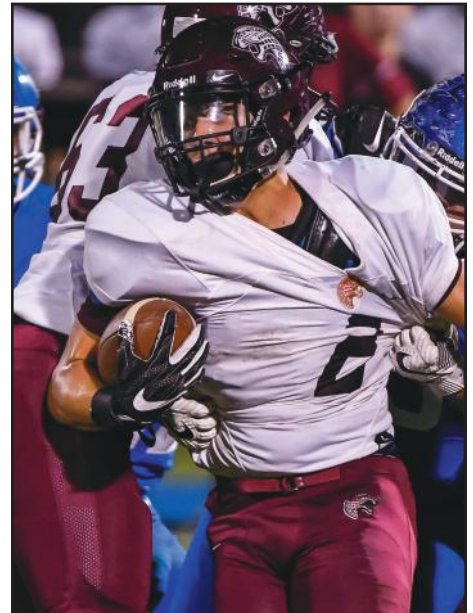




**Senior DL Jason Harris, Higley** (photo by Steve Paynter of maxpreps.com)



**Hayden Parson, Marana Mt. View** (photo by Darin Sicurello of maxpreps.com)



**Jacob Ramirez, Desert View** (photo by Joe Jackson of maxpreps.com)

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Front seven.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Replacing three-year starter at quarterback and replacing entire secondary.

**2019 expectations:** Know more after camp (July).

**Region notes:** Higley advanced to the semifinals of its conference for the third year in a row (4A in 2016 and 2017) and last year in its initial year in 5A. The Knights were 9-4 in 2018 and are 56-36 in eight seasons with coach Eddy Zubey at the helm.

## SONORAN REGION

### Empire

**Head coach:** George Kelly.

**Years as school's head coach:** 1st year.

**2018 record:** 5-5.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. RB Alex Kalastro (6-1, 220); Sr. WR Cody Pacheco (6-5, 205), 27 receptions, 415 yards, 7 TDs; Sr. RB Memo Ramirez (5-9, 175), 156 rushing yards, 1 TD; Sr. OL-DL Juan Holguin (5-11, 270); Jr. C Jacob Ehlert (6-0, 250).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. CB Taylor Justice (5-11, 170), 18 tackles; Sr. LB Kalastro; Sr. S Pacheco, 27 tackles; Sr. SS Ramirez, 61 tackles, 2 sacks, 4 INT.

**Also keep an eye on:** ATH Deyawn "Yani" Brown (5-11, 170).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Brown, Ramirez, Justice and Pacheco are dynamic players and can be difference makers.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Impressed by our ability to get to the ball. Kalastro and Ramirez have ability to be difference makers.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Need to fine tune quarterback position. Trevor Taylor has a cannon for an arm and Yani Brown has shown promise with arm strength and is dynamic on the ground.

**2019 expectations:** Make sure every player gets an opportunity to learn the game.

### Flowing Wells

**Head coach:** Scott Cortese.

**Years as school's head coach:** 1st year.

**2018 record:** 8-3.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. OL Derek Gonzales (6-4, 265); Sr. WR Lloyd Love (6-2, 205), 8 receptions, 124 yards, 4 TDs; Sr. RB Brian Cruz (5-8, 175); Sr. WR Ryan Swecker (5-8, 155), 116 rushing yards, 1 TD.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DL Gonzales, 37 tackles; Sr. LB Cruz 31 tackles; Sr. DB Swecker, 43 tackles.

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. QB Austin Spivey (5-8, 170); Sr. FS Peyton Marcus (5-8, 165); Jr. LB Estevan Aragon (5-9, 175); Jr. RB Giovanni Walls (5-6, 150).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Running game. Well coached.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Well coached. Multiple.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Lack of varsity experience.

**2019 expectations:** Be a good teammate. Compete every down. Out work our opponents.

## Rincon/University

**Head coach:** Mike Strack.

**Years as school's head coach:** 2nd year, record 1-9.

**2018 record:** 1-9.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB Preston Silvas (6-1, 190), 444 rushing yards, 12 TDs, 1,322 passing yards, 7 TDs, 5 INT; Sr. OL Cooper Harris (6-4, 280); Sr. WR Isaac Pimentia (5-10, 170), 20 receptions, 372 yards, 3 TDs; Sr. RB Austin Barrow (5-10, 185), 195 rushing yards, 1 TD; Sr. OL Alberto Borboa (6-1, 190); Sr. TE Javier Benitez (6-3, 200), 11 receptions, 86 yards; So. OL Chris Holdal (6-1, 190).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Jr. LB Jaxon Sabourin (5-11, 185), 57 tackles; Sr. DE Borboa, 42 tackles, 4 sacks; Sr. DB Pimentia, 44 tackles; Sr. LB Barrow, 39 tackles, 3 sacks; Sr. LB Benitez, 25 tackles; Jr. DB Steven Geiger (5-11, 160), 10 tackles; Jr. LB Damon Taylor (5-11, 175), 20 tackles.

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. DB Adam Plante (6-0, 165); So. OL-DL Anthony Stanley (5-11, 185); Sr. RB-LB JJ Haygood (5-8, 175).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Returning quarter-

back, better knowledge of offense. Improved wide receiver play. Right tackle Cooper Harris could be D1 prospect.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Better understanding of scheme. More aggressive this year with better knowledge. Linebacking play. Four returning starters there.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Depth. Not a lot of numbers. Line play on both sides of the ball. If it improves we should be much better.

**2019 expectations:** Improve from 1-9 to .500. Increase numbers at lower level programs.

**Region notes:** Marana Mountain View made a coaching change shortly after the 2018 season ended nabbing one of the area's top coaches in the past decade in Matt Johnson. Johnson led Ironwood Ridge for 10 seasons with a glowing 85-35 record, one state title and no losing seasons. Mountain View finished 5-5 in 2018 and missed the playoffs after two consecutive appearances. The Mountain Lions won the region title, but region champs were not guaranteed an automatic berth last season.

**Desert View** finished fourth in the region last year with a pair of region wins in its 3-7 season. Cholla managed a 1-9 record in coach Shawn Wasson's first year.

## SOUTHERN REGION

### Cienega

**Head coach:** Pat Nugent.

**Years as school's head coach:** 5th year, record 37-11.

**2018 record:** 9-3.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Jr. C Andrew Husfelt (6-4, 265); Sr. G Tyrae McKinney (5-10, 250).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DE Damaggio Strevay (6-3, 255), 44 tackles, 2 sacks; Jr. NG Hunter Schalgel (6-3, 275), 29 tackles.

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. Chase Iverson (6-3, 250); Sr. David Wilkinson (5-10, 225); Jr. LB Dillon Silva (5-11, 215); Jr. LB-RB Gaby Levy (5-10, 185); Jr. LB-TE Isaiah Webb (5-10, 220).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Offensive line.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Defensive line.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** All skill positions are new players. Quarterback has no experience.

**2019 expectations:** Goals are always the same. Win region title and compete for state title.

### Ironwood Ridge

**Head coach:** James Hardy.

**Years as school's head coach:** 1st year.

**2018 record:** 6-5.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB Octavio Audry-Cobos (6-3, 215), 760 passing yards, 9 TDs, 3 INT, 776 rushing yards, 7 TDs; Jr. G Scott French (5-11, 265); Sr. HB-FB Luca Moioli (6-0, 200); Sr. C Josh Olenick (6-0, 210); Sr. TE Ryan Drescher (6-6, 215); Sr. T Max Vernon (6-3, 230).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DB Cameron Drescher (5-11, 175), 61 tackles; Sr. CB Eli Pallanes (5-10, 160), 26 tackles, 4 INT; Sr. LB Moioli; Sr. DB Cole Madril (5-9, 180), 11 tackles; Sr. DE Vernon, 13 tackles.

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. RB Brandon Barrios (5-10, 190); Jr. RB Tyus Williams (5-8, 165).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Returning quarterback with high completion percentage and ability to run. Four returning starters on offensive line.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Linebackers and depth at that position. Three returning starters in secondary.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Lost 7 of 8 defensive linemen to graduation. New offensive coordinator. Replacing graduated running back Nate Grijava and wide receiver Drew Cook.

**2019 expectations:** Embrace new coaching staff and grow as a team. Defend region championship. Improve on 10 straight playoff appearances.

### Marana

**Head coach:** Louie Ramirez.

**Years as school's head coach:** 2nd year, record 7-4.

**2018 record:** 7-4.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Jr. QB Kai Spencer (6-3, 185); Jr. WR Zamir Pierce (6-3, 185); Sr. OL Tanner Wengert (6-3, 270); Sr. TE Chance Lamey (6-2, 255); Sr. TE Cristian Wood (6-0, 220).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Jr. DB Spencer, 27 tackles; Jr. DB Pierce; Sr. DL Wengert, 22 tackles; Sr. DL Lamey; Sr. LB Wood.

**Also keep an eye on:** Jr. RB Ken Blackman (6-0, 180); Jr. WR-DB Charles Ebunoha (6-1, 175); Jr. OL-DL Ben Evans (6-3, 240); Jr. WR-DB Duncan Fouts (6-2, 180).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Coachable.

Tough. Smart. Playmakers. Camraderery.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Tough.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Consistency.

**2019 expectations:** Establish run game. Sustain culture and team buy-in.

### Nogales

**Head coach:** Jake Teyechea.

**Years as school's head coach:** 2nd year, record 2-8.

**2018 record:** 2-8.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. RB Paul Gracia (5-8, 150), 301 rushing yards, 9 receptions, 95 yards, 1 TD; Sr. OL Samuel Lugo (5-11, 235); Sr. OL Hernan Ortiz (6-0, 295); Sr. OL Gerson Galeano (6-1, 245); Sr. OL Daniel Lopez (6-0, 225); Jr. RB-WR Richard Hanlan (5-10, 175), 7 receptions, 71 yards, 1 TD; Sr. WR Genaro Parra (5-8, 155); Jr. QB Peter Rodriguez (6-2, 215); Jr. TE Miguel Hernandez (6-2, 220); Sr. QB Oscar Felix (5-11, 160), 940 passing yards, 10 TDs, 12 INT; Sr. FB Abraham Aldaz (5-11, 185).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DL H. Ortiz, 27 tackles; Sr. CB Parra 16 tackles; Sr. DL Galeano, 11 tackles; Sr. CB Heriberto Barnett (5-8, 155).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Offensive line, speed and skill depth.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Strength, depth, line and speed.

**2019 expectations:** Be aggressive, consistent on all levels and fast.

**Region notes:** Buena stayed competitive for the second year in a row posting a 5-5 record in 2018. That followed a 6-4 campaign and put a pair of 0-10 seasons clearly in the rearview mirror.

**Sunnyside** brings a familiar face to its head coaching position with Blue Devils' alum Glenn Posey back for a third run with program. Posey's last stay was 2011-2015 and resulted in at least a .500 season each year and an overall record of 30-24.



**By Andy Morales**  
**azpreps365.com**

Nestled deep in an old pecan grove sits one of Arizona's newest up-and-coming programs.

The growth of Sahuarita is similar to Anthem in north Phoenix and the explosion of families in the Vail area in Tucson's far east side. The population growth forced Sahuarita to build a second high school, Walden Grove, in 2011.

The varsity football team, not surprisingly, started out 0-2 in 2012 but managed to go up 5-3 before ending the year 5-5. But in 2014, the program made its first playoff appearance after a 7-2 start.

The following two seasons weren't as fruitful, though. It seemed that trend would continue but an upset over Catalina Foothills in 2017 led to another playoff appearance.

The momentum continued with an 8-3 finish last year, giving the Red Wolves their first region title. Now, the team is expected to continue to gain traction and break into 4A's top ten.

The defense is centered around senior middle linebacker Rick Avelar III (135 tackles last year), and the offense is pow-



**Walden Grove's senior quarterback Alex Lopez (photo by Andy Morales of azpreps365.com)**

ered by a set of twins. Senior quarterback Alex Lopez threw for 2,655 and 29 touchdowns and ran for 624 yards and six more scores.

His brother, Jordan, a wide receiver, caught 1,230 of those yards and accounted for 12 touchdowns. Alex's 2018 throwing stats put him in the top 12 state-wide and second in the 4A Conference while Jordan's receiving totals placed him seventh state-wide and second in the 4A Conference.

The twins accounted for 72% of the offense last year.

"The team chemistry looks to be great this year just like last year, so we need to move forward," Alex said. "We have a lot of sophomores on the team. So we need to build them up to compete the same way we did, and our defense looks good."

The twins are getting some college exposure and, like all other players, they have dreams of playing for teams such as Oregon, but they wouldn't mind a look from Arizona and Arizona State. Their athleticism allows them up to play multiple positions, and Jordan is one of Southern Arizona's best soccer players.

But football is his choice at the next level.

"I need to be even better than last year – at least two times better," Jordan said. "I have interest from Western New Mexico, and I hope we will get even more exposure to colleges this year. We can pull it off. I know we can."



**Wide receiver Jordan Lopez had 1,230 receiving yards in 2018 (photo by Andy Morales of azpreps365.com).**





*Saguaro celebrates its sixth consecutive title in 2018 (photo by Mark Jones of maxpreps.com).*

**By Andy Morales**  
**azpreps365.com**

**1. SAGUARO:** For Saguaro, 12 championships against 10 different opponents with an average victory margin of 38-17 is the norm, and under current head coach Jason Mohns (86-10 at Saguaro, 94-19 overall), there seems to be no end in sight. Mohns guided the Sabercats to six straight titles and is on a 49-0 streak against teams from Arizona. You have to go back to Sept. 4, 2016 to find the last loss, a 20-12 setback to Pinnacle, and that loss came on the heels of a 41-21 loss to Centennial. That was the last time Sabercats played either team, but that could change this year under the new Open Division playoff system. The top eight teams, according to maxpreps' rankings, from 4A to 6A will be placed in one bracket. The Sabercats finished No. 5 in the maxpreps system, with Chandler taking the top spot and Centennial coming in next last year. Among the star-studded cast the Sabercats are returning: Sr. QB Tyler Beverett (2,093 yards passing and 22 TD in 2018), Sr. RB Israel Benjamin (1,625 yards rushing and 27 TDs), Sr. Will Shaffer (569 yards receiving and 9 TDs) and Jr. NG/DT Alani Ma'afu (80 tackles and three sacks). Mohns will most likely break 100 career wins this year.

**2. SALPOINTE:** The Lancers could be looking at three straight championships if not for the Saguaro Sabercats. A 24-

3 loss to Saguaro in the 4A semifinal round in 2016 was followed by losses in the 4A 2017 and 4A 2018 state championship games. If Saguaro moves into the Open Bracket at the end of the year, then the 4A title will be there for the taking, unless Salpointe makes it to the Open. It helps to have talent and the Lancers have plenty of that in Sr. sensation Bijan Robinson. Robinson rushed for 2,400 yards and 35 TDs even though he missed a game last year. With 4,801 career rushing yards, Robinson is only 1,077 yards away from the Big School Record (5,878/Marcus Thomas/Tolleson/2000-2002) and 2,643 yards away from the state record (7,544/Casey Jahn/Northwest Christian/2008-2011). Robinson was also named the Ed Doherty Player of the Year. He is joined by fellow senior Lathan Ransom. Ransom finished the 2018 campaign with 1,242 all-purpose yards, 82 tackles and six interceptions. Ransom committed to Ohio State.

**3. DESERT EDGE:** The Scorpions moved down from the 5A Conference and finished ranked No. 3 in the state with a semifinal finish. If Saguaro and Salpointe move up to the Open bracket, then it will be the favorite in the 4A Conference title race. The Scorpions have both Salpointe and Saguaro on their schedule this year, so we should know pretty quick where the teams stand since the Lancers visit in the third week. With one of the toughest schedules in the state, the Scorpions also have dates set with region foes Cactus and



Peoria. Head coach Jose Lucero expects his team to be very fast and athletic on offense with a lot of returners. His top receivers are returning along with three starters from his offensive line. Look for Sr. WR. Jihad Marks (6-1, 175). Sr. WR. Keith McKaney (6-1, 175), Jr. WR. Andrew Patterson (5-8, 165) and Jr. RB. Marques Miller (5-11, 175) to set the tone for another great year for Desert Edge. They also possess two of the the state's best at their respective positions, DB Steven Ortiz and QB Adryan Lara.

**4. PEORIA:** The Panthers went into the 4A playoffs with a 9-1 record and a No. 4 ranking but No. 13 Seton Catholic upset the Panthers 54-49 in the first round. Peoria looks to be 4-0 when Desert Edge visits in late Sept. Desert Edge is one of three teams on Peoria's record with a winning record from last year - Estrella Foothills (6-5), Cactus (8-4) and Desert Edge (7-4) – so power points might be hard to come by. Head coach Will Babb believes he is experienced in a lot of key positions with Sr. WR Javon Scott (5-7, 145), Sr. QB Kyle Samford (5-10, 175) and So. RB Cameron Mack (5-9, 185) all returning. Sr. DB Micho Cordero (5-8, 175), Sr. LB Al Barkat (5-10, 185), Sr. DE Gabe O'Campo (6-1, 205) and Sr. DL Sean Enriquez (5-10, 290) will be called to keep the defense steady.

**5. CANYON DEL ORO:** Sahuaro was the surprise team last year and this spot could be filled by Canyon del Oro. The Dorados finished 7-4 last year but it could be remarkably different this year. Their first loss came at Flowing Wells (38-37) and it was a result of not having a kicker on the roster. Sahuaro manhandled the Dorados 42-21 in October but the Cougars have lost some key parts of their magical season. So this game suddenly looks winnable for the Dorados. Finally, the biggest obstacle will be a visit to Salpointe. The Dorados hope to be 7-0 at that point and it will set up a match between Bijan Robinson and Jr. RB Stevie Rocker. Rocker gained 1,163 yards rushing last year, but he was only allowed 39 against Salpointe while Robinson put together 123 yards and two TDs. The QB position for the Dorados is the big question, with four players battling it out for the start, according to head coach Dustin Peace. But all of his linebackers and defensive backs are returning and the team speed should be enough to guarantee a home game in the 4A playoffs.

**6. CACTUS:** The Cobras finished 8-4 last year but lost to Saguaro 69-6 in the quarterfinal round of the 4A playoffs. A trip to Salpointe in week four will let second-year head coach Joseph Ortiz know where his team stands. Ortiz feels his team is prepared for his system in year two with an offensive line returning three starters to help protect RB Anthony Flores (1,200 yards and 19 TDs) and Sr. QB Conner Cordts (1,235 yards passing, 16 TDs.) Ortiz gives defensive coordinator Brian Belles a lot of credit, and he will have SR. LB. Nate (Doodles) Quinones (5-9, 170), SR. S. Nicc Quinones (5-10, 185), JR. CB. Antonio Pratt (5-10, 170) and JR. DE. Riley Davies (6-2, 220) to work with. There are four playoff teams on the schedule, and the Cobras host rival Peoria in the final week of the season. The West Valley Region title should be up for grabs in that game, but the winner will also be in a better position for a playoff run.

**7. SETON CATHOLIC:** The Sentinels finished ranked No. 13 but a 54-49 win over No. 4 Peoria in the first round raised some eyebrows. Sure, the team lost 63-19 to Sahuaro in the

next round but the upset left a few questions. The Sentinels lost to Mesquite in the fifth week to open region play, but the Wildcats failed to make the playoffs and the second loss was a lopsided 69-0 affair to Saguaro. But the power-point killer was a 37-21 setback at Poston Butte the following week. Poston Butte finished 4-6 and ranked No. 24. Pete Wahlheim is in his seventh year with the Sentinels. If he can find a way to stay undefeated leading up to his game with Saguaro, then a better seeding is sure to follow. Sr. RB/DB Kayson Unchurch (5-9) returns with 2018 710 yards rushing, 216 yards receiving and 8 touchdowns.

**8. WALDEN GROVE:** The Red Wolves look to finish the regular season with a home playoff game this year. A 20-19 loss to Flowing Wells in their opening week hurt their seeding down the stretch. Third-year coach Corey Noble has a realistic shot at an undefeated regular season with WR Jordan Lopez and QB Alex Lopez returning. Alex Lopez threw for 2,659 yards with 29 TDs and he rushed for 624 yards and his twin brother had 1,230 yards receiving. The seniors are looking to get more exposure on the recruiting trail and the wins should help them out in that area. On defense, Noble returns Sr. LB, Rick Avelar III (6-2, 220) and his 138 tackles.

**9. GLENDALE:** The Cardinals moved down from the 5A Conference and finished with a 9-2 record in their first year at the 4A level. A 53-52 loss to Apache Junction at home in the ninth week prevented an undefeated regular season and the Cardinals lost 49-48 to Sahuaro in the first Round. Rob York is in his fourth year with the program and he will depend on Sr. RB Kevin Daniels (6-2, 230) to lead the team once gain. Daniels rushed for 1,935 yards with 38 TDs and he added 648 yards receiving and 5 more TDs. York added two more defensive coaches to his staff and that defense will be tested when the team travels to play Walden Grove in the fifth week. Sr. DE David Jimenez (5-8, 220), Sr. S Danny Valadez (5-6, 152), Sr. OLB, Dimitri Taylor (5-9, 161) and Sr. CB, Karima Edware (5-8, 153) will be called upon early and often.

**10. ARCADIA:** The Titans finished 8-3 and ranked No. 5 in their last year in Division III but that 2015-2016 season gave way to a bump to the 5A Conference the next year. Arcadia finished 2-8 in 2017 and 0-10 in 2018. The program was moved down to the 4A Conference the following year and the team responded with a 6-4 record under first-year head coach Kerry Taylor. The Tians started the 2018 campaign with a 5-0 record but a 70-14 loss at Saguaro led to a three-game skid, with losses to Mesquite and Seton Catholic holding the team back from an even more remarkable comeback situation. The same schedule presents itself this year, and the program knows one win from that group of losses will be the difference between the playoffs and staying at home. It could also provide enough power points to break into the top 10. Taylor returns Sr. QB Kadin Beler (1,1718 passing yards and 16 TDs, 746 rushing yards in 2018), Sr. RB Paxton Earl (808 rushing yards, 651 receiving yards) and Jr. WR Crew Edwards (594 receiving yards) on offense and Sr. SS SaMaury Alexander (66 tackles), Sr. DE Trey Brown (62 tackles, 5 sacks and Sr. MLB Nixon Nolan (5-11, 174), 60 tackles on defense.



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**Paxton Earl, Arcadia** (photo by Mark Jones of maxpreps.com)



**Yakeen Baylis, Marcos de Niza** (photo by Steve Paynter of maxpreps.com)



**Ty Thompson, Mesquite** (photo by Darin Sicurello of maxpreps.com)

By Andy Morales  
azpreps365.com

## 4A DESERT SKY REGION

### Arcadia

**Head coach:** Kerry Taylor.

**Years as school's head coach:** 1.

**2018 record:** 6-4.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB Kadin Beler (6-1, 195), 1,171 passing yards and 16 TDs, 746 rushing yards; Sr. RB Paxton Earl (5-9, 180), 808 rushing yards, 651 receiving yards; Jr. WR Crew Edwards (6-0, 155), 594 receiving yards.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. SS SaMaury Alexander (6-0, 175), 66 tackles; Sr. DE Trey Brown (6-3, 205), 62 tackles, 5 sacks; Sr. MLB Nixon Nolan (5-11, 174), 60 tackles.

### Marcos de Niza

**Head coach:** Eric Lauer.

**Years as school's head coach:** 1.

**2018 record:** 3-7.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. TB Yakeen Baylis (5-9, 185), 1,541 yards rushing, 13 TDs; Sr. S Martell Thompson (6-3, 175); Sr. OL/DL Richard Gadberry (6-4, 280); Sr. LB/RB Matthew Canada (5-11, 200); Jr. WR Nicolas Updyke (5-8, 165); Jr. OL Enrique Ruiz (6-2, 260).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. OL/DL Richard Gadberry (6-4, 280); Jr. LB/FB Jacob Irick (5-10, 190); Sr. LB Josh Tata (5-10, 190); Jr. DB Collin Gordon (5-7, 164); Sr. DE Micah Willingham (6-1, 185); Sr. OL Alez Norrish (6-7, 285).

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. WR Jasim Burt (5-7, 160); Sr. WR/RB Collin Guley (5-8, 160); OL/DL Kobe Hernandez (5-10, 230); Jr. OL Zachery Paiz (5-11, 260); Jr. G. Kobe McConnell (6-0, 260).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Having our first spring together. Returning RB Baylis for his 3rd year as a starter. We hope to do well in the run game.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Having our first spring together and the team grasping the defense much quicker than last year.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** QB is an area we know always helps to move your team along the way so this will be a first year starter that we will coach up hard.

**2019 expectations:** To represent the school well daily by focusing on the process and being young men of character.

### Mesquite

**Head coach:** Scott Hare.

**Years as school's head coach:** 0.

**2018 record:** 5-5.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Jr. QB Ty Thompson (6-4, 210), 2,361 yards passing, 21 TDs.; Sr. WR/FS Jacob Walker (6-2, 195), 788 yards receiving, 9 TDs.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DE Hunter Hanna (6-1, 185), 55 tackles.

### Poston Butte

**Head coach:** Dain Thompson.

**Years as school's head coach:** 2.

**2018 record:** 4-6.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. RB, Khalil Cooper (5-11, 180), 988 yards rushing; Sr. C. Isaiah Navarro, (5-11, 225); Sr. OG, Julio Castaneda (5-10, 294); Sr. WR, Chance Thomasson, (5-9, 150).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. SS Shane Landis Ku (5-7, 130); Jr. CB, Zion Burns (6-0, 176); Jr. CB, Gavin Lloyd (5-10, 163); Sr. LB, Khalil Cooper (5-11, 180); Sr. LB, Isaiah Navarro (5-11, 225); Jr. FS, Mattias Perez (5-9, 150).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Offensively, we will have an opportunity to be much balanced this season. We will have an athletic group of players to share offensive touches.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** We return six



**Damian Sellers, Saguario** (photo by Mark Jones of maxpreps.com)



**Nate Quinones, Cactus** (photo by Kevin French of maxpreps.com)



**Jihad Marks, Desert Edge** (photo by Darin Sicurello of maxpreps.com)

players in the back of our defense from last season. This should give us the experience needed to be very competitive in all our games.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** We will have a great off-season competition for the starting QB. We look forward to the competition to fill three of the five OL positions. This should make for some great preseason practices.

#### **Saguaro**

**Head coach:** Jason Mohns.

**Years as school's head coach:** 7.

**2018 record:** 13-1.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB, Tyler Beverett (6-3, 205), 2,093 yards passing, 22 TDs.; Sr. RB, Israel Benjamin (5-10, 200), 1,675 yards rushing, 27 TDs.; Sr. WR, Matt Polk (6-4, 210), 466 yards receiving; Sr. TE, Will Shaffer (6-1, 220), 569 yards receiving; WR, Shawn Miller (6-1, 190); Sr. OT, Jaylan Jeffers (6-6, 265); Sr. OG, Tye Kassen (6-3, 265); Jr. OT, Bram Walden (6-4, 275); Jr. C, TJ McRae, (6-3, 288)

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Jr. DE, Quintin Somerville (6-3, 230); Sr. DE, Damian Sellers (6-4, 230); Jr. DT, Alani Maui (6-3, 265); Sr. LB, Will Shaffer (6-1, 220); Sr. CB, Kelee Ringo (6-3, 210); Sr. CB, Cameron Nash (510, 165); Sr. S, Jacobe Covington (6-2, 190); Sr. S, Danny Rivera (6-0, 190).

**Also keep an eye on:** Jr. ATH, Denzel Burke (6-1, 190); Sr. LB, Braxen Tessler (5-10, 190); Sr. TE, Michael Tupper (6-4, 230); Sr. WR, Jacob Pettijohn (5-10, 165).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Experience. Return nine starters. Size, talent, experience on OL. Return 4/5 starters. QB play - Return starting QB Tyler Beverett. Run game - Return leading rusher and 4/5 OL. Playmaking ability - return three WR's with starting experience, plus have two new players that will be key contributors.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Secondary is deep and talented. Defensive front returns 3/4 starters. Speed. All four members of 4x100 state leading relay team play on defense. Length. Experience with eight returning starters.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Leadership. We replace four tough, team-first leaders. Linebacker play. We replace three D-I linebackers from 2018.

**2019 expectations:** Represent our state with class and win our

two out of state matchups. Win our region. Qualify for the Open Division playoffs. Win the Open Division State Championship. Represent our school and community with character and class on the field and in the classroom

#### **Seton Catholic**

**Head coach:** Pete Wahlheim.

**Years as school's head coach:** 6.

**2018 record:** 8-4.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. RB/DB Kayson Unchurch (5-9), 710 yards rushing, 216 yards receiving, 8 TDs.

**2019 expectations:** The second playoff team from the region.

#### **4A WEST VALLEY REGION**

##### **Cactus**

**Head coach:** Joseph Ortiz.

**Years as school's head coach:** 1.

**2018 record:** 8-4.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** SR. QB. Conner Cordts (6-2, 190), 1,235 yards passing, 16 TDs.; SR. RB. Anthony Flores (5-11, 200), 1,292 yards rushing, 15 TDs.; SR. OL. Jacob Flaharty (6-2, 240); SR. OL. Travis Combs (6-0, 230); JR. WR. Antonio Pratt (5-10, 170); JR. OL. Vlad Ticala (6-6, 310); JR. TE. Riley Davies (6-2, 220).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** SR. LB. Nate (Doodles) Quinones (5-9, 170); SR. S. Nicc Quinones (5-10, 185); JR. CB. Antonio Pratt (5-10, 170); JR. DE. Riley Davies (6-2, 220).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** O-Line 3/5 starters returning. Two were first team all-region. RB Anthony Flores returns from a 1,200-yard season and 19 TDs. QB Conner Cordts returns from a solid junior year. Running game. Ability to play fast.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Speed. Senior experience. Two first team all-region players return in the Quinones Brothers. Brian Belles as Defensive Coordinator, always has the kids in the right position. Great Coach.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Replacing senior starters with youth. Varsity Experience

**2019 expectations:** Win Region. Play in the 4A championship game.



## Taylor Putting Himself, Program on the Map



**Jace Taylor, Lake Havasu (photo by Darin Sicurello of max-preps.com)**

**By Stephen Perez**  
**azpreps365.com**

Defying all odds on the football field is no stranger to Jace Taylor.

"I am just a competitive person," he said. "I will not let anyone stop me or get me off my path."

Being from Lake Havasu, Taylor knew from an early age that he would be overlooked because of it.

Instead of letting it tear him down, he used the doubters as motivation to get where he wanted to be.

When Taylor was four years old, his family moved from Las Vegas to Lake Havasu City for job opportunities presented to his parents.

"It is tough because people always doubt you or set low standards for you," he said. "I wanted to set the tone and make a difference and change the culture around here."

The 6-foot-5, 225-pound senior wide receiver from Lake Havasu High School worked hard to get in this position. Now Division I colleges want Taylor to play for them.

He's received offers from South Dakota State University and Northern Arizona University.

"It is always something I wanted to do, be a part of growing up so now that it is finally here I am just taking advantage of the moment," he said.

Taylor did not get there on his own.

He had people in his corner, most importantly his dad, who always believed he could do it when no one else did.

"Freshman year my dad helped guide me, because I was choosing between playing football or basketball," he said. "He helped me answer which one I would be more successful at."

Taylor said his dad helped him come to the realization that he can turn heads with his size playing football.

"Coming out of Havasu you have to catch people's eye," he said. "It is not every day you see a 6-foot-5 wide receiver who has speed and can catch whereas in basketball that is just an average guard."

Taylor believes that his size helps him, but it is his football knowledge that separates him from the pack.

"I have a great understanding of routes and how to run them and knowing what to do on coverages to exploit the defense," he said. "I realized I could play at the next level because of that."

Jace knows he is ready for Division I football.

His mindset, skills and attitude prepared him long before he knew what sport he wanted to commit his time to.

"I had to work, which meant going out on my own doing footwork and catching drills every day," he said. "I am goal driven and I think that is what separates me from most high school athletes and will help me at that next level."

He also wants to continue putting his team and city on the map.

"I really want to win," he said. "I love this team and school and it would be great to go to the playoffs and go further because it is my last season. Winning with them and putting on for our school is a big goal of mine."

**Stephen Perez is a student at Arizona State and was an azpreps365.com intern this summer.**

### Deer Valley

**Head coach:** Dan Friedman.

**Years as school's head coach:** 1.

**2018 record:** 0-10.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** OL. Brandon Swartz (6-4, 240); OL. Eddie Boroquez (6-4, 225); OL. Ryan Riley (6-0, 215); QB. Tanner Conaway (6-2, 185); QB. Trent Green (5-7, 130), 414 yards passing; WR. Dylan Anderson (5-7, 150).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** LB. Donny Moore (5-9, 200); LB Jaden Stewart (5-6, 155); DB, AJ Shaffer (5-8, 160).

**Also keep an eye on:** DL. Dylan Henderson (6-4, 210).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Better understanding of the system in year two. O-Line experience.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** A lot of young guys got varsity experience.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** QB. A lot of positions up for grabs.

**2019 expectations:** Compete. Win. Stay healthy.

### Desert Edge

**Head coach:** Jose Lucero.

**Years as school's head coach:** 3.

**2018 record:** 9-4.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. WR. Jihad Marks (6-1, 175); Sr. WR. Keith McCaney (6-1, 175); Jr. WR. Andrew Patterson (5-8, 165); Jr. RB. Marques Miller (5-11, 175); Jr. OL. Logan Corefield (6-4, 240); Jr. OL. Max Garcia (6-1, 240); Jr. OL. Gavin Broschious (6-4, 290).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Jr. DB. CJ McDowell (5-9, 160); Jr. LB. Isabien Rams (5-10, 195); Jr. DL. Cameron Steele (6-1, 210); So. DL. Isaiah Williams (5-11, 290).

**Also keep an eye on:** SO. DL. Christian Contreras (6-0, 210);

So. WR. Matt Willis (6-3, 190); Jr. WR. Richie Kulik (5-9, 160); Jr. LB. Myles Hobbs (5-10, 185).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** We expect to be very fast and athletic on offense. A lot of returners from a team that made it to the semifinals. QB returning as well as all our top WR. Three out of five OL will be returning starters for us.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** We will be strong up front with our DL. Return two elite cover corners in our secondary. Expect to play fast and get after it.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** We have to develop two safeties who can win for us. We have a lot of good candidates right now, but that is a main focus this summer. We will still be a team full of many underclassmen with a small, but talented senior class. We need to continue to grow. Need to replace to OL at very important spots, LT and C.

**2019 expectations:** We expect to compete every week with the best teams in our conference. We play many of the top teams in 4A on our schedule (Saguaro, Salpointe, Cactus, and Peoria) and we expect to compete in each game and get better.

#### Lake Havasu

**Head coach:** Karl Thompson.

**Years as school's head coach:** 11.

**2018 record:** 4-6.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. WR. Jace Taylor (6-5, 195), 486 yards receiving.; Sr. WR/RB, Jaden Azar (5-7, 145); Sr. WR/QB. Brace Spencer (5-7, 150), 886 yards passing, 6 TDs.; Sr. LB. Josh Nelson (6-2, 185); Jr. LB Brandon Lamicki (5-11, 190); Jr. DB/WR, Jessie Bradley (5-9, 180); Jr. OL/DL, Jonathan Justice (6-4, 215).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Skill Players Experience.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Basic core knowledge.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Quarterback. Offensive line. Overall depth.

**2019 expectations:** Develop QB. Improve depth.

#### Peoria

**Head coach:** Will Babb.

**Years as school's head coach:** 7.

**2018 record:** 9-2.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. WR Javon Scott (5-7, 145); Jr. OL Trey Hendrix (6-1, 245); Sr. QB Kyle Samford (5-10, 175); So. RB Cameron Mack (5-9, 185); Sr. LS Drew Gunell (6-0, 175); Jr. K Angel Islas (5-10, 185).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DB Micho Cordero (5-8, 175); Sr. LB Alaa Barakat (5-10, 185); Sr. DE Gabe O'Campo (6-1, 205); Sr. DL Sean Enriquez (5-10, 290). Also keep an eye on: Sr. LB/RB Ryan Rafidi (6-0, 215); Jr. RB, Brandon Price (5-10-180); Sr. OL Adan Ramirez (5-10, 200).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Year under our belt in new system. WR/QB experience. RB position. Trey Hendrix OL.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Speed. Experience at key positions. Athletic.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Younger players filling needed roles. Depth at certain positions.

**2019 expectations:** Win games early while gaining experience.

#### 4A SOUTHWEST REGION

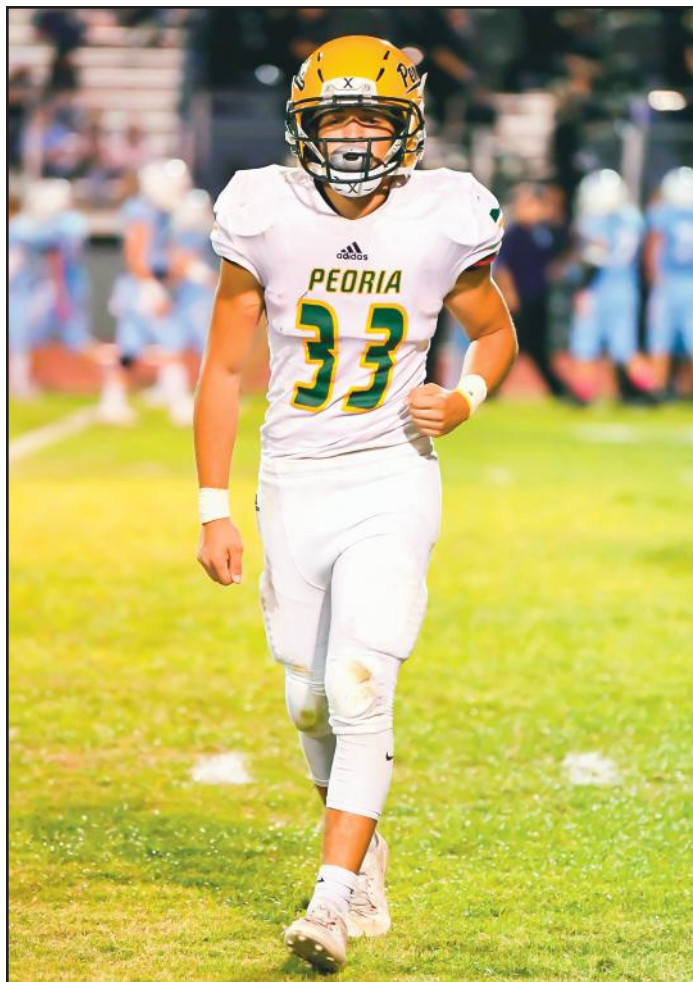
##### Buckeye

**Head coach:** Kelley Moore.

**Years as school's head coach:** 5.

**2018 record:** 3-7.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB. Angel Macedo (5-11), 352 yards passing; Sr. RB Zeke Barajas (5-10, 180); Jr. WR/FS Jaheem Rosetta (6-1, 185).



**Linebacker Alaa Barakat, Peoria** (photo by Mark Jones of maxpreps.com)

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Jr. LB Wyatt Gates (5-7, 188), 64 tackles; Sr. LB Mason Hogan (5-10, 200), 63 tackles; Sr. DT Kieran Kalima (5-7, 176).

#### Estrella Foothills

**Head coach:** Derek Wahlstrom.

**Years as school's head coach:** 2.

**2018 record:** 6-5.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. WR. Jacob Marsh (6-2, 190), 575 yards receiving; Sr. OL. Ishmael Hart (5-11, 230); Sr. OL. Finn Walter (6-2, 215); Jr. WR, Daylen Batchan (6-2, 165); Jr. OL. Marc Jones; Jr. OL. Corbin Triplett (5-9, 212).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DE/OLB, Drew Welch (6-4, 200); Sr. DL, Austin Wright (6-2, 205); Sr. C, Griffin Rogers; Jr. ILB, Quinlan Popham (6-2, 190); Jr. OLB, Matt Gundogan; Jr. OLB/S, John Coleman (5-10, 150).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** We have quite a bit of experience returning on the offensive line. The balance of our skill players should make it hard for defenses to focus on taking away any one component. Our understanding of the scheme in year three helps us to play with greater confidence.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** We had a number of student-athletes play on the defensive side of the ball last year which will help us going into this year. Our defense has a number of very intelligent student-athletes, which we hope helps us to play fast and downhill. Our understanding of the scheme in year three helps us to play with greater confidence.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** We are replacing three Region Player of the Year student-athletes



and a senior class that exhibited great leadership last season. Can our program handle the success of winning our region last year and build upon it, or do we think we've arrived?

**2019 expectations:** Have student-athletes that will represent their families, school, and community with class, dignity, honor, and respect. Compete for another Region Championship. Get to the playoffs and see how far we can go. We would like to see growth and improvement as a program.

#### **Gila Ridge**

**Head coach:** John Ellegood.

**Years as school's head coach:** 0.

**2018 record:** 6-4.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB Kaleb Cota (5-10, 180), 1,260 yards passing, 15 TDs; Sr. RB Renan Duarte (5-7, 2-7), 1,032 yards rushing, 10 TDs; Sr. WR David Randle (6-3, 175), 385 yards receiving; Sr. WR Dominic Jones (6-7, 215), 299 yards receiving.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. D'Angelo Richmond (6-3, 215), 74 tackles; Sr. DB Chris Torres (5-10, 155).

#### **Youngker**

**Head coach:** Anthony Cluff.

**Years as school's head coach:** 3.

**2018 record:** 3-7.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB, Daniel Armenta (6-1, 180) 787 yards passing; Sr. TE, Nick Hancock (6-2, 190); Sr. WR, Jordan Creer (6-0, 160); Sr. OL, David Gonzalez (6-0, 270); Sr. OL, Ethan Mascaranas (5-8, 265); Jr. OL, Emmanuel Flores (6-2, 190).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DB, Jordan Creer (6-0, 160); Jr. DB, Julian Montoya (5-8, 150); Sr. DE, Jayvon Kimbrough (6-2, 190); Jr. OLB, Raul Caldera (5-7, 160); Sr. OLB, Angel Jimenez (5-11, 185).

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. ILB, Dillon Stockdale (5-10, 170).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Returning O-line with knowledge. Experienced QB.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Athleticism.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Running back and defensive line.

**2019 expectations:** Play better as a team.

#### **Yuma**

**Head coach:** Curt Weber.

**Years as school's head coach:** 6.

**2018 record:** 3-7.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Jr. RB Erick Cervantes (5-9, 165); Sr. RB Azral Gonzalez (5-10, 180); Sr. OL Justin Perez (5-10, 230); Sr. OL Servando Campos (5-8, 190); Sr. OL Adrian Lorona (6-0, 230); Jr. WR Alex Mosqueda (6-1, 170); Sr. RB Serafin Cortez (5-9, 180); Jr. WR Devon Miller (6-1, 185); Sr. WR Zachry Moody (6-0, 175).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Jr. LB Erick Cervantes (5-9, 165); Sr. DL Justin Perez (5-10, 230); Sr. LB Azral Gonzalez (5-10, 180); Sr. LB Serafin Cortez (5-9, 180); Sr. DL Adrian Lorona (6-0, 230); Jr. DB Alex Mosqueda (6-1, 170); Sr. DL Servando Campos, DL (5-8, 190).

**Also keep an eye on:** So. ILB, Jaynoah Medel (5-10, 185); SO. DL, Julian Goldsborough (6-1); Jr. QB, Jacob Straub (5-10); Sr. DL, Dillon Arguello (5-10, 220).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Returning skill players.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Good front seven.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Passing game and depth.

**2019 expectations:** Win the District. 6-7 wins.

#### **4A SKYLINE REGION**

##### **Greenway**

**Head coach:** Ed Cook.

**Years as school's head coach:** 2.

**2018 record:** 10-2

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Jr. RB Christian Johnson, 232 yards rushing.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. Heston Wahner (6-0, 175), 94 tackles; Sr. Nick Deaver (5-10, 200), 89 tackles; Sr. Jace Creed (5-7, 150), 87 tackles.

##### **Moon Valley**

**Head coach:** Seth Millican.

**Years as school's head coach:** 3.

**2018 record:** 2-8.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB Michael Vazquez (5-10, 192), 235 yards passing, 81 tackles; Sr. DB Brayden Crotz-Williams (6-3, 180), 342 yards receiving.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Jr. Jordan Richardson (5-11, 145), 69 tackles.

##### **Shadow Mountain**

**Head coach:** Ron Fagan.

**Years as school's head coach:** 2.

**2018 record:** 4-6.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. LB Martin Vaughn II (5-10, 210), 467 yards rushing, 93 tackles.

##### **St. Mary's**

**Head coach:** Tom Brittain.

**Years as school's head coach:** 3.

**2018 record:** 5-5.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB Alex Pacheco (5-10, 170); Sr. TB Sam Bryant (5-11, 180); Sr. C Noah Martinez (6-2, 255); Sr. OT Drew Neighbors (6-0, 245); Sr. TB Patrick Sullivan (5-11, 190); Jr. OT Andrew Carreon (6-3, 285); Sr. OG Isaac Bustos (5-8, 240); Jr. WR Sean Trujillo (5-11, 180).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. OLB Sam Bryant (5-11, 180); Sr. CB Dominic Ke (5-10, 180); Dr. DT Noah Martinez (6-2, 255); Jr. DT, Andrew Carreon (6-3, 285); Jr. CB. Seamus Sullivan (5-8, 150); Jr. S Sean Trujillo (5-11, 180).

**Also keep an eye on:** Jr. DE, David Wilmowski (6-2, 210).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Strong returning line. Strong returning backfield and QB.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Depth in secondary. Strong returning D-Linemen.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Pass defense.

**2019 expectations:** Win our Region. Make playoffs. Undefeated at home. Win wearing Gold.

##### **Tempe**

**Head coach:** Brian Walker.

**Years as school's head coach:** 10.

**2018 record:** 7-3.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. OL Alek시오 Leha (6-0, 255); Sr. C, Keshawn Thompson (6-1, 270); Sr. WR, Diego Danage (5-9, 180).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DL, Sione Tonga'uiaha (6-0, 260); Sr. LB, Joseph Near (6-3, 244); Sr. DB, Javan Cooks (5-11, 182); Sr. DB, Gus Willis (5-8, 171).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Intelligent unit. Coachable. Eager to learn.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Physical. Have at least one experienced player in each group. Lots of versatility. Many players can play many different positions.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Experience and depth are a major concern.



**RB/LB Luis Jaramillo, Flagstaff** (photo by Mark Jones of max-preps.com)

**2019 expectations:** Come together as a family. Improve daily. Continue what last year's team helped get started.

#### **Thunderbird**

**Head coach:** Matt Nalette.

**Years as school's head coach:** 0.

**2018 record:** 4-6.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. FS Steven Dortch (5-10), 82 tackles; Sr. LB Matt Reyes (5-9), 64 tackles.

#### **4A GRAND CANYON REGION**

##### **Bradshaw Mountain**

**Head coach:** Chuck Moller.

**Years as school's head coach:** 2.

**2018 record:** 8-3.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. MLB Noah Shaver (6-0, 195), 116 tackles, 8 sacks.

##### **Coconino**

**Head coach:** Mike Lapsley.

**Years as school's head coach:** 0.

**2018 record:** 7-3.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Jr. RB Zach Bennett (5-9, 165), 1,210 yards rushing, 15 TDs; Sr. RB Bailey McCauslin (5-9, 160), 340 yards rushing; Sr. RB Eli DeHerrera (5-8, 160); Sr. WR Kyle Cassados (5-0, 170), 265 yards receiving; Sr. WR Josh Monke (6-0, 175); Jr. G Kylor Dunlap (5-11, 220); Sr. G Riley Darnell (6-0, 235).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. CB, Kyle Casados (5-10, 170); Sr. S Josh Monke (6-0, 175); Sr. CB Brian Gutierrez (6-0, 175); Sr. LB Jordan Lucero (6-0, 180); Sr. LB

Aaron Avitia (5-11, 215); Jr. LB Manuel Cardoza (6-1, 190).

**Also keep an eye on:** So. WR Andy Ruiz (6-1, 195); Sr. G Riley Darnell (6-1, 235).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Experienced backfield. Experienced receivers.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Returning line-backers. Returning secondary. Experienced coaches.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Learning new concepts.

**2019 expectations:** Execute on both sides of the ball. Discipline. Play as a team.

#### **Flagstaff**

**Head coach:** Todd Hanley.

**Years as school's head coach:** 0.

**2018 record:** 3-7.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. K/P/LB, Oscar Castruita (5-11, 180); Sr. RB/DB Colby Holloway (5-8, 165); Sr. QB/TE/LB Joe Weidinger (6-3, 185); Jr. RB/LB Luis Jaramillo (5-11, 200); Jr. CB/WR Ryan Tagle (5-11, 175); Sr. C/DL Ira Talashoma (5-7, 175); Sr. SS/WR Dayton Koyiyumptewa (5-7, 165); Sr. TE/LB Dayton Hardin (6-1, 200); Sr. OL/DL Denver Seaton (5-11, 230).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. OL/DL Logan Caputo (6-2, 250); Sr. LB Warren Lipscomb (5-11, 205); Sr. DB/WR Shawn Howard (6-0, 175).

**Also keep an eye on:** So. DE/RB Anthony Hill (6-0, 190); So. DE/RB Lane Maier (6-0, 190); Sr. QB/LB Chance Kortsen (6-0, 185).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Luis Jaramillo, returning 1,300 yard rusher. Three quality QBs competing for position: Kortsen, Bewley, Weidinger. Ryan Tagle outstanding receiver in new spread offense. Colby Holloway, versatile slot, RB. Senior leaders on offensive line: Talashoma, Caputo and Seaton.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Simplified scheme utilizing team speed.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Who will win QB battle. Who can grasp new offensive scheme.

**2019 expectations:** Establish consistency of scheme through all three levels. Create competition at every position. Challenge for the region title. Earn a playoff spot (1st time in seven years). Bring effort, enthusiasm and toughness to every contest.

#### **Lee Williams**

**Head coach:** Patrick O'Boyle.

**Years as school's head coach:** 0.

**2018 record:** 3-7.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. WR, Kade Juelfs (6-0, 190); Sr. RB, Donnie Sims (5-9, 160), 472 yards rushing; Sr. RB, Wesley Boyd (5-9, 165); Sr. WR, Robert Paulson (5-10, 170); Sr. OL, Luigi Garibaldi (5-10, 200); Sr. OL Kris Ashton (6-1, 230); Jr. OL, Zach Allen (6-2, 220); So. OL, Aaron Caraveo (6-3, 230).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. WR, Kade Juelfs (6-0, 190); Sr. RB, Donnie Sims (5-9, 160); Sr. RB, Wesley Boyd (5-9, 165); Sr. WR, Robert Paulson (5-10, 170); Sr. LB Garrett Pfaff (6-10, 190); Sr. LB Luigi Garibaldi (5-10, 200), 60 tackles; Sr. DL, Lozell Sheppherd (6-2, 280); Sr. DL Addis Guzman (6-0, 230); Jr. DL Zach Allen (6-2, 220); Jr. DB/LB, Morgan Mazon (5-9, 165); Jr. LB/DL Eric Sims (5-10, 170).

**Also keep an eye on:** Jr. QB, Levi Beckham (6-2, 215); Jr. WR/DB, Rye Samson (5-9, 150); Jr. WR/DB Kameron Toms (6-1, 165); Jr. WR/LB Seth Ferris (6-3, 190); Jr. QB/WR/DB, Dylan Petersen (6-0, 175).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** The ability to have multiple sets and schemes to consistently move the football down the field.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** The ability to ad-



just and to run to the football.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Who will be the leaders of the team and what will our identity be as a whole.

**2019 expectations:** To get better each and every day and compete in each football game by being sound with our assignments and sound mentally.

#### **Mingus Union**

**Head coach:** Robert Ortiz.

**Years as school's head coach:** 1.

**2018 record:** 9-3.

#### **Mohave**

**Head coach:** Rudy Olvera.

**Years as school's head coach:** 5.

**2018 record:** 2-8.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. OL Thomas Nunn (5-8, 235); Sr. OL Dalton Harms (6-3, 240); Jr. OL Richard Ramirez (6-5, 260).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DB/LB Senior Nathan Perry (5-9, 180); Sr. DB Austin Foster (5-7, 160), 48 tackles.

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. DB/WR Chris Flores (5-6, 130), Sr. DB/WR Brian Ising (5-7, 140), Sr. RB/LB Brandon Lopez (5-10, 215), Jr. QB Isaac Lopez (6-0, 200), Sr. TE/LB Raul Martinez (6-1, 215).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** On Offense we will be young and very fast in the backfield with a good sized veteran offensive line.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** On defense. Our secondary looked very fast during spring ball. Young linebacker core with room to grow and improve.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Overall this summer our young guys need to show lots of growth in order for us to complete in our very tough region.

#### **Prescott**

**Head coach:** Cody Collett.

**Years as school's head coach:** 5.

**2018 record:** 7-4.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** WR Dellinger Boyd; WR Joe Police; RB Syllas Espitia, 500 yards rushing; TE Aaron Greene; Jr. WR Brayden Nelson; OL Walker Cahn; OL Joseph Macalino; OL Jadon Rummage.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** LB Sam Giordan; DE Aaron Greene; S Dellinger Boyd; DE Trey Koehler; LB Rhett Pearce; SS Luke McCauslin; DL Nate Goligoski.

**Also keep an eye on:** Jr. QB Wyatt Snyder; Jr. WR Nathan Briseno; Jr. RB/LB Nate Wright.

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Solid skill guys with smaller but tough OL.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Some explosive decorated returners.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Depth at certain spots.

**2019 expectations:** We expect to compete for a region title and playoff berth. If we stay healthy we hope to play well into November in 4A playoffs.

#### **4A BLACK CANYON REGION**

##### **Apache Junction**

**Head coach:** Vance Miller.

**Years as school's head coach:** 5.

**2018 record:** 7-4.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. WR Tommy Ryan (5-10, 165); Sr. QB Gibson Limongello (6-0, 185), 1,459 yards passing, 18 TDs, 776 yards rushing; Jr. WR Cameron Gar-



**Gibson Limongello, Apache Junction (photo by Jim Willittes of maxpreps.com)**

cia (5-9, 155); Sr. RB Chris Lohman (5-11, 185); Sr. WR Edgar Martinez (5-8, 165); So. WR Jordan Morris (6-2, 190); Sr. RB Ethan LaBrue (6-2, 225); Sr. OL Michael Jada (6-2, 190); Sr. OL Ethan Wright (6-1, 220); Sr. OL Santiago Gonzales (6-0, 250).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. FS Talon Izbicki (5-11, 165); Sr. CB, Cass Casperson (5-10, 165); Sr. LB, Zach Langenbach (6-1, 190); Sr. SS, Gino Andrade (5-10, 180); Jr. LB, Brody Bullard (6-1, 230); Jr. DL, Roman Yashchuck (6-2, 250).

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. RB, Anthony Reyes (5-9, 185); Sr. DL, Cody Arbogast (6-0, 210); Jr. OL, Kelton Nelson (6-2, 310); Jr. CB, Aydin Franko (5-10, 170).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Experienced at the skilled positions. QB is a 3-year starter. OC has been consistent for three years.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** LB core is experienced. Size and speed advantage.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Developing a cohesive offensive line with new guys and returning starters.

**2019 expectations:** Our goal is to 3-peat as region champs. Stay healthy!

##### **Combs**

**Head coach:** Travis Miller.

**Years as school's head coach:** 2.

**2018 record:** 4-6.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB, Wayne "Tre" Buck (6-2, 170), 1,073 yards passing; Jr. ATH, Joey Jensen

# Daniels' Preferred Form of Punishment: Touchdowns

By Jose Garcia  
azpreps365.com

A tackle Kevin Daniels made when he was 11 impacted his approach to the game of football.

The Glendale High senior running back, the state's touchdown leader last year, stopped playing defense after that collision as a youth player. He was playing safety when a wide receiver suffered a concussion and was transported to a hospital.

"I never wanted to do it (hurt somebody) again," Daniels said.

Fast forward to today, and Daniel still feels bad when he physically hurts opponents.

He won't apologize for scoring 43 touchdowns last year. But he will check on the health of a defender attempting to tackle the 6-2, 225-pound Daniels.

He did so during one of the wildest regular season games in 2018. While scoring one of his seven touchdowns in that game, an Apache Junction defender broke his arm near the end zone, trying to take Daniels down.

Immediately after scoring Daniels asked the defender if he was OK.

"I told him there was no malice," Daniels said. "The kid understood."

Daniels is a gentleman on and off the field with some toughness mixed in for good measure.

"My dad (Isaac) always taught me that even when you are playing you have to play with anger, with a passion," Daniels said.

That was evident last year as he led Glendale to its first playoff appearance since 2006 with a senior dominated team.

This year, Glendale is very young, but the youngsters have Daniels to lean on.

Besides continuing to take it to the house, Daniels is also expected to keep bringing good grades home.

He struggled in that area after enrolling at Glendale as a freshman but is turning it around. The progress he's made led to an offer from Northern Arizona University.

"I was so appreciative when (NAU assistant) Junior Taylor offered," Daniels said. "I just kept thinking this is going to open doors for me."

One of Daniels' dreams is to become a physical therapist.

His appreciation for the profession began while recovering from an injury as a sophomore. He was so thrilled after he was cleared to play that he gave his physical therapist a big hug.

He hasn't stopped running since. Daniels has rushed for for 3,409 yards and scored 72 touchdowns in his career.



Running back Kevin Daniels, Glendale

He needs 31 touchdowns to tie Christian Kirk's (Saguaro, Arizona Cardinals) career 4A state record of 103 touchdowns.

"I never thought I could score that many," said Daniels about scoring 43 touchdowns last year. "That was cool and fun."

Do it again and he'll double his fun.

(5-10, 165); Jr. WR, Lucas Corriveau (6-0, 170); Sr. WR, Deven Mock (6-0, 196), 327 yards receiving; So. RT, Brodee Tucker (6-1, 225); Jr. RG, Taniela "Bubba" Taunima (5-11, 280); Sr. LT, Simon Taunima (5-10, 255).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. CB, Brayden Bernal (5-10, 150); Jr. OLB, Joey Jensen (5-10, 165), 55 tackles; Jr. SS, Lucas Corriveau (6-0, 170); Sr. FS, Bob Henry (6-2, 170); Sr. DE, Deven Mock (6-0, 190); Jr. OLB, Jace Judd (5-10, 180); Jr. MLB, Dominik Richie (6-0, 205); So. DT, Brodee Tucker (6-1, 225); Jr. DT, Taniela "Bubba" Taunima; Sr. DE, Curtis Jones (6-0, 195); Sr. NG, Simon Taunima (5-10, 250).

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. C, Cody Redford (6-4, 205).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Experienced QB. Young players with varsity experience.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Speed. Young players with varsity experience. Lots of returners.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Depth. 2019 expectations: Win the region.

## Dysart

**Head coach:** John Ganados.

**Years as school's head coach:** 2.

**2018 record:** 2-8.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Jr. Slot, Anthony Aguilar (5-9, 160), 217 yards receiving; Jr. OL, Israel Nolasco (6-2, 405); Jr. Tackle, Greg Gregory-Bey (6-2, 285).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Jr. DT, Israel Nolasco (6-2, 405); Jr. DT, Greg Gregory-Bey (6-2, 285).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Two solid linemen returning.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** We're very young!

**2019 expectations:** Play hard. Play smart. Compete.

## Glendale

**Head coach:** Rob York.

**Years as school's head coach:** 3.



**2018 record:** 9-2.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. RB Kevin Daniels (6-2, 230), 1,935 yards rushing, 38 TDs, 648 yards receiving, 5 TDs; Jr. WR, Rocco Bruney (6-1, 175).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DE David Jimenez (5-8, 220); Sr. S Danny Valadez (5-6, 152); Sr. OLB, Dimitri Taylor (5-9, 161); Sr. CB, Karima Edware (5-8, 153). Also keep an eye on: So. OL, Cristain Oropeza (6-0, 256); So. OL, Chris Ramirez (6-1, 253); So. OL, Manny Gortarez (6-1, 210); Jr. DE Erick Contreras (5-7, 210).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Returning one of the top RB's in the state. No changes in coaching staff. Younger players have bought into what we are doing and working hard.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Key defensive starters coming back. Added two new defensive staff members.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Leadership. Commitment. Work ethic.

**2019 expectations:** Get better every day. Beat our rival. Finish the season with a winning record. Win the Region. Go to the playoffs.

## Washington

**Head coach:** Tim Mayfield.

**Years as school's head coach:** 6.

**2018 record:** 3-7.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** So. G Gilbert Calderon (6-0, 240); Jr. RB Dominick Sanders (5-10, 160); Jr. C Mario Cruz (6-0, 265); Jr. TE Bobby Escobar (6-3, 190); Sr. RB Travion Hughes (5-11, 170); Sr. G Carlos Castillo (5-9, 175); Jr. T Jesus Bojorquez (6-1, 200); Sr. WR Dae Dae Zachary (5-10, 160).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** So. DT Gilbert Calderon (6-0, 240); Jr. SS Dominick Sanders (5-10, 160); Jr. FS Michael Gruppo (5-10, 145); Jr. CB/LB Travion Hughes (5-11, 170); Sr. LB Carlos Castillo (5-9, 175); Sr. WR Dae Dae Zachary (5-10, 160).

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. RB/DB Reece Humeyestewa (5-10, 170); Jr. RB/CB. Demetrious Harmon (5-6, 140).

**Strengths heading into summer:** Our team's weakness will be the experience on our defense and offensive lines. We return all of our lineman and they have been working hard in the off season to get stronger. Our line will be led by So. Gilbert Calderon and Jr. Mario Cruz. Our biggest weakness is going to be our skill guys. If Jr. Dominick Sanders and Sr. Travion Hughes can stay healthy, they will anchor our offense and defense. Biggest question mark is who is going to play QB for us. During Spring Football two players emerged as possible starters, So. Gabe Segovia and Sr. Dae Dae Zachary.

**2019 expectations:** After our QB went down with a high ankle sprain in our first region game last year and was out for the remainder of the season, we are trying to recruit more basketball, baseball and wrestling athletes at our school to play football so we can be deeper on the bench. Our Seniors this year are small in numbers but hungry to get to the playoffs and win a region title. We have several players returning players on the offensive line and defensive line if we can find quality skilled positions on both offense and defense, we should be able to complete for a region title. Our goal is to win the region title and a return to the state playoffs. We open with a difficult region game versus the Dysart Demons so we will be tested early.

## 4A GILA REGION

### Amphitheater

**Head coach:** Jorge Mendivil.

**Years as school's head coach:** 5.

**2018 record:** 3-7.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB, Kevin Silva

(5-11, 160), 682 yards passing; Sr. RB, Julian Encinas (5-8, 175), 290 yards rushing; Jr. WR, Orlando Acosta (5-8, 150); Sr. WR, Julian Campos (6-1, 195); Sr. OL, Orlando Burrueal (5-10, 270); Jr. OL, Jose Gonzalez (5-10, 270); Jr. OL, Daniel Dominguez (6-2, 235); Sr. OL, Ben Moreno (5-10-195).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DL, Julian Campos (6-1, 195); Jr. DL, Greg Goldschtyrn (5-11, 195); Sr. DL, Gustavo Ibarra (6-0, 275); Sr. LB, Julian Encinas (5-8, 175) 66 tackles; Jr. DB, Orlando Acosta (5-8, 150); Sr. DB, Kevin Silva (5-11, 160).

**Also keep an eye on:** Jr. DB, Emilio Cocio (5-10, 155); Jr. RB, Isaiah Hill (5-9, 175).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Offensive Line. Experienced QB and receivers.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Aggressiveness. Overall team speed.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Finding a breakaway threat. LB play.

**2019 expectations:** Continued improvement throughout the season. Winning record. Post season. Region champion.

## Douglas

**Head coach:** Hunter Long.

**Years as school's head coach:** 0.

**2018 record:** 2-8.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB Trey Rose III (5-10, 180), 1,098 yards passing, 13 TDs; Sr. TE Christian Estrella (6-4, 219), 919 yards rushing; Sr. RB John Ballesteros (5-10, 180), 345 yards rushing, 259 yards receiving.

## Palo Verde

**Head coach:** Mike Wells.

**Years as school's head coach:** 0.

**2018 record:** 2-8

**Keep an eye on:** Sr. WR Damier Nelson, 463 yards receiving; DB Darius Johnson; RB Seth Irankuda; Sr. WR Kendall Williams.

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** New coaching staff.

**2019 expectations:** State championship.

## Pueblo

**Head coach:** Brandon Sanders.

**Years as school's head coach:** 5.

**2018 record:** 5-5.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB, Marcelino Vega (6-0, 190) 351 yards passing, 369 yards rushing; Sr. RB, Joshua Garcia (5-9, 170); Sr. OL, Sergio Zazueta (6-1, 280); Sr. WR, Ricardo Laguna (5-11, 160); Sr. WR, Hassan Aden (6-0, 165); Sr. RB, Fernando Medina (5-8, 170); Sr. RB, Julian Lopez (5-8, 180); Sr. OL, Juan Rabago (5-8, 270); Sr. OL, Miguel Alday (5-8, 300); So. JR, TE, Jesus Prado (6-1, 200).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. CB, Joshua Garcia (5-9, 170); Sr. S, Fernando Medina (5-8, 170), 36 tackles; Sr. DB, Ricardo Laguna (5-11, 160); Sr. CB, Hassan Aden (6-0, 165); Sr. DE, Christian Peru (6-0, 270); Sr. DE, Sergio Zazueta (6-1, 280); Sr. LB, Julian Lopez (5-8, 180); Sr. DL, Juan Rabago (5-8, 270); Jr. DL, Sterling Grandberry (6-2, 310); Sr. S, Marcelino Perez (5-9, 160).

**Also keep an eye on:** SR, Edgar Lopez (5-10, 190); Sr. OL/DE, Jordon Parrish (5-10, 260); Jr. OL/DE, Darian Aldaco (6-1, 250).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Offensive Line, Quarterback. Running backs.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Secondary. Experience.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Chemistry.

**2019 expectations:** Win home opener. Beat our rivals. Win all home games. Win Gila Region. Win State.

## **Rio Rico**

**Head coach:** Zach Davila.

**Years as school's head coach:** 3.

**2018 record:** 1-9.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB Michael Bustamante (6-0, 165).

## **Walden Grove**

**Head coach:** Corey Noble.

**Years as school's head coach:** 2.

**2018 record:** 8-3.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB, Alex Lopez (6-1, 200), 2,659 yards passing, 29 TDs, 624 yards rushing; Sr. WR, Jordan Lopez (6-2, 210), 1,230 yards receiving; Sr. WR, Hector Najar (6-1, 180); Sr. C, Grant Annett (5-9, 230); Sr. WR, Will Fortin (5-9, 170); Jr. RB, Stephen Brower (5-9, 185), 289 yards rushing; Sr. K/P, Nathan Alvarenga (5-9, 175); Sr. OL/DL, Christian Karlinsey (6-2, 240).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. LB, Rick Avelar III (6-2, 220), 138 tackles; Sr. DE, Sam Martinez (5-9, 185); Sr. CB, Ari Hickman (5-8, 175); Sr. DE, Thomas Welky (6-2, 215).

**Also keep an eye on:** Jr. WR/DB, Ty McDermott (6-2, 180); Sr. OL/DL, Miguel Mejia (6-2, 230); Sr. OL/TE/DE/LS, Ismael Gallardo Jr. (6-0, 200); Jr. LB/FB, Sebastian Adamski (5-10, 200).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Returning 1st Team All-State WR Jordan Lopez. 2nd in all categories last year in 4A. Returning Region Offensive POY QB Alex Lopez, top 5 in all passing categories last season. 36 TDs over 3500 yds. Returning 2-year starter at Center. Had 31 pancakes and 0 sacks allowed in 11 games last season. Returning strong core of skills players at WR/RB from last year.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Returning 1st-team All-state LB, Rick Avelar III, Led all of AZ in TFL last season. Great group of athletes returning in secondary. Strong at the DE position.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** How we will replace the 7 OL/DL starters from last season. Will we continue to work hard to build the program. How will we continue to grow as a program. Replacing a lot of starters on defense that was #2 in 4A last year.

**2019 expectations:** Be the best WGHS football team we can be. Increase our team GPA to over a 3.4 (Has gone from 2.5 to a 2.8 to 3.2 last 2 years). Host a playoff game. Win a playoff game. Continue to develop great leaders and young men in the community and classroom.

## **4A KINO REGION**

### **Canyon del Oro**

**Head coach:** Dustin Peace.

**Years as school's head coach:** 11.

**2018 record:** 7-4.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. OL/DL Diego Lujan (6-0, 270); Sr. WR Devin Medina (6-1, 185); Jr. RB Stevie Rocker (6-1, 185), 1,163 yards rushing, 12 TDs; Sr. WR Dylan Zamorano (6-0, 175); Jr. C, Nicholas Contreras (6-0, 220); Sr. OL Andrik Valdez (5-11, 215); Jr. WR Jayden Bracy (6-0, 210), 242 yards receiving; Jr. TE, Dustin Sheeley (6-0, 200).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DB Austin Brooks (6-1, 180); Sr. DB Cory Bonstrom (5-10, 175), 47 tackles, 3 interceptions; Sr. DB Gavin Davis (5-10, 175); Sr. OLB Adam Maldonado (6-2, 180); Sr. LB Mason Catterson (5-10, 205), 71 tackles.

**Also keep an eye on:** Jr. OLB Alex Maldonado (5-9, 165).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Leading rusher is returning with three starting offensive linemen. A lot of receivers returning as well.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** All secondary and LBs are returning. We will have great defensive team speed.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** QB, as we have four competing for the position. Depth, as we will have around 38 players on the roster.

**2019 expectations:** Very high as we have a lot of 2-3 year starters returning. Leadership is amazing.

## **Casa Grande**

**Head coach:** Jake Barro.

**Years as school's head coach:** 4.

**2018 record:** 5-5.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** So. QB, Angel Flores (6-2, 215), 1,409 yards passing, 10 TDs, 445 yards rushing, 11 TDs; Sr. WR, Darrell Penn (5-7, 165), 355 yards receiving; Sr. RB, DJ Johnson (5-9, 185), 254 yards receiving, 390 yards rushing; Jr. OL, Kirk Tsabetsaye (6-0, 245).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Jr. LB, Jacob Thomas (5-10, 230), 66 tackles; Sr. LB, Marcos Villanueva (5-10, 210); Sr. CB, Damion Allen (5-9, 170); Sr. CB, Jahmier Haman (5-10, 165), 2 interceptions; Sr. DL, Dominic Gallegos (6-0, 230); Sr. DE, Jorge Aguilar (6-3, 220).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** We have a strong senior class with good leadership. Young talented quarterback. Returning, explosive RB.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Experienced defense. Bring back most of DL and LB. Fast secondary.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Replacing the offensive line. Depth.

**2019 expectations:** We hope to improve on last year's 5-5 record. Make the 4A state playoffs.

## **Catalina Foothills**

**Head coach:** Darius Kelly.

**Years as school's head coach:** 0.

**2018 record:** 4-6.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** So. Derrick Williams (6-0, 150), 261 yards receiving, 59 tackles, 3 INTs.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DE/OLB Will Parker (6-2, 220), 59 tackles, 4.5 sacks.

## **Sahuaro**

**Head coach:** Scott McKee.

**Years as school's head coach:** 10.

**2018 record:** 10-3.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB Izaiah Grigsby (5-9, 155), 789 yards passing, 8 TDs; Sr. RB Izaiah Davis (5-10, 180), 684 yards rushing, 7 TDs.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Jr. Trevion Watkins (5-7, 190), 65 tackles, 3.5 sacks.

## **Salpointe**

**Head coach:** Dennis Bene.

**Years as school's head coach:** 19.

**2018 record:** 13-1.

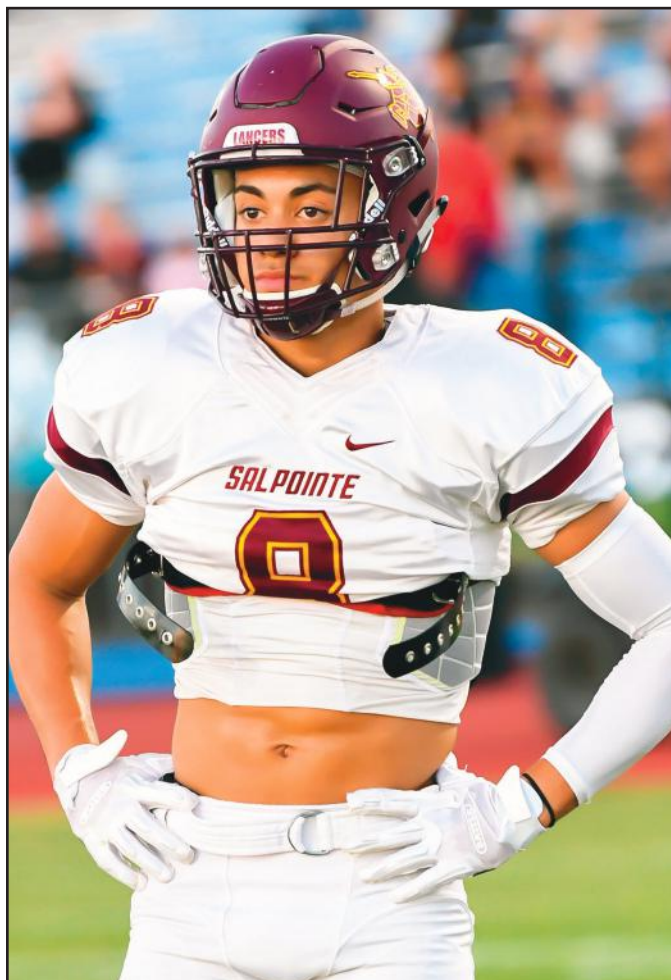
**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. RB Bijan Robinson (6-0, 210), 2,400 yards rushing, 35 TDs.; Sr. WR Lathan Ransom (6-2, 195), 625 yards receiving; Sr. WR Dae Han Chang (5-9, 175), 339 yards receiving; Jr. WR Julian Robles (6-0, 180); Sr. TE Connor Witthoft (6-3, 220); Sr. OL Bruno Fina (6-4, 240); Jr. OL Jonah Miller (6-6, 290); Sr. OL Isaiah Willhoite (6-1, 250).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DB Lathan Ransom (6-2, 195), 82 tackles, 6 INTs; Sr. DB Charlie Raetzman (6-0, 170); Sr. DB Luke Straka (5-10, 170); Sr. LB Trent Strong (6-0, 220), 116 tackles; Sr. LB Ray Figueroa (6-0, 210), 6 sacks, 117 tackles; Sr. LB Shamon Davis (5-9, 210), 115 tackles, 6 sacks; Sr. LB Christian Ralls (6-0, 190); Sr. DL Sergio Sanchez (6-1, 260); Sr. DE Luke Regina (6-1, 190), 53 tackles, 9 sacks.

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. QB Jackson Bolin (6-3, 190); Jr. RB David Cordero (6-0, 175); So. DL Jace Springer (6-2, 250); So.



## College Decision Out of the Way Time to Focus on Team, Season for Ransom



Lathan Ransom, Salpointe Catholic (photo by Mark Jones of maxpreps.com)

By Andy Morales  
azpreps365.com

His numbers might seem almost ordinary to those who have never seen him play, but Salpointe senior Lathan Ransom is far from ordinary.

Ransom collected no less than 28 offers from Power Five conferences, including 10 from the Pac-12 and nine from the SEC. Teams from Alabama to Oregon were fighting for his signature, but Ransom released his top five choices and only one SEC team made the cut, and it wasn't Alabama.

Ransom whittled his choices down to Ohio State, Oklahoma, Nebraska, Notre Dame and LSU on June 4 and questions started to fly in about the lack of interest in ASU and the University of Arizona. He finished the 2018 season with 625 yards receiving (23.1 yards per catch), 82 tackles and six interceptions, but he's taking his skills to where he feels they will be best suited.

Ransom made that final decision on his birthday, July 16. He chose Ohio State and the move reportedly moved the Buckeye recruiting class to No. 2 in the nation.

It might move up again if another Salpointe standout joins him there.

"All the coaches have been great, and they've been supportive of my family," Ransom said. "It's a great process."

Salpointe is loaded.

Most eyes will be on senior standout Bijan Robinson and for good reason. Robinson has a slew of college offers of his own, and he's on the verge of breaking the state rushing record for the 4A Conference.

But also nine of the top ten defenders return for their senior seasons.

"We have three quarterbacks to choose from, and Bijan is back," Ransom added. "We have all the linebackers and secondary back. We feel we can compete with anybody this year, so we are hoping for the Open bracket. That's where we want to be."

QB Treyson Bourguet (6-2, 190).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Skill positions bigger and faster than we have been in the past. Obviously headlined by 2-time 2000 yard rusher Bijan Robinson. Big QBs with talented arms should have healthy competition. Overall numbers of returners - we should be better than last year's team.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Our back 7- LBs and DBs are veterans - Very athletic and physical.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Offensive and defensive line. We need a few kids to step up and we will be solid. We have a few key starters returning but depth right now is a question.

**2019 expectations:** Win our region. Undefeated regular season. Win a State or 4A Championship.

**Vista Grande**

**Head coach:** Chris Semore.

**Years as school's head coach:** 2.

**2018 record:** 2-8.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Jr. WR, Jace Atkins 5-10, 165; Sr. OL, Roberto Barrera (5-11, 200); Sr. OL, Omari Smith (6-1, 300); Jr. OL, Calvin Valazquez (6-0, 225).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DL, Omari Smith (6-1, 230); Sr. DL, Elijah Montijo (6-0, 220); Sr. LB, Roberto Barrera (5-11, 200); Sr. DB, Mateo Garcia (5-8, 145).

**Also keep an eye on:** Jr. WR, Christopher Hernandez (5-10, 165); So. WR, Tyrese Constable (5-9, 160); Jr. OL, Skyler Higdon (6-4, 280).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Increased strength and speed. Competitiveness.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Going to be more athletic on the defensive side.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Experience.

**2019 expectations:** Compete every day. Improve every day.



*Yuma Catholic, 2018 3A Football State Champions (photo by Darin Sicurello of maxpreps.com)*

**By Andy Morales**  
**azpreps365.com**

**1. YUMA CATHOLIC:** The Shamrocks reached 11 wins for the eighth time in Rhett Stallworth's 10 years with the program, but it was the elusive 12th win for the state championship that some will remember the most, and that's unfortunate. Stallworth has earned at least 10 wins a season for a reason and success should not only be measured by what kind of trophy a team brings back from a state championship game. Granted, by his own accounts of having almost no strengths returning from defense, coupled with only one lineman returning, is cause for concern, but Stallworth still has Sr. QB Gage Reese and his 4,661 yards passing and 64 TDs — all in 2018 — in his pocket along with Sr. RB Ean Chavez and his 1,458 yards rushing (24 TDs) and 1,121 yards receiving (13 TDs). Look for another 10-win plus season

**2. AMERICAN LEADERSHIP ACADEMY – QUEEN CREEK:** The Patriots are eligible for the postseason for the first time since winning the state championship in 2016. Technically, the team made the semifinals in 2017 but all wins were subsequently vacated due to the use of a player who had already

graduated. The Patriots finished 8-2 last year, which could have placed the team near the top four heading into the playoffs. Sr. QB Rand Jensen (894 yards passing) returns along with Sr. WR Ethen Cluff (565 yards receiving) and So. RB Aziyah Jamison (672 yards rushing). Head coach Rich Edwards will be counting on his team's experience at all skill positions and the schedule is set up for success if the team can focus on each week rather than the suspension. A trip to Yuma Catholic in week five could be the deciding week, and it will continue the rivalry between the two schools that was fueled by a 28-21 victory over Yuma Catholic in the quarterfinal round of the forfeited season. The Shamrocks beat the Patriots 49-27 last year.

**3. NORTHWEST CHRISTIAN:** Northwest Christian entered the 2018 playoffs as the No. 1 seed, but Yuma Catholic went in the postseason as the favorite. The Crusaders lost to Yuma Catholic at home, 36-30, in week two, and the team beat Benjamin Franklin 21-13 the next week, but no team was able to get within 17 points of the Crusaders the rest of the way until Yuma Catholic came calling once again in the state championship game. The Shamrocks led 27-20 in the final moments of regulation, but Northwest Christian was able to punch the



ball in with nine seconds left to send the championship game to overtime. With the score tied 34-34 after first overtime period, Yuma Catholic fumbled away an opportunity to win the game in the second overtime and a touchdown pass from Easton Meier to Dustin Inness secured the third state championship in Crusader history. Inness was one of 20 seniors on that team. The list of graduating seniors included Aren van Hofwegen and his 1,635 yards rushing but longtime head coach David Inness comes back with a solid position at quarterback and a firm defense behind DB Cameron Adams.

**4. SABINO:** Sabino lost to Yuma Catholic 75-43 in the semifinal round last year but the Sabercats look to enter the 2019 playoffs with a much higher ranking than last year. Head coach Ryan McBrayer is in his third year with the Sabercats and returns most of his starters from last year except for graduating senior MLB Richie Piña and his 136 tackles. QB AJ Skaggs (1,624 yards passing, 20 TDs) returns for his junior season and Jayson Petty is now a senior. Petty pulled 554 yards last year, and he also came up with 41 tackles and 10 sacks. Look for sophomore TE Michael Masunas to contribute right away. A favorable schedule might have the Sabercats looking at a 9-1 record, or even a 10-0 record, come playoff time. The team suffered back-to-back losses to Casa Grande and Sahuaro to start out the season but both of those teams look to be very beatable this fall.

**5. SNOWFLAKE:** Snowflake lost to Sabino in the quarterfinal round last year, and the Lobos might actually come back even stronger than the No. 3 ranking the program earned last year. It all begins with the return of Sr. QB Ethan Ramage and his 1,653 yards passing and Sr. RB Brigden Turley and his 821 yards rushing. Five of the top six receivers graduated, but head coach Kay Solomon believes his squad can increase the offensive output from last year regardless. The Lobos are also looking at a near perfect regular season this year. A 14-8 loss at home to Benjamin Franklin in the second week prevented a top seed for the Lobos. Look for the squad to key in on that game this year.

**6. VALLEY CHRISTIAN:** The Trojans haven't won a state championship since 2009 but a jump from a No. 22 ranking in 2017 to No. 5 last season has the team hoping for more. Even better, the team from Chandler made it to the semifinal round before meeting up with No. 1 seed and eventual state champion Northwest Christian. Kirk Sundberg took his team to the semifinals in his first year with the program and he's relying on the experience and talent from his quarterback position (Vinnie LaGatta) and the versatility of his skill players to launch another successful season. Plus, Sundberg reports he only lost one starter in his defensive backfield. Each week matters and a 23-21 loss at Arizona Lutheran in week three might have made the difference between a No. 5 ranking and a No. 4 ranking. The Trojans avenged a 22-15 loss at Page in week four with a 28-20 win at Page in the quarterfinal round, which only serves as an example of the growth the team made within one season.

**7. PAGE:** It's been 43 years since Page has played on the final day but the rise from a No. 34 ranking in 2015, to No. 17 in 2016, to No. 13 in 2017 to No. 4 last year has the Sand Devil faithful wondering what could be in store this year. But

the loss of Mitchell Stephens is a huge setback. Stephens coached the Sand Devils over the last seasons (18-5), and he came oh so close to reaching the quarterfinals but he came up against a resurging Valley Christian squad. Page also lost the services of RB Kele Meredith to graduation. His 2,154 yards rushing and 19 TDs will be hard to replace, but Jr. QB Robert Smith (579 yards passing and 786 yards rushing) could be the key. Staying in the top ten and winning another 3A North championship is key for the program. Anything that happens after that would be gravy. This could be one of the most important seasons for the San Devils in many ways.

**8. SAFFORD:** The Bulldogs took out No. 7 Odyssey Institute 34-0 in the first round last year but the reward was a trip to Yuma Catholic in the quarterfinals and a 65-28 loss. Still, quite a few had Odyssey Institute making that trip to Yuma. An 0-3 start to Snowflake, Wickenburg and Thatcher was hard to overcome but the Bulldogs went on a roll and almost knocked Sabino in the final week of the regular season. The 20-17 loss changed the fortunes for both squads. One team earned the right to meet Yuma Catholic in the semifinal round at a neutral site while the other had to face them at Yuma. Eric Hjalmarson is in his third year with the Bulldogs, and he has all of his offensive weapons returning, including Jr. CJ Scrivner and his 1,149 yards rushing. In fact, eight of his top skill position players on offense return along with Sr. LB Robert White and his 105 tackles. The Bulldogs could be the wildcard team this year.

**9. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN:** The Chargers started the 2018 season 3-4 but three wins in a row gave the team the automatic berth from the 3A Central Region and a No. 9 ranking heading into the state playoffs. American Leadership Academy – Queen Creek finished 8-2 overall and 4-0 in the 3A Central Region but the Patriots were ineligible for postseason consideration. Franklin will come back with an experienced line, with four offensive linemen returning and five of the front seven defenders returning. An early 6-point loss to ALA – Gilbert North might have been the factor that kept the team from the top eight and a chance to host a first round game but the Chargers still put together a 35-6 win at No. 8 Wickenburg. No. 1 Northwest Christian beat Benjamin Franklin 35-7 in the quarterfinal round. The Chargers also lost to 21-14 at Sabino, which shows the importance of every game in the conference.

**10. PUSCH RIDGE:** The Lions finished 5-5 last year, but a 35-34 loss to Safford in week nine cost the team a top ten ranking. Jr. RB Evan Lovett (6-1, 195) finished the season with 1,192 yards rushing and 204 yards receiving and collected 20 touchdowns, including two fumble returns and three kickoff returns. He also had 63 tackles and five sacks. Lovett also punted and he kicked off. Head coach Jerry Harris is concerned about his QB position, but his defense is solid with Sr. DB Antone Brack (5-11, 140); Sr. LB, Ryan Garcia (5-8, 170); Sr. LB Jackson Kubiak (66 tackles), Lovett and Sr. DL Phillip Raica (45 tackles) setting the tone. The Lions started out 1-3 last year and that might happen again this year, but the team will have to refocus for region play like it did last year with the belief that one more victory will improve its playoff position.

## 3A Conference Team-By-Team Preview

By Andy Morales & Oree Foster  
azpreps365.com

### 3A NORTH REGION

#### Window Rock

**Head coach:** Wilbur Begay, Jr.

**Years as school's head coach:** 3

**2018 record:** 5-5.

**Returning starters on offense:** Sr. QB Joey Begay; Sr. SB Jason Yazzie; Sr. TB Naataah Chief; Sr. C Jacob Tso; Sr. T Aaron Begaye; Sr. Guard David Watson.

**Returning starters on defense:** Sr. ILB Shawney Sam; Sr. ILB Tyler Thomas; Sr. OLB Marion Ynzunza; Sr. OLB Naataah Chief; Jr. DE Caleb Dickson; Sr. DE Aaron Begaye; Sr. CB Adrian Desteaa; Sr. S Jason Yazzie.

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Experience.

**Strengths on defense heading into summer:** Experience.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Depth. We have been low in numbers this off season.

**2019 expectations:** Just an overall better season than last season.

#### Chinle

**Head coach:** Alan Barwick.

**Years as school's head coach:** 2.

**2018 record:** 5-5.

**Returning starters on offense:** Sr. QB/WR James Bahe (5-8, 150); Sr. WR/QB Darren Woody (5-10, 175); Sr. OL/RB Shia Brown (5-7, 185); Jr. RB/WR Jonathan Robertson (5-8, 165).

**Returning starters on defense:** Sr. DB Darren Woody (5-8, 150); Sr. OLB Darren Woody (5-10, 175); Sr. ILB Shia Brown (5-7, 185); Sr. DT Jaron Segay (6-0, 200); Sr. ILB Andrew Carroll (5-11, 185); Jr. DB Cvto Lowe (5-8, 160); Jr. DB Jonathan Robertson (5-8, 165); Soph. ILB Luke Jones (5-8, 180).

**Also keep an eye on:** Jr. ATH Corey Yazzie (5-9, 165); Sr/OL/DL Xavier Yazzie (6-2, 210); Jr. ATH Darrell Brown, (5-5, 140); Sr/ QB/TE Juwan Gray (5-11, 175).

**Strengths on offense heading into summer:** We have a lot of new faces, but they are all coachable and they work hard.

**Strengths on defense heading into summer:** We have a lot of returners on defense, which was our strength last year. They are familiar with the system and each other is a big deal for us.

**What are your team's biggest question marks heading into the summer:** Will the offense be ready to go by the time the season starts.

**2019 expectations:** Our first goal is always to win the region. The 3A North is a sneaky good region with quality athletes all around. The coaching staff at Page, Tuba City, Monument Valley, Ganado and Window Rock are filled with coaches of high football smart and they are men of character. It will be tough fight every week.

#### Monument Valley

**Head coach:** Bryan Begay.

**Years as school's head coach:** 15.

**2018 record:** 4-6.

**Returning starters on offense:** Soph. QB Andrew Sheppard (5-10, 155); Sr. G Simeon Thinn (6-0, 190); Jr. G Latrell Maloney (5-



**LB Evan Lovett, Pusch Ridge** (photo by Darin Sicurello of max-preps.com)

11, 225).

**Returning starters on defense:** Soph. DB Andrew Sheppard (5-10, 155); Sr. G/LB Simeon Thinn (6-0, 190); Jr. G/LB Latrell Maloney (5-11, 225).

**Strengths of offense heading into the summer:** Second year at the helm at starting quarterback, Andrew Sheppard, to get better with his reads and his ability to trust his knowledge of one complete varsity season. A good group of young, talented players have been showing up for the weight room and spring practice.

**Strengths of defense heading into the summer:** Looking for our linebackers to get and continue to get well equipped in the 4-3 defense.

**What are your team's biggest question marks heading into the summer:** We're going to be very young. Which is exciting. Most people say you win games with senior leadership. I'm hoping our youth develops quickly and understand their roles quick. We may start and play some freshmen this season because they are that talented to play at the varsity level. Our junior high program went 13-2.

**2019 expectations:** Same as every season. Win as many games possible. Win the 3A North. Make the playoffs. Advance as far as we can.





**Senior DE Jason Petty, Sabino** (photo by Darin Sicurello of maxpreps.com)

#### **Tuba City**

**Head coach:** Vincent Lee.

**Years as school's head coach:** 1.

**2018 record:** 1-9.

**Returning starters on offense:** Jr. FB Seth Brown (6-0, 187).

**Returning starters on defense:** Jr. DT Julian Reyes (5-6, 165); Jr. DB Sean Kaya (5-8, 150).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Returning backfield combined with an ever improving offensive line.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Returning young line-backer unit is looking to lead and dictate defensive improvement.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Will the team commit to summer conditioning, hold each other accountable and improve as a team. Will the underclassmen step up and challenge the upperclassmen. Who will emerge as a leader and take control of the team.

**2019 expectations:** All members of the team commit to summer workouts in order to further develop fundamentals and drastically improve the defense and run game. Develop leaders who will help to drive the team into the level of improvement. Compete and improve on last year's conference record and overall record.

#### **Page**

**Head coach:** Leland Billy.

**Years as school's head coach:** 1.

**2018 record:** 10-2.

**Returning starters on offense:** Sr., ATH., Gabe Gomez, (5-9, 170); Jr., QB Robert Smith, (5-11, 160); Sr., TE., Kimball Begay,

(6-0, 190); Sr., FB., Nick Yazzie, (6-0, 220); Sr., OL., Andrew Curley, (5-9, 205); Sr., OL., Conner Begay, (5-11, 280).

**Returning starters on defense:** Sr., DB., Giovanni Coulson, (5-9, 150); Sr., DB., Gabe Gomez, (5-9, 170); Sr., LB., Kimball Begay, (6-0, 190).

#### **3A SOUTH REGION**

##### **Catalina**

**Head coach:** Chris Barlow.

**Years as school's head coach:** 1.

**2018 record:** 3-7.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DB Brandon Hussey (5-9, 175), 40 tackles.

##### **Pusch Ridge**

**Head coach:** Jerry Harris.

**Years as school's head coach:** 3.

**2018 record:** 5-6.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. WR. Antone Brack (5-11, 140); Sr. RB Ryan Garcia (5-8, 170), 373 yards rushing; Sr. OL Jackson Kubiak (5-9, 195); Sr. OL Henry Newman (6-0, 165); Jr. RB, Evan Lovett (6-1, 195), 1,192 yards rushing, 13 TDs, 204 yards receiving; Jr. TE Phillip Raica (6-0, 205).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DB, Antone Brack (5-11, 140); Sr. LB, Ryan Garcia (5-8, 170); Sr. LB, Jackson Kubiak (5-9, 195), 66 tackles; Sr. DB, Will Mauer (6-0, 155); Jr. LB, Evan Lovett (6-1, 195), 63 tackles, 5 sacks; Sr. DL, Phillip Raica (6-0, 205), 45 tackles.

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Proven running backs. Improved OL.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Experienced line-backer corps.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** QB Competition. Limited upperclassmen.

**2019 expectations:** Make playoffs. Win region.

#### **Sabino**

**Head coach:** Ryan McBrayer.

**Years as school's head coach:** 2.

**2018 record:** 10-3.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. WR Diego Armijo (6-2, 180); Jr. QB AJ Skaggs (6-0, 190), 1,624 yards passing, 20 TDs; Jr. OT Zach Brown (6-1, 240); Sr. OT Brian Castellanos (6-0, 200); Sr. OG Max Rabich (5-9, 180); Sr. TE/WR, Jayson Petty (6-2, 200), 554 yards receiving, 10 TDs.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. CB Draven Carsten (5-9, 160); Sr. SS Daniel McAllister (5-9, 170), 42 tackles; Sr. FS Diego Armijo (6-2, 180), 60 tackles, 6 INTs; Sr. DT Brian Castellanos (6-2, 200); Sr. DE Jayson Petty (6-2, 200), 41 tackles, 10 sacks; Sr. LB Marceise Stubblefield (6-1, 180), 53 tackles.

**Also keep an eye on:** Jr. LB Luke Thompson (6-0, 185); Sr. RB Andrew Owen (5-10, 160); So. DE/TE Michael Masunas (6-3, 225); Jr. OT/DT Adam Brauer (6-5, 300).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Returning QB with all the intangibles. Athletes at the skill positions.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Ball hawking secondary. Athletic LBs. Bookend DEs.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Young guys stepping into key roles. O-Line depth.

**2019 expectations:** Compete each week. Earn a playoff spot.

## **Safford**

**Head coach:** Eric Hjalmanson.

**Years as school's head coach:** 2.

**2018 record:** 7-5.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB, Jelick Arbizio (5-9, 170); Sr. FB, Robert White (5-10, 185); Sr. RB, Sam Tobias (6-1, 205); Sr. QB, Mason Duros (5-10, 180), 704 yards passing; Sr. WR, Justin Torrio (6-2, 165), 234 yards receiving; Sr. OL, Zach Juarez (6-0, 230); Jr. RB, CJ Scrivner (6-1, 185), 1.149 yards rushing, 14 TDs, 258 yards receiving.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DL, Zach Juarez (6-1, 230); Sr. LB, Sam Tobias (6-2, 205), 55 tackles; Sr. LB, Robert White (5-10, 185), 105 tackles; Sr. FS, Jerick Arbizio (5-9, 170), 39 tackles; Sr. DB, Justin Torrio (6-2, 165); Jr. LB, CJ Scrivner (6-1, 185); Jr. DB, Jared Garcia (5-10, 160).

## **Sahuarita**

**Head coach:** Don Watt.

**Years as school's head coach:** 1.

**2018 record:** 6-4.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. C/DL, RJ Ahumada (6-2, 250); Sr. G/DL, Malakyde Alatasi (6-2, 250); So. G/DL, Elizaiah Toaiva (6-0, 245); Jr. T/DL, Mona Molio'o (6-0, 235); Sr. T/DL, Franky Brito (5-10, 240); Sr. RB/FS, Cristian Gonzales (6-2, 185), 478 yards rushing, 358 yards receiving; Sr. RB/LB, Bryce Williams (5-6, 150); Sr. RB/LB, Michael Molio'o (5-10, 200); Jr. ATH, Gabe Elias (6-0, 150); Sr. WR/Sec, Osten Sherry (6-0, 150).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. C/DL, RJ Ahumada (6-2, 250), 59 tackles; Sr. G/DL, Malakyde Alatasi (6-2, 250); So. G/DL, Elizaiah Toaiva (6-0, 245); Jr. T/DL, Mona Molio'o (6-0, 235); Sr. T/DL, Franky Brito (5-10, 240); Sr. RB/FS, Cristian Gonzales (6-2, 185); Sr. RB/LB, Bryce Williams (5-6, 150); Sr. RB/LB, Michael Molio'o (5-10, 200); Jr. ATH, Gabe Elias (6-0, 150); Sr. WR/Sec, Osten Sherry (6-0, 150).

**Also keep an eye on:** Jr. QB, Ezequiel Casas (5-6, 140); Jr. ATH, Anthony Giarraputo (5-9, 155); Sr. RB/LB, Jacob Terrell (5-9, 165).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Offensive line. Endurance, Speed.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** DI/LB. Experience.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** "Next man up?" at a few positions. Staying healthy. Continue improving on current trajectory.

**2019 expectations:** Improve on record from last year. Improve on the number of players going to college.

## **Tanque Verde**

**Head coach:** Jeremiah Johnson.

**Years as school's head coach:** 5.

**2018 record:** 2-8.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB Ty Bennett (6-3, 170); Sr. TB, Kahlo Valenzuela (6-0, 165); Sr. C Colton Karulski (5-10, 220); Sr. T Dalton Felish (6-2, 254); Sr. FB, Chase Birch (5-10, 163); Jr. G Isaac Moran (5-10, 210); Jr. G Landen Lee (5-11, 270); Jr. HB, Dillon Simmers (5-11, 170).

**Also keep an eye on:** So. LB, Garrett Smith (5-11, 165); So. DT, Terrence Oathout (5-9, 230); So. WR, Calvin Jones (6-1, 160).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Solid line coming back and returning backfield.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** New defensive coordinator. Returning LBs.



**Junior RB C.J. Scrivner, Safford (photo by Darin Sicurello of maxpreps.com)**

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Numbers. Who is going to put in the hard work to get better.

**2019 expectations:** Play attack defense and be gap sound. Score 25 points or more a game. Plus-2 in turnovers. No fumbles. Limit mental mistakes.

## **REGION NOTES**

3A South teams have played for a state title three of the last four years.

## **3A EAST REGION**

### **Blue Ridge**

**Head coach:** Bob Lindon.

**Years as school's head coach:** 4.

**2018 record:** 6-5.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Jr. QB PJ London (6-1, 195).

### **Holbrook**

**Head coach:** Christopher Starkey.

**Years as school's head coach:** 1.

**2018 record:** 1-7.

**Returning starters on offense:** Sr., G., Coran Gary, (6-4, 320); Sr., QB/WR, Tyson Begay (5-10, 160); Sr. RB/WR., Myron Begay, (5-8, 135); Sr., RB/H-Back, Shylan Shay (5-8, 190); Sr., TE/H-Back, Gabe Baker, (6-3, 205); Sr., WR/QB, John Lee, (6-0, 160); Jr., RB/H-Back, John O'Brien, (5-7, 170); Jr., WR., Keith Scheurman, (5-10, 160); Jr., WR., Angel Baca, (5-9, 150); Jr., WR., Ter-



rence Silversmith, (5-9, 150).

**Returning starters on defense:** Sr., NT, Coran Gray, (6-4, 320); Sr. S., Tyson Begay, (5-10, 160); Sr., S., Myron Begay, (5-8, 135); Sr., LB/DE., Shylan Shay, (5-8, 190); Sr., DE, Gabe Baker, (6-3, 205); Sr., C., John Lee, (6-0, 160); Jr., LB/DE., John O'Brien, (5-7, 170); Jr. CB., Keith Scheurman, (5-10, 160); Jr. CB., Angel Baca, (5-9, 150); Jr., CB., Terrence Silversmith, (5-9, 150); Soph., LB., Malakeal Johnson, (5-8, 170).

**Strengths on offense heading into summer:** Older skill position players who have experienced playing multiple spots, which can make us versatile in our attack. Small but quick and will take advantage of having athletic individuals in all 11 spots.

**Strengths on defense heading into summer:** Athletes who love to play hard and fast. What is lacked in skill will be made up for in effort and communication.

**What are your biggest question marks heading into the summer:** Can we finish the season? After forfeiting the last two games of the season last year, due to ineligibility and health issues, can we finish the year and start to change the culture here in Holbrook. We are building something special but will not sacrifice doing things the right way to get back on track. We believe by doing things the right way first, over time the culture will come and 'The Holbrook Way' will be established. Consistency in coaches and players over the past two years resulted in an uphill battle, but we had a descent showing during spring ball. Everything has been laid out there. The upperclassmen know what is at stake.

**2019 expectations:** Develop the 'new normal at Holbrook'. We will establish a way of doing things the right way but will carry on for years to come. Develop an understanding of do right, do your best, and consider others in all situations. Develop a tradition of leadership and accountability. Develop an understanding that football is a pathway to give us life skills, such as teamwork, hard work, being on time, discipline, persistence and commitment. Tools that will carry us and allow us to be the best we can be in whatever we choose to pursue. Develop a team identity, what is our team about? How will we compete in practice? How will we compete in games? How will we compete when things go best? Develop a giving relationship with our community and other groups on campus. Understand the greater good.

#### **Payson**

**Head coach:** Bryan Burke.

**Years as school's head coach:** 1.

**2018 record:** 4-6.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Jr. QB Trevor Cline (6-1, 185); Sr. WR Jesse Conway (6-2, 180); Sr. WR Trevor Flores (5-7, 145); Sr. TE Porter Flake (5-10, 180); Sr. RB Kyle Shepard (5-7, 150); Jr. RB Bladimir Benitez (5-8, 160); Sr. OL Will Howell, SR OL (6-4, 220); Jr. OL Soto Sellis (5-9, 210).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Jr. SS Trevor Cline (6-1, 185); Sr. FS Jesse Conway (6-2, 180); Sr. CB Trevor Flores (5-7, 145); Sr. MLB Porter Flake (5-10, 180); Sr. LB Kyle Shepard (5-7, 150); Sr. DE Will Howell (6-4, 220); Jr. DE/DT Soto Sellis (5-9, 210); Jr. CB Jojo Ortiz (5-7, 140); So. Travis Christianson (5-10, 180).

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. RB Marques Alcorta (5-9, 185); So. WR Josh Reynolds (6-0, 165); Sr. OL/DL James Watson (5-10, 195).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Our strength this year is in the quality depth in our running back and receiver positions. We have the ability to run the ball downhill consistently and get some athletes out in space.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Depth in the line-backer and secondary positions. We have a very athletic and intelligent group which has increased the scope of our defense. We also have a very athletic defensive line that can play both the run and pass rush effectively.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Lack of experience in the offensive/defensive line.

#### **Show Low**

**Head coach:** Monte Maxwell.

**Years as school's head coach:** 3.

**2018 record:** 4-7.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB Colton McGinnis (6-6, 175), 1,847 yards passing, 13 TDs; Sr. RB Cal Fawcett (5-9, 150), 214 yards rushing, 340 yards receiving, 93 tackles; Sr. WR Keegan Clark (6-1, 165), 915 yards receiving, 81 tackles.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. Zachary Maxwell (6-0, 200), 103 tackles; Sr. Anthony Avila (6-0, 265), 86 tackles; Sr. Jack Baird (5-1, 175), 79 tackles.

#### **Snowflake**

**Head coach:** Kay Solomon.

**Years as school's head coach:** 4.

**2018 record:** 9-3.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB, Ethan Ramage (6-2, 170), 1,653 yards passing and 12 TDs; Sr. RB, Brigden Turley (5-9, 200), 821 yards rushing; Sr. OL, Jordan Patton (6-0, 210); Sr. OL, Logan Whitman (6-1, 250); Jr. OL, Carter Solomon (6-1, 280); So. K, Samuel Crocket (5-8, 155).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. LB, Brigden Turley (5-9, 200); Jr. LB, Terren Green (5-11, 190); Jr. FS, Mayson McKinlay (5-9, 180); Sr. DL, Jordan Patton (6-0, 210). Also keep an eye on: Sr. WR/DB, Jacob Ballard (5-10, 160); Sr. DB Shandon Hatch (5-6, 150); Sr. RB/LB, Isaac Dally (5-8, 170); Sr. WR/DB, Kadin Foote (6-3, 155).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Returning QB. Returning RB Turley was our leading rusher. More depth than usual at RB/WR positions.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Returning DC Art Hargrove. Depth at DL positions. Depth at LB positions.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Can we get inexperienced players ready for a very tough early season schedule? Can we improve our offensive output both passing and running game? Can we maintain solid defensive play? Can we use some of our depth to our advantage?

**2019 expectations:** Build team chemistry. Win all five non-region games in August and September. Win 3A East Region. Host two home playoff games in November. Win the 3A conference championship.

#### **Winslow**

**Head coach:** Brandon Guzman.

**2018 record:** 6-5.

**Returning starters on offense:** Sr., C., Braden Williams, (5-9, 215); Sr., T., Cameron Wilbanks, (6-1, 250); Sr., RB., Mason Scott, (5-10, 205); Sr. WR., Dylan Sanders, (5-10, 125).

**Returning starters on defense:** Sr., OLB., Mason Scott (5-10, 205); Sr., OLB, Braden Williams, (5-9, 215); Jr., DB., Sonny Wilbanks, (5-8, 165); Jr., DB., Joseph Gonzales, (6-0, 165); Jr., MLB., Aiden Ortiz-Kislingbury, (5-6, 185).

**Strengths of offense heading into the summer:** Power run game. Young QB with huge potential.

**Strengths of defense heading into the summer:** Depth on the DL; Returning three starting linebackers.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Young wide receivers; Replacing two starters on the OL.

**2019 expectations:** Make the playoffs; Replacing two starters on the OL.

### 3A WEST REGION

#### Chino Valley

**Head coach:** Wade Krug.

**Years as school's head coach:** 6.

**2018 record:** 4-6.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. TB Trevor Gianfrancesco (6-1, 195); Sr. QB Tyler Carey (6-2, 168); Sr. TE JR Willingham (6-3, 185); Jr. WR Dante DeBono, 11, WR (5-10, 147); Jr. OL Rudy Melendez (6-2, 215); Jr. OL Evan Sosa (5-10, 210); Sr. OL Mike McCarty (5-10, 185).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. MLB Trevor Gianfrancesco (6-1, 195); Sr. FS Tyler Carey (6-2, 168); Sr. SS JR Willingham (6-3, 185); Jr. CB Dante DeBono (5-10, 147); Jr. DE Rudy Melendez (6-2, 215); Jr. DT Evan Sosa (5-10, 210); So. DE Dakota McMains (6-2, 212).

**Also keep an eye on:** So. LB Demitre Insalaco (5-10, 185); So. DB/QB Jayden Smith (5-8, 153); Jr. LB David Holmes (6-1, 179); Jr. OL Alex Ayala (5-10, 208).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Depth (Lots of players returning with experience). Starters returning with 2-3 years of experience. Offensive Line with Experience.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Speed. Attitude. Playing experience depth.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Leadership. Who will become the leader of the team? Who will become the "PLAYMAKER" on offense. How will they adapt to the changes on offense and defense.

**2019 expectations:** Start off the season with a winning record before the start of region play. Establish ourselves as team early in games. Build upon the last 3 seasons.

#### Kingman

**Head coach:** Cam Wierson.

**Years as school's head coach:** 3.

**2018 record:** 3-7.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** So. QB Lamar Jackson, 335 yards passing; Jr. QB Austin Dias (5-8), 251 yards passing, 551 yards rushing; Sr. RB Gavin Randall, 324 yards rushing.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. Powers Corbin, 52 tackles, 2 sacks.

#### Kingman Academy

**Head coach:** John Morgando.

**Years as school's head coach:** 1.

**2018 record:** 3-7.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. WR, Dallas Edwards (6-2, 160); Sr. Braden Judd (6-1, 175); Sr. WR, Connor Alleman (6-0, 170); Jr. QB Charlie Anderson (6-0, 170); Jr. T Matthew Eads (5-11, 170); Jr. G, Michael Eads (5-9, 190); Jr. Donovan Flanigan (5-9, 220).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. CB, Dallas Edwards (6-2, 160); Sr. SS. Braden Judd (6-1, 175); Sr. LB, Connor Alleman (6-0, 170); Jr. FS, Charlie Anderson (6-0, 170); Jr. LB, Matthew Eads (5-11, 170); Jr. DT, Donovan Flanigan (5-9, 220); Jr. DE, Isaac Cater (5-8, 175).



**TE Cade McAfee, Benjamin Franklin** (photo by Mark Jones of maxpreps.com)

**Also keep an eye on:** So. T, Logan Sealy (6-4, 260).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Lot of experience this year and we are still young. We should be able to spread the ball out and pass and run well.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** We are a young group still returning several starters. Our LB are a strong spot for us.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Offensive line and depth in all positions.

**2019 expectations:** Looking to improve over last year's record and be a more competitive team. We have a higher set of expectations in year two.

#### Northwest Christian

**Head coach:** David Inness.

**Years as school's head coach:** 9.

**2018 record:** 13-1.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Jr. OT Cameron Sterner (6-2, 270); Sr. WR/RB Cameron Adams (5-9, 170); QB Johnathan Metzger (6-2, 175), 1,355 yards passing, 22 TDs; Sr. QB/WB Easton Meier (5-11, 190), 349 yards passing.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Jr. DL Cameron Sterner (6-2, 270); Jr. DL Ben Strawn (6-2, 210); Sr. DB Cameron Adams (5-9, 170), 47 tackles, 7 INTs.

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. LB/RB Jacob Sherwood (5-10, 190); Sr. LB/RB Austin Young (6-1, 210); Sr. RB/DB Corbin Hulbert (5-8, 150).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Senior QBs



Johnathan Metzger and Easton Meier are great leaders and have played in big games. Two senior backs have great size and run hard (Jacob Sherwood and Austin Young). Good group of young linemen that have worked really hard in the off season. Group who loves to play and will play hard for four quarters.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Understanding our system and how we play our defense. Great group of young players waiting to take their turn. Inside of our defense with the two senior LB's and Cameron Sterner and Ben Strawn on the DL. Corners will be a strength for our defense. Great kids who have grown up in our system.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Which young guys will step up and win starting positions. Going to be a fun summer. Lots of learning. We're going to be young and fun.

**2019 expectations:** To play hard and play right and to be playing our best football at the end of the year. To be in the hunt the young guys don't know any better.

### **River Valley**

**Head coach:** Jonathan Clark.

**Years as school's head coach:** 1.

**2018 record:** 4-6.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB Seth Christy (6-2), 1,235 yards passing; Jr. RB Richard Vega (5-6, 185); 477 yards rushing; Sr. CB Sam Evans (5-11, 165) 416 yards receiving.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DB Isaac Miller (5-7) 43 tackles.

### **Wickenburg**

**Head coach:** Mike L Mitchell.

**Years as school's head coach:** 1.

**2018 record:** 8-3.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Jr. ATH Bryson Alder (5-10, 160), 350 yards receiving, 68 tackles, 6 INTs.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. LB Michael Flinn (5-10, 160), 92 tackles; Jr. LB Clay Watson (5-11, 175), 62 tackles; Sr. DE Wyatt Grantham (6-3, 225), 46 tackles, 5 sacks.

### **3A CENTRAL REGION**

#### **American Leadership Academy – QC**

**Head coach:** Rich Edwards.

**Years as school's head coach:** 6.

**2018 record:** 8-2.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB, Rand Jensen (6-1, 190), 894 yards passing, 10 TDs.; Sr. WR, Carter Taylor (5-11, 180); Sr. WR, Ethen Cluff (5-11, 180), 565 yards receiving; So. RB, Aziyah Jamison (6-0, 190), 672 yards rushing; Sr. LG A.J. McCambley (6-2, 225); Sr. LT Brandon Dees (6-2, 210); Sr. RG Jackson McBride (6-6, 260); Sr. RT Taylor Atkin (6-4, 250).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. RT Taylor Atkin (6-4, 250); Sr. WR, Carter Taylor (5-11, 180); Sr. WR, Ethen Cluff (5-11, 180); Jr. DE, Micah Ferrin (6-5, 225), 45 tackles; Sr. DE, Marcus Ferrin (6-3, 225), 56 tackles, 7 sacks; Sr. CB Cole Bailey (6-0, 180); Sr. NG, Payton Henderson (6-1, 230); Sr. MLB, Logan Call (6-0, 190), 58 tackles.

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. OL/DL, Brett Coplen (6-3, 240); Jr. WR/DB, Dom Ruffalo (5-10, 170).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Experience at all skill positions. Key lineman returning. Running Back position.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Experience. Aggressiveness. Well coached.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Offensive line. Team discipline. Middle linebacker.

#### **American Leadership Academy – Ironwood**

**Head coach:** Michael Smith.

**Years as school's head coach:** 2.

**2018 record:** 1-9.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB Jake Malloy (6-1, 160), 936 yards passing.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** So. FS Andrew Fearn (5-8, 140), 4 INTs.

#### **Benjamin Franklin**

**Head coach:** Dave Jefferies.

**Years as school's head coach:** 4.

**2018 record:** 7-5.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB, Danner Bowen (5-10, 160); Sr. TE, Cade McAfee (5-10, 190); Sr. RB, Zach Jefferies (6-0, 180), 587 yards rushing; So. OL, Cole Parker (5-10, 225); Sr. OL, Matthew Teuscher (5-9, 185); Jr. OL, Dean Terrill (5-9, 215); Jr. OL, Noah Badger (5-9, 160); Jr. ATH, Dayson Blair (5-8, 135).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DL, Tanner Willis (5-10, 200); Sr. DB, Danner Bowen (5-10, 160); Sr. LB, Cade McAfee (5-10, 190), 127 tackles; Sr. DL, Jacob Glover (6-0, 185); Sr. LB, Matthew Teuscher (5-9, 185), 52 tackles; Jr. DL, Dean Terrill (5-9, 215); Jr. LB, Noah Badger (5-9, 160); Sr. DB Braiden Moffat (5-8, 150).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** We return 4-of-5 on the OL.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Returning five of our front seven defenders.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Several starters were injured for multiple games last year so we're hoping to avoid the injury bug this time around.

**2019 expectations:** Earn that 11th game!

#### **Coolidge**

**Head coach:** Rodger Schenks.

**Years as school's head coach:** 0.

**2018 record:** 7-4.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** QB/FS Val Rodriguez (5-10, 165), 1,572 yards passing, 22 TDs, 548 yards rushing.; LB/RB Michael Bosques (5-10, 190); WR/DB Jonathon Martinez (6-0, 175); C/DL Joseph Cardenas (6-1, 205); WR/DB Tyler Tolley (5-9, 160).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** DB/WR Auggie Chaing (5-10 165); DL/QB Jacob Gunter (6-2, 205); LB/TE Angelo Palacios (5-11, 185), 80 tackles.

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Experienced QB and skill players.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Very aggressive and disciplined.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Depth.

**2019 expectations:** Team goal is to make the playoffs.

#### **Florence**

**Head coach:** Scott Howard.

**Years as school's head coach:** 5.

**2018 record:** 3-7.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. RB, Joshua Maignan (5-11, 190), 1,39 yards rushing, 12 TDs; Sr. WR, Kamden White (5-11, 175); Sr. TE, Regen Terry (6-4, 240); Sr. OT,

# Florence's Terry Ready to Lead Troops

By Andy Morales  
azpreps365.com

Florence is located southeast of Gilbert, just beyond Queen Creek and San Tan Valley.

It's a community with about 35,000 residents. One would have to believe that Regen Terry is probably one of the most recognizable faces in town – especially on Friday nights.

He stands 6-feet, 4-inches and weighs 225-pounds and. The Florence High standout also is walking around town with 13 Division I offers.

azpreps365.com caught up with the big man on his campus and community before he really starts terrorizing offenses.

**Q:** Tell us about your college offers and what your timeline is for making a decision. We understand you have 13 offers and some recruiting sites have predicted you will chose Boston College.

**A:** Yes, sir. I have 13 offers right now and I hope to get that down to my top six by the end of July or maybe the first week of August. I plan on making my final decision for the early signing period. I made about six or seven visits, and I will be visiting Utah next.

**Q:** You have some strong connections with Boston College. Can you tell us about those?

**A:** My father (Reggie Terry) works there (Terry is in his fifth season as assistant athletics director for football operations and player personnel.) and my brother, Reggie Terry Jr., plays there (6-4, 240 redshirt sophomore DE), but I haven't made that decision yet.

**Q:** You came to Arizona in 2007 because your father worked for the Arizona Cardinals as the director of football administration. Why did you pick Florence?

**A:** We moved here from New York and we felt it was a good fit. It's a great community and we found a place where we could come to high school and make a mark for ourselves.

**Q:** Florence must be pretty excited for your success.

**A:** Yes. We had a down season last year. We are working hard as a team and, for myself, I want to cap off what I did last year (75 tackles, 35 unassisted and 5 sacks) and put my head in the dirt every six seconds and try to make a statement.



Senior defensive end Regen Terry (#52), Florence (photo by Mark Jones of maxpreps.com)

**Q:** What positions have college coaches told you they would like to see you play?

**A:** I'm very multiple, and I can play end or even outside line-backer. I feel I can dominate at any position they will put me in.

**Q:** Tell us about a player on your team who deserves more recognition.

**A:** Our running back Joshua Maignan. He's a very good player – a baller straight up. He will control the offense and I'll do the same on defense. We are a good duo.

Timothy Lewis (6-2, 255); Sr. OG, Gabe Valdez (5-9, 265); Jr. WR, Malik Payton (5-11, 160), 491 yards receiving; Jr. WR, Kaleb White (5-8, 150); Jr. QB, Christopher Walter (6-3, 185), 1,402 yards passing, 13 TDs; Jr. OG, Jayvian Montanez (5-11, 240).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DE, Regen Terry (6-4, 240), 72 tackles; Sr. CB, Joshua Maignan (5-11, 190); Sr. FS, Kyon Minatee (5-10, 175); Jr. DT, Kolton Stone (6-2, 310); So. CB, Isaac Sandoval (6-0, 175); So. LB, Victor Aguirre (6-1, 195).

**Also keep an eye on:** So. DE, Ryan King (6-2, 205); So. LB, Jim Bruin (6-0, 190); So. OT, Aiden Cook (6-0, 235); So. WR, Tommy Carberry (5-8, 145).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Experienced offensive line. Play making ability. Skill positions.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Athletic. Physical. Disciplined.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Depth.

**2019 expectations:** Be explosive offensively. Play a physical brand of defense. Win the Central Region. Have two home playoff games. Compete for a 3A state title.

## San Tan Foothills

**Head coach:** Jeremy Sather.

**Years as school's head coach:** 0.

**2018 record:** 3-7.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** So. QB Brett Lincoln (5-11, 150), 449 yards passing; Jr. WR Cutter Kuhl (5-7, 140), 584 yards rushing.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Jr. CB Ethan Lunsford (6-0, 145), 34 tackles.

## 3A METRO EAST REGION

**Arizona College Prep**

**Head coach:** Myron Blueford.





**Joel Diaz, Arizona College Prep** (photo courtesy of Steve Chadwick)



**Ahmed Momoh, Fountain Hills** (photo by Mark Jones of maxpreps.com)



**Louie Lopez, Bourgade Catholic** (photo by Mark Jones of maxpreps.com)

**Years as school's head coach:** 2.

**2018 record:** 1-9.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Jr. QB, Mark Chavez (6-0, 190), 1,715 yards passing, 15 TDs; Jr. RB, Mario Duncan (5-11, 165), 212 yards rushing; Jr. WR, Bryan Dyson (5-11, 150), 1,050 yards receiving, 11 TDs; Sr. WR, James Chadwick (6-0, 175); Sr. WR, Dawson Moulesong (6-2, 150); So. WR, Bryce Chen (5-10, 160), 460 yards receiving; So. Center, Deven Kukreja (5-10, 245); So. Tackle, Keaton Messerole (6-0, 235); Sr. Guard, Octavio Diaz (6-1, 190).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DE Eric Decoster (5-10, 205), 4 sacks; Sr. DE Alex Gilchrist (6-1, 190); Jr. OLB, Kolby Forshee (5-10, 170); Jr. MLB, Kellen Gibson (6-2, 210), 7 sacks, 125 tackles; Sr. SS, Saar Zutshi (5-9, 195); Jr. FS, Joel Diaz (6-1, 180), 5 INTs, 98 tackles; Sr. CB Ihtiram Muh-tady (5-11, 145).

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. DB, Ahlias Jones (6-1, 175); Jr. DB/WR, Caden Churnetski (5-11, 145).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** We return all of our skill players with more knowledge of the offense. Our players have gotten stronger and faster.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Have D1 players on defense. We are bigger and more physical. Have a new DC, Javier Zuluaga, that will set a culture on defense.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Our running game is our question mark. We need to run block better and run downhill.

**2019 expectations:** We will have our first winning season. Making the playoffs.

#### **American Leadership Academy - Gilbert North**

**Head coach:** Randy Ricedorff.

**Years as school's head coach:** 2.

**2018 record:** 6-5.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Jr. QB, Jack Ricedorff (6-2, 190), 2,234 yards passing, 25 TDs; Sr. FB, Kayden Orna (5-10, 210); So. TB, Matt Ohlund (6-2, 195), 547 yards rushing; Sr. WR, Taggart Caskey (6-1, 195); Sr. WR, Malakai

Williams (6-5, 205); Sr. Slot, Jacob King (5-10, 175); Sr. C, Kade Thorley (6-2, 275).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DE, Cayden Orna (5-10, 210), 46 tackles; So. LB, Matt Ohlund (6-2, 195); Sr. SS, Taggart Caskey (6-1, 195), 3 INTs; Sr. DE, Malakai Williams (6-5, 205); Sr. FS, Jacob King (5-10, 175); Sr. CB Zach Brown (6-3, 180); Sr. CB Jake McAleavy (6-1, 185); Sr. DT, Salesi Morello (6-2, 210).

**Also keep an eye on:** Jr. OL/DL, Breyson Wilcock (6-3, 270); Jr. OL/DL, Angel Nance (510, 240); Jr. OL/DL, Alex Wright (6-3, 265); Jr. OL/DL, Seth McAfee (6-2, 230).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Returning first team all-state QB. All Skill kids return. Great balance to both run and pass.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** All four DBs are seniors and are returning starters. Cayden Orna first team All-State DE. Great depth on the defensive line.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** We need to create depth in the off season at most positions. Continue to develop a young offensive line.

**2019 expectations:** State Championship. Region Championship. Undefeated.

#### **Coronado**

**Head coach:** Curt LeBlanc.

**Years as school's head coach:** 2.

**2018 record:** 1-9.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB Mikel James (5-9, 175), 1,480 yards passing, 629 yards rushing; Jr. WR Daijon Safford (6-0, 165), 647 yards receiving; Sr. OG Tim Allen (6-0, 250); So. TE Anthony Goseyun (6-2, 185); Jr. WR Isaiah Brown (6-1, 165).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. SS Mikel James (5-9, 175), 49 tackles.; Jr. OLB Isaiah Brown (6-1, 165), 42 tackles; Sr. OLB Owen Peabody (6-1, 170); Jr. LB Jalen Cardenas (5-7, 165); Jr. FS Daijon Safford (6-0, 165); Jr. LB William Bermejo (5-10, 165); Sr. DB Robert Kendricks (6-0, 170); Sr. DB Juan Booth (5-10, 165).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Two-year starter at QB. Returning starter at WR. New offensive coordinator.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Return leading tackler. Return starting LBs. New defensive coordinator.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Total numbers in program. Ability to learn two new schemes. Staying healthy for duration of season.

**2019 expectations:** No eligibility issues. No injuries. Improve on last season.

#### **Fountain Hills**

**Head coach:** Jason Henslin.

**Years as school's head coach:** 3.

**2018 record:** 7-4.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. RB, Ahmed Momoh (6-1, 191); Sr. WR, Caden Poole (6-0, 175), 287 yards receiving; Sr. WR, Hunter Richards (5-8, 150); Jr. LT, Hafeez, Momoh (6-2, 208), 570 yards rushing; Jr. QB, Shane Davenport (6-2, 175); Jr. C, Brandon Becher (5-8, 165); Jr. G, Sal Luna (6-0, 255); Jr. G, Evyn Lappe (5-10, 172); So. RT, JT Despain (6-0, 190).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. SS, Ahmed Momoh (6-1, 191), 73 tackles, 12 sacks; Sr. CB, Caden Poole (6-0, 175); Sr. DT, Canyon Coplan (5-11, 185); Jr. MLB Momoh Hafeez (6-2, 208), 111 tackles, 5.5 sacks; Jr. DT, Sal Luna (6-0, 255); Jr. MLB, Evyn Lappe (5-10, 172); So. CB, Boden Davidson (5-9, 158).

**Also keep an eye on:** So. ATH, Bruin Smith (5-11, 170).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Experience. We started seven under classmen on offense last year. Speed.

We've got fast skill players and a fast o-line. Also last year's Region POY, RB Ahmed Momoh, is our fastest player. Depth. We've got 5-6 WRs who could all start. Two good QBs. Eight quality O-linemen.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Experience, with seven starters returning and young guys ready to step in we should be a very stingy defense. Aggressive. Ahmed Momoh was second in the state in sacks last year with 12. We also have several others than can get after the QB. Growth, with so many young starters last year it will be fun to see how they compete with added strength and size. Our best defender, Hafeez Momoh, has added 15 lbs. of muscle and gotten much stronger.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** We have athletes, we have experience, can we take the next step and compete against the big boys like NWC, Valley Christian, and others.

**2019 expectations:** Our goal for 2019 is to be in every game. We should not have big losses like last year because we won't be as young and inexperienced. We also want to see a big jump in our offensive production. With more upperclassman in starting roles this should be accomplished. My expectation is that we go from five wins to more like 7 or 8 wins in the regular season.

#### **Gilbert Christian**

**Head coach:** Danny Norris.

**Years as school's head coach:** 0.

**2018 record:** 3-7.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. RB, Miles Kruse (5-9, 170); Sr. RB, Weston Zierer (5-10, 170); Sr. OL, Connor Swingle (5-11, 2050); Sr. OL/FB, Joe Dickerson (5-9, 210); Sr. OL/TE, Tate Whitlow (5-11, 200); Sr. QB, Tyson Heyn (6-4, 180); Jr. RB/TE, Brody Curtner, (5-11, 160); Sr. RB/QB, Cole Sundt (5-9, 170); So. OL, Sean Phelps (6-2, 210); Jr. OL, Luke Webb (5-



**Nathaniel Smith, Paradise Honors** (photo by Darin Sicurello of [maxpreps.com](http://maxpreps.com))

10, 190); Jr. OL/TE, Cooper Payne (6-1, 185).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DB, Cole Sundt (5-9, 170); Jr. DB, Marcus McWilliams (5-10, 165); So. DE, Sean Phelps (6-2, 210); Sr. LB/S, Tyson Heyn (6-4, 180); Jr. LB, Darion Martin-Dantzler (5-10, 185); Sr. DL, Joe Dickerson (5-9, 210); Sr. LB, Tate Whitlow (5-11, 200); Jr. DL/LB, Cooper Payne (6-1, 185); Jr. LB, Luke Webb (5-10, 190); Jr. LB, Jace Feely (6-0, 175); So. LB/S Matthew Hershey (5-8, 175).

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. RB/DB, Connor Wiejaczka (5-8, 150); So. RB/DB, AJ Krahling (5-8, 150).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Offensive line has been together for three years and is made up of a bunch of really great young men. Our running backs are fast and aggressive. We have multiple young men who can play QB, as they are knowledgeable and coachable. The young men in our program have been very receptive to our new offense and are ready to work.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** We have a really strong and aggressive defensive line. Smart linebackers who flow to the ball and attack. New defensive scheme this season will put our young men in position to make plays and get takeaways.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** New coaching staff, new offense, new defense: How will we respond?

**2019 expectations:** Playoffs. Team GPA over 3.25. +15 take-away margin. 4,000 yards of total offense. Average 35 points per game.





**Senior Vinnie LaGatta, Valley Christian (photo by Mark Jones of maxpreps.com)**

### 3A METRO WEST REGION

#### Bourgade Catholic

**Head coach:** Marcel Lopez.

**Years as school's head coach:** 2.

**2018 record:** 6-4.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB Louie Lopez (5-10, 132), 2,147 yards passing, 22 TDs; Sr. RB Joshua Dreher (5-7, 166), 970 yards rushing, 371 yards receiving; Sr. RB Ishmael Alvizo (5-9, 168), 292 yards rushing, 45 tackles; Jr. WR Sebastian Gameros (5-10, 155); 545 yards receiving, 12 TDs, 28 tackles, 5 INTs.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DB Mason McDowell (6-0), 43 tackles; Sr. CB Sammy Alcantar (5-8, 135), 41 tackles.

#### Odyssey Institute

**Head coach:** Jon Castellanos.

**Years as school's head coach:** 1.

**2018 record:** 8-3.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB Carson Snyder (6-3, 185), 596 yards passing; Sr. RB Chris Weaver (6-0, 180), 2,398 yards rushing, 23 TDs; Sr. RB DJ Rowe (5-7, 150), 456 yards rushing, 5 INTs.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Jr. Antonio Johnson (5-9, 150), 53 tackles, 4 sacks; Sr. DE Johnathan Velazquez (6-3, 250), 42 tackles.

#### Paradise Honors

**Head coach:** Chad Talley.

**Years as school's head coach:** 0.

**2018 record:** 3-7.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. RB Nathaniel Smith (6-0, 195), 2,006 yards rushing, 18TDs; Sr. WR David Goitia (5-6), 231 yards receiving; Jr. Benjie Castro (5-11, 185), 69 tackles; Jr. MLB Kevin Partida (5-7, 140), 49 tackles.

#### Valley Christian

**Head coach:** Kirk Sundberg.

**Years as school's head coach:** 1.

**2018 record:** 9-4.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. WR, Tanner Canfield (5-11, 165); Sr. OL, Jalen Collins (6-3, 180); Sr. QB/WR, Vinnie LaGatta (5-9, 155), 688 yards passing, 616 yards rushing, 461 yards receiving; Sr. OL, Justin Raposa (6-1, 220); Jr. WR, Andrew Hanzal (6-1, 155), 535 yards receiving.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DB, Tanner Canfield (5-11, 165); Sr. DL, Jalen Collins (6-3, 180); Sr. DB, Vinnie LaGatta (5-9, 155); Sr. DB, Ben Somora (6-1, 185); Sr. DB, Justin Stinson (6-4, 185); Sr. LB, Gage Summers (6-0, 195).

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. WR, Shane Haagsma (6-0, 195); Sr. OL/DL, Josh Heeringa (6-0, 228); Sr. TE/LB, Nick Thrappas (6-0, 180); Jr. DB/RB, Tony Gomez Jr. (5-8, 155).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Quarterback position (returning experience and young talent). Versatility of skill players (allows us to be multi-dimensional). Experience (second year in the system helps).

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Defensive backfield (only lost one starter, good young talent). Team speed. Schematic multiplicity. Good high end talent (3 potential Region D POY candidates in Stinson, Summers, Canfield).

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Line of scrimmage on both sides. Offensive back field. How will we progress from year 1 with our system and coaching staff to year 2? Will we use our influence and leadership within our school to make a positive, transformational impact on the student body?

**2019 expectations:** Compete to defend our region championship. Qualify for state playoffs. Play into late November.

#### Yuma Catholic

**Head coach:** Rhett Stallworth.

**Years as school's head coach:** 10.

**2018 record:** 11-3.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. RB Ean Chavez (5-8, 175), 1,458 yards rushing, 24 TDs, 1,121 yards receiving, 13 TDs; Sr. QB Gage Reese (5-11, 170), 4,661 yards passing, 64 TDs; Jr. WR Johna Leon (5-11, 170); OL Rennan Weatherby (6-2, 240).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** DE Donovan Armstrong (5-11, 175), 115 tackles; CB Zaire Riley (5-6, 150), 30 tackles, 3 INTs; LB Luke Kelly (5-9, 175), 92 tackles; DB Raki Malone (6-2, 175), 63 tackles.

**Also keep an eye on:** So. WR/DB Mario Martinez (6-0, 170); So. WR/DB Austin Priest So (5-11, 170).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Passing game. Running back is all state.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** None.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Only one returning offensive lineman.



**Mike Morgan, St. Johns Head Coach (photo by Jim Willittes of maxpreps.com)**

**By Oree Foster**  
**azpreps365.com**

St. Johns High School football coaching legend Mike Morgan has been there and done that throughout his illustrious 40-year career.

But what he might accomplish this year can't be overlooked. With 327 victories, Morgan is eight wins from passing the late, great Paul Moro on Arizona's all-time coaching win list.

The wins belong to a coach, but Morgan can come up with 327 reasons why his family, friends, players and the St. Johns community also deserve credit for getting him to this point.

"High school sports are competitive," Morgan said. "Football is a competitive sport. I love football. Coaching kids is rewarding, and continue to coach for the love of the game."

Since his successful high school journey began at Coolidge High as a student, Morgan's was mentored by some great coaches along the way.

At Coolidge High, where he excelled in football as a wide receiver and defensive back and as a pole vaulter, Morgan played football for coaching legend Alva Hawkins and competed in track and field for Richard Maynes.

Hawkins was in attendance when Morgan won his 250th game. After graduating from Coolidge 1973, four-time U.S. track Olympian George Young recruited Morgan to compete for him at Central Arizona College.

Morgan said Young inspired him to become an outstanding student-athlete.

"I learned a lot from coach Young," Morgan said. "Coach Young had tremendous work ethic. He was like a machine. He made me realize that I can compete with anyone. He was a dedicated world class athlete. His coaching philosophy made me realize I wanted to coach as well."

But before placing a whistle around his neck, Morgan graduated from Central Arizona with a two-year degree and and first-team All-American Nation Junior College All-American pole vaulting honors.

He also became a conference pole vaulting champion at Northern Arizona University in 1978, when he cleared the 17-foot mark during a regular season meet. It was then that Morgan's coaching experience began, first at Chinle for two years and then at Ganado High, his first head football coaching stop.

At Ganado, Morgan converted a small condemned maintenance building into a weight room and the football program into a winner.

"A few years ago, I took my St. Johns team to play in Ganado," he said. "Many of my former players and the Ganado community were at the game. They came over before and after the game to talk. It was great to see everyone again. My former players and Ganado community treated my wife, Diana, and myself with respect. My former Ganado players now





**Morgan and his son Clint (photo courtesy of the Morgan family)**

have kids that are participating. I will always remember my former Ganado teams, players and community."

After a 7-year run at Ganado, it was time for new challenges — St. Johns High, White Mountain-area football and championship battles.

It took Morgan just three seasons to turn St. Johns into a 2A Conference power and complete one of the state's greatest runs. From 1992-95, St. Johns won 43 games in a row and became the first 2A program to win three consecutive championships.

A seven-year championship drought ensued but ended with the help of Morgan's two sons, Vince and Clint, quarterbacks who led St. Johns' offense and defense during a couple of state championship runs.

Vince guided the team to a 2000 state runner-up finish, and Clint led St. Johns to a 2002 title and 2003 runner-up ending. The 2007 and 2008 seasons marked the last time St. Johns and Morgan lifted the championship trophy.

But the Morgan football coaching, championship line doesn't end with Mike. Mike's brother, Bill, won a couple of titles while Valley Christian and another ring at Show Low.

The Morgan family tree of coaching and teaching

can be traced to Morgan's parents, Don and Janice. Don and Janice were educators at Coolidge High.

Morgan is 64 and will continue to give St. Johns all he has. He returns a veteran, state-title contending team this season.

Will this be his last season?

If it is, it might turn into one of the more memorable ones for Morgan.

For now, he's appreciating every moment of his unfinished coaching journey.

"I've been blessed to coach this long," Morgan said.

**EDITOR'S NOTE: The author of this story, Oree Foster, and St. Johns head football coach Mike Morgan were classmates at Central Arizona College in Coolidge, Arizona. Foster and Morgan remain close friends to this day.**

## The Morgan File

Has never had a losing season.

A Central Arizona College Wall of Success Hall of Fame alum.

Navajo Nation Athletic Coaches Hall of Fame inductee in 2012.

Has lost only 80 games in his career.

Retired in 2012 as a physical education and health instructor.

He is 6-2 in title games.

The 43-game win streak at St. Johns from 1992-95 is the third highest ever in state.

Earned 12 2A North Region Coach of the Year, four 3A North Region Coach of the Year, three Arizona Football Coaches Association Coach of the Year and six newspaper Coach of the Year awards.



*Thatcher is the preseason favorite to capture the 2019 2A title (photo by Jim Willittes of maxpreps.com).*

**By Jose Garcia**  
**azpreps365.com**

**1. THATCHER:** Nineteen starters and coach Ramon Morales' beard and curly locks are gone. A new chapter is about to start for the three-time defending champ. Teams are sensing that, with so many new faces at Thatcher, they might finally have a chance. But they also know that the 2A title road still goes through the Thatcher. Morales decided around Christmas that he was returning for one more season. "We want to continue the culture and environment we've created here," the 64 year old said. Most of the coaching staff, including offensive coordinator Don Conrad, also are returning. The Eagles won't have a 6-deep backfield rotation like last year. But it'll still have the luxury of using 4-5 backs, with seniors Bretton Dodge and Gavin Bryce getting most of the carries. It appears that Jr. Mark Wren will start at QB. He's familiar with the offense, having run it on JV last year. The o-line, the program's centerpiece in its option game, returns two solid starters in seniors Spencer Stevens and Graeson Schreck. The other o-line starters got playing time last year. Collin Thompson, one of the elite players in 2A, is a bull. He'll be charging from multiple positions, including DE, TE as well as guard. "I think if we can stay on course, embrace the process and have kids step

up, who knows," Morales said. "I think we have enough talent to make it interesting. Let me put it that way."

**2. ST. JOHNS:** This might turn into a memorable season for the program. A lot of varsity experience returns as well as coach Mike Morgan for his 30th season. Third-year starter QB Ramon Sanchez worked a lot in the offseason and will see some playing time at LB this year. Protecting him will be an offensive line that returns six linemen who saw a lot of action last year. The team will need to replace an All-State WR but 6-3, 185 Graham Nielson, a transfer and some young talent will pick up the slack. Plus, there's two-time state wrestling champ Tanner Crosby at slot and RB. The secondary might be the biggest concern but does have depth there. The four leading tacklers from last year return, including Sr. Tate Skousen. "We look good on paper, but paper means nothing," Morgan said. "We feel we can play against anybody but know that there are no slouches. There are 4-6 very good teams this year."

**3. ROUND VALLEY:** "It's one of those years where we will wait and see what happens and go with it," said coach Marcus Bell about all of his new starters. "We have a bunch of guys who are working hard and going through the process. We have good



speed." A lot of new faces might start, but the same coaching staff returns for its 9th consecutive season. The skill positions are young, but that's where the speed is. The offensive and defensive lines are new but have ability, Bell said. The main threat in the backfield will be a two-year starter at LB, Marc Irigoyen. Senior Dylan Jordan and first-year varsity player Seth Willbank will also get their share of carries. "We have a good group of kids who are working hard and are coachable," Bell said. "They are looking for a chance to get on the field and break out."

**4. PHOENIX CHRISTIAN:** The Cougars will be in the state title race if they stay healthy. They are strong in the trenches, especially with Zach Cole (6-4, 260) and Mark Hocking (6-3, 270). They'll open gaps for one of 2A's best names and running backs, Man-Man Freeman, a force at linebacker also. With Freeman, three-year starter Nate Sandoval, Hocking, DE Marcel Pierre and DE Cristian Sanchez, it'll be tough to run against the Cougars. The team will return only one DB, but in Cole's opinion he's a D-I prospect (Jr. Howard Russell). With the Cougars lacking skills players, Russell will also be a slot receiver. The Cougars also lack depth but will get some reinforcements after Week 5. The QB starting job will come down to the "tough" Jose Herrera and North High transfer Adrian Fleming. The team's 11-game schedule includes a game against 3A state contender ALA Queen Creek.

**5. SANTA CRUZ:** Santa Cruz's youngsters learned the hard way last year that nothing will be given to them. That reality set in after they lost their season opener and the team didn't make the playoffs. "Because we've had so much success, some of the boys thought it was going to be automatic," coach Rashard Davis said. A 2018 team heavy with sophomores, Davis hopes, has grown up. That maturity will be tested early since the team will be without its top back and returning leading tackler, Hunter Ogle, in the early going while he recovers from hernia surgery. But the team will have quarterback Austin Hukill back. Hukill's junior year was trying for personal reasons, but he's ready to lead his team, Davis said. He'll play behind an o-line that returns every starter except for one. The team is more experienced but will only dress six seniors. One of those seniors, Evan Clute, was the second leading rusher last year and will have to carry the load in the backfield along with the strongest skill player, Soph. Ricardo Alaniz, while Hunter recovers. The team's front-7 is "tough" but needs to find a free safety who can roam and do it all.

**6. BENSON:** Offensive line. It ends and starts there for coach Chris Determan. "That's it," said the 17-year coach. "Truth be known." This year's line will be a mix of young and older players. Two freshmen played on the line last year. That's because the injury bug bit the team. The starting QB, Talon Palmer, didn't play in 2018 because of an ACL injury, but he's back and so is his leadership. The team has to settle on a fullback but the run game is in capable hands with D'ondre Villalobos and Carson Barney, and there's depth at that position, too. Barney also is the team's strong safety. He's not a big kid but balls out for his team on every down. Benson has them but needs to develop some linebackers, Determan said.

**7. MORENCI:** Joe Garcia, Morenci's defensive coordinator the past 6-7 years, was named the head coach this season. Garcia

used to be Wilcox's head coach for several years. Morenci will welcome a lot of new starters this year but the expectations continue to be high. "The new starters have some experience, but they now get to be the main guys," Garcia said. "We'll see who steps up." Sr. tackle Zachary Esparza, a three-year starter, Sr. center Omar Ortega, a two-year starter, and second year starting QB Brandon Blair are the mainstays on offense. It'll be running back by committee this year, Garcia said. The team will dress only six seniors. "We definitely have a lot of work to do but the kids are willing to embrace the challenge," Garcia said. "We'll go as far as their work ethic takes them."

**8. SCOTTSDALE CHRISTIAN:** Nate Holtz took over as head coach on May 11, but it didn't take him long to get everybody on the same page. "I feel like we are in a good spot as far as what we've installed, but even bigger the culture we've established with the players, parents, coaches and administration," said Holtz, an area representative for Fellowship of Christian Athletes. "I think we are beyond the feeling out process. We are moving in a strong direction toward something special." Holtz used to coach in college for 13 seasons and served under Desert Mountain coach Conrad Hamilton when they were at Chaparral. Scottsdale Christian didn't lose all of its skill players after all. Wide receivers Ben Carver and Ben Tobin will be a couple of focal points on offense. Sophomore Jake Brugman will step in as the new QB in SCA's spread system. The running backs in SCA's stable will likely rotate. The offensive and defensive lines lack depth but possess a key player, junior Will Chambers.

**9. TRIVIUM PREP:** In its first year in 2A, the Knights were more of a finesse team. In its second year, it'll rely more on its power. The Crimson Knights made a big first impression last year by finishing 10-1 and winning a first round round state game. "Since we have the same schedule we hope to recreate what we did last year and go a step further in the playoffs," coach Michael Spencer said. "But we know it's going to be tougher." Sr. RB David Marquez's (1,175 rushing yards 23 TDs) shoulders are big enough to help carry the team this year. He'll run behind an offensive line that's added some muscle and pounds. Sr. Kade Gutierrez, the team's leading tackler last year at MLB, will start at QB this year. Gutierrez likely won't see as many reps on D. The front 7 returns almost everybody.

**10. TONOPAH VALLEY:** The Phoenix finished the 2018 regular with a 7-3 regular season but didn't make the playoffs. The 18 seniors on the team are planning to show they deserved a playoff invite. Besides probably St. Johns, nobody in 2A returns as much starting lineup experience as Tonopah Valley. Fourteen of the team's 15 returning starters are seniors. "The leadership we have, it's nothing like I've seen anywhere I've been," coach Dustin Johnson said. "They don't point a finger." The general of the team is QB Cooper Arndt, whose 4.5 speed will help direct the team's wing-T. He'll work with an offensive line that goes, from left to right, 240, 200, 230, 225, and 280 and is mobile. LB/RB C.J. McClure and Arndt figure to lead the team in rushing yards for the second consecutive year. The team lacks depth but a key piece returned to the team, center Kevin Hernandez, after a year off.

By Jose Garcia and Oree Foster  
 azpreps365.com

## LITTLE COLORADO REGION

### Alchesay

**Head coach:** Brandon Newcomb.

**2018 record:** 9-2.

**Returning starters on offense:** Jr., OL., Rico Riley, (6-2, 270); Sr. OL., Kendrick Clitso, (5-10, 260); Sr., OL., Noah Walker, (5-10, 225); Jr., RB., Davin Parker, (5-8, 165).

**Returning starters on defense:** Jr., DT., Rico Riley, (6-2, 270); Sr., LB., Zonte Upton, (5-10, 155); Sr., CB., Ryan Quintero, (6-0, 145); Sr., DT., Londo Larzelere, (6-3, 290).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** We return four offensive line starters. Davin Parker played meaningful minutes in replace Tyreck Cosay.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Ryan Quintero will be a three-year starter. Jeremiah Kessay returns. Was Second Team All-State defensive end.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** We graduated a lot. We have to replace Kellen Parrish at QB. He was a three-year starter. Cesario Hernandez was the anchor of our O Line for three years. Must find a MLB to replace Jordan Brooks.

**2019 expectations:** We want to defend our three region championships. Win a playoff game. Never been done in school history.

### Hopi

**Head coach:** Raleigh Namoki.

**Years as school's head coach:** 6.

**2018 record:** 4-6.

**Returning starters on offense:** Sr. QB Jeremy Lomavaya; Sr. WR Khai Elliott; Sr. OL Jaden Stone; Sr. OL Isiah Silas; Sr. OL Juan Espinoza; Sr. RB Daniel Harris; Sr. WR, Verlan Mahle; Sr. RB Adam Harvey; So. RB Curtis Talieje; So. TE Brady Namoki; So. DL Darryl Sahmea Jr. DL; So. DB Charles Harris.

**Returning starters on defense:** Sr. DB Jeremy Lomavaya; Sr. DE Khai Elliott; Sr. DL Jaden Stone; Sr. DL Isiah Silas; Sr. DL Juan Espinoza; Sr. DB Daniel Harris; Sr. DB Verlan Mahle; Sr. DB Adam Harvey; So. DB Curtis Talieje; So. DE Brady Namoki; So. DL Darryl Sahmea; So. DB Charles Harris.

**Strengths on offense heading into summer:** We have experience with Jeremy Lomavaya and Khai Elliott as three year varsity starters.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** We have kids who love the contact and have three year varsity experience with many of our eniors.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** We are always worried about the numbers games. We hope that many students join football, but we end up having to resort to iron man football, where many players play both offense, defense and special teams.

**2019 expectations:** To win the region championship and make it to state.

### Many Farms

**Head coach:** Jonathan Begay, Sr.

**Years as school's head coach:** 1.

**2018 record:** 0-10.

**Returning starters on offense:** Sr., RB., Seth O'Daniel, (5-10, 160); Sr., QB., Chandler Tsosie, (5-8, 180); Jr., RB., Garren Nez, (5-5, 130); Jr., OL., Jonathan Monroe, (5-8, 135); Jr., OL., Bryce Bitsie, (5-6, 145); Sr., TE., Shaun Naize, (5-11, 150); Soph., OL., Micah Begay, (5-8, 150); Soph., QB., Jonah Dashee, (5-5, 120); Soph., C., Shandonn Uentillie, (5-6, 160); Soph., OL., Ashton Tso, (5-7, 175); Soph., WR., Tyran Nez, (5-0, 120); Soph., T., Colton Etsitty, (5-8, 190); Soph., OL., Marcus Begay, (5-6, 190); Sr., OL., Araya Yazzie, (5-11, 190).

**Returning starters on defense:** Sr., LB., Seth O'Daniel, (5-10, 160); Sr., MLB., Chandler Tsosie, (5-8, 180); Jr., OLB., Garren Nez, (5-5, 130); Jr., DT., Jonathan Monroe, (5-8, 135); Jr., DT., Bryce Bitsie, (5-6, 145); Sr., CB., Shaun Naize, (5-11, 150); Soph., DT., Micah Begay, (5-8, 150); Soph., S., Jonah Dashee, (5-5, 120); Soph., DT., Shandonn Uentillie, (5-6, 160); Soph., DE., Ashton Tso, (5-7, 175); Soph., S., Tyran Nez, (5-0, 120); Soph., OLB., DT., Colton Etsitty, (5-8, 190); Soph., DT., Marcus Begay, (5-6, 190); Sr., DT., Araya Yazzie, (5-11, 190).

**Strengths of offense heading into the summer:** We are going to have more experience with our offensive line this year.

**Strengths of defense heading into the summer:** One of our strengths is going to be experience because most of our returning players were underclassmen.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into the summer:** Conditioning would be our team's biggest question mark. Getting our players to practice during the summer is a challenge because of where they live is far from our school.

**2019 expectations:** Our goals for the team is to win a couple of games this year and give these kids some confidence, changing attitudes to a winning attitude.

**Region notes:** Greyhills Academy finished 2-7 last season. ... Many Farms failed to win a game last year for the first time since 2008. The team did have nine freshmen on the roster, however. ... Last year, Pinon reached the five win mark for only the second time since 2004. That was a great turnaround considering that in 2017 it failed to win a game for the first time in the program's history. ... Red Mesa has reached the 9-win mark only twice since 2004. Last year was one of those times. Red Mesa also came close, as the 15th seed, to defeating No. 2 Trivium Prep in the playoffs. ... After a 7-2 season in 2017, Rock Point took a step back last year after finishing 3-7. ... Valley, which had eight freshmen on the roster, will look to improve after a 1-8 ending last year.

## SALT REGION

### Antelope Prep

**Head coach:** Gary Mauldin.

**Years as school's head coach:** 7.

**2018 record:** 8-3.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Jr. QB Trey Holbein (15 TDs 1,792 passing yards. Salt Region Offensive Player of the Year 2018); So. Martin Hernandez (All-Region honorable mention); Sr. RB Sam Martinez (776 rushing yards 10 TDs. 97 tackles. 2nd team All-Region); Sr. C Mark Rivera (1st All-Region); Jr. TE/WR William Whitley (342 rushing yards 5 TDs. 263 receiving yards 5 TDs. 128 tackles. 1st team All-Region).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Jr. LB Xavier Carrillo (116 tackles. 1st team All-Region); So. DL Jose Soto (123



tackles, 10 sacks. 1st Team All-Region); Sr. DB Dylan Thomas (99 tackles. 1st team All-Region).

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. P Isaac Filero (61 tackles. 1st team All-Region).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Big offensive Line. Only losing one starter from the line. Returning QB Hohlbein. Strong running game and speed. Strong passing game.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Defense had five shutouts last year. Losing just two starters off that squad.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** As always at the small school level, it would be depth.

**2019 expectations:** Contend for the region. Make the Playoffs.

**More about the program:** The Rams open up Zero Week (Sat. Aug. 24) against Juneau Douglas High School in Juneau, Alaska. A great experience for the players, coaches, staff.

### North Pointe Prep

**Head coach:** Damien Logan.

**Years as school's head coach:** 1.

**2018 record:** 8-3.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. T Connor Christensen 6-1, 220; Sr. T Matthew McGovern 6-2, 230; So. WB Brayan Mendoza 5-7, 130; Sr. QB Race Shaul 5-11, 150; Sr. TE Jay Brodeur 5-11, 160.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DT Connor Christensen 6-1, 220 (33 tackles, 6 sacks); Sr. DE Matthew McGovern 6-2, 230 (22 tackles); Jr. S Alex Ritchie 5-6, 140 (36 tackles); Sr. LB Jay Brodeur 5-11, 160 (31 tackles); So. CB Quentin Simmons 6-0, 150.

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. K/P, Ali Akbar Al-Shiteawi, 5-8, 170; Sr., FB/LB, Nick Aquino, 5-8, 185; Sr., ATH, Cylar Alley, 5-11, 160.

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Simplicity, power.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Multiplicity.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** How many student athletes will we end up with.

**2019 expectations:** Win games.

**More about the program:** After making the playoffs for the first time in school history, the Falcons have set their sights on advancing into later rounds of the playoffs.

### Valley Lutheran

**Head coach:** Brian Porter.

**Years as the school's head coach:** 1.

**2018 record:** 1-9.

**Returning starters on offense:** Sr. OL Collin Goode; So. WR Khaled Khaled; Sr. OL Will Krieger; So. WR Diego Vasquez-Loya; Jr. OL Jesus Martinez; So. WR Daniel Mock; So. QB Carson Mousel; So. OL Andrew Mullady; Jr. RB Adam Niyogushima; So. OL Jacob Van Der Toorn; Sr. OL Kyler Wade.

**Returning starters on defense:** Sr. LB Collin Goode; Sr. DL Will Krieger; Sr. LB Kyler Wade; Jr. DL Jesus Martinez; Jr. OLB Adam Niyogushima; So. OLB Khaled Khaled; So. DB Daniel Mock; So. LB Carson Mousel; So. LB Andrew Mullady; So. DE Jacob Van Der Toorn; So. DB Diego Vasquez-Loya.

**Also keep an eye on:** Jr. WR/OLB Jules Van Gilse; Jr. OL/LB Dylan Merrill; Jr. WR/DB/K Carlos Guzman; So. OL/DE Sam Henig; So. RB/OLB/K Htai Htoo.

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** We have brought in a new offensive coordinator. Our offense will be more complex, however, it is designed to fit the players we have. We return 11 starters from last year. Many were young but had a ton of experience.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Again, we return



*William Whitley, Antelope (photo courtesy of Antelope High School)*

many starters off of last year's defense. They are very familiar with the system and should be much more disciplined this year.

**What are your team's biggest question marks heading into the summer:** We are not deep at the offensive and defensive line. Once again this year we will be counting on many freshmen to fill our holes.

**2019 expectations:** I expect us to be much more competitive this year. We have a new coaching staff that is very involved with the program on a daily basis. We will be 100% more prepared every week.

### Veritas Prep

**Head coach:** Jason Black.

**Years as school's head coach:** 2.

**2018 record:**

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. WR Zach Jackson 6-2, 175 (643 receiving yards 3 TDs); So. QB Gage Lentz 6-1, 170 (655 passing yards 7 TDs, 183 rushing yards); Jr. WR Harris Lytle 5-10, 150 (214 receiving yards 4 TDs); Jr. RB Nisa Ma'afu 5-11, 190 (457 rushing yards 8 TDs); Jr. OL Johnathan Morrison 5-11, 180; Jr. RB Marko Vuletic 5-10, 160 (413 rushing yards, 3 TDs); Sr. OL Jackson Walters 6-1, 195.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Jr. LB Matthew Africa 5-11, 180; Sr. DB Zach Jackson 6-2, 175 (6 INTs); Jr. FS Harris Lytle 5-10, 150 (35 tackles); So. LB Eli Rovelo 5-6, 160 (28 tackles); So. SS Anthony Williams 5-10, 165 (2 INTs).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Skill positions are all returning starters. Speed. Depth.



**WR Zachary Jackson, Veritas Prep (photo by Paul Campbell of maxpreps.com)**

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Continuity. Intelligent players. Speed.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Roster size. Line production.

**2019 expectations:** Win our region. Make the schools first every playoff birth. Make some noise in the 2A Conference.

**Region notes:** Scottsdale Prep's David Primavera has his team heading in the right direction. The program had one of the better turnarounds in the state going from 0-10 two years ago to 5-4 last season. It went 3-0 in games determined by four points or less. Oscar Frias, the team's starting QB, was a sophomore last year, and his three top receivers were underclassmen last year. ...

**Sedona Red Rock** hired one of the state's all-time greats, Bob Young, as coach. He'll take over a program that has struggled the past three seasons.

#### **AGUA FRIA REGION**

##### **Arizona Lutheran**

**Head coach:** David Peter.

**Years as the school's head coach:** 4.

**2018 record:** 9-3.

**Returning starters on offense:** Sr. OL Daniel Massadeh 6-0, 180; Sr. RB Josh Wagenknecht 6-1, 200; Sr. QB Tyson Biciolis 6-0, 160 (845 passing yards 11 TDs); Sr. OL Joseph Perez 5-7, 180; Sr. FB Trent Knutson 5-9, 180.

**Returning starters on defense:** Sr. CB Tyson Biciolis 6-0, 160 (2 INTs); Sr. DE Josh Wagenknecht 6-1, 200; Sr. LB Maurice

Chapman 5-6, 180 (65 tackles, 4 sacks).

**Also keep an eye on:** So. RB Jacob Holguin 5-9, 145.

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Lower levels having success last year running our double wing.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Lower levels growing in their communication.

**What are your team's biggest questions marks heading into the summer:** We graduate a ton of players from both sides of the ball, Which players are willing to outwork others for those positions?

**2019 expectations:** We need to get stronger so we can stay healthy for the entire season.

#### **Heritage Academy**

**Head coach:** Tony Stillings.

**Years as the school's head coach:** 1.

**2018 record:** 0-11.

**Returning starters on offense:** Sr. QB Dyson Ellison 6-0, 160 (418 passing yards); Sr. OL Elijah Miller 5-11, 180; Sr. OL Jeffrey Vargas 6-1, 240; Sr. RB Alan Villanueva 5-10, 170 (238 rushing yards, 255 receiving yards); Jr. WR Jaxon Brand 5-7, 135; Jr. WR Max Ferris 6-0, 155; Jr. OL Caleb Moseley 5-5, 190; So. OL Diego Samaniego 5-6, 180.

**Returning starters on defense:** Jr. LB Max Farris 6-0, 155 (37 tackles); Jr. LB Omar Hernandez 5-4, 140; Sr. C Brad McBride 5-11, 125 (17 tackles); Jr. LB Charlie Lines 6-0, 155 (39 tackles); Jr. DL Caleb Moseley 5-5, 190; 12 DL Jeffrey Vargas 6-1, 240 (33 tackles, 3 sacks); Sr. FS Allan Villanueva 5-10, 170 (56 tackles, 2 INTS).

**Also keep an eye on:** Jr. RB LaTrell Beck 5-10, 155; Jr. WR Kyle Boblett 6-1, 150; Jr. LB Jarrod Cruz 5-6, 140.

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Deceptive offense. Strong senior leadership.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Speed to the football.

**What are your team's biggest questions marks heading into summer:** Experience level.

**2019 expectations:** Improve our overall strength and speed. Improve our knowledge of the game to gain experience.

#### **Santa Cruz**

**Head coach:** Rishard Davis.

**Years as school's head coach:** 6.

**2018 record:** 4-6.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Jr. OG Diego Castillo; Jr. OT Juan Castillo; Jr. TE-WR Orlando Davis Jr.; So. C Tanzor Gil; Sr. FB Emilio Gobeia; Jr. TE-WR Dylan Hukill; Jr. RB Hunter Ogle; Sr. RB-WR Arik Padilla.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Jr. DB David Avilez; Jr. NG Diego Castillo; Jr. DT Juan Castillo; Sr. LB Evan Clute; Jr. LB Orlando Davis; Sr. DB Arik Padilla; Jr. LB Hunter Ogle.

**Also keep an eye on:** So. RB Ricardo Alaniz; So. LB Steve Calvin Jr.; Jr. / DB Joaquin Jimenez; Jr. LB Mauricio Lopez.

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Experience.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Experience.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Will we have a better commitment to the offseason this year? Quarterback position.

#### **VERDE REGION**

##### **Glendale Prep**

**Head coach:** Robert Addicott.

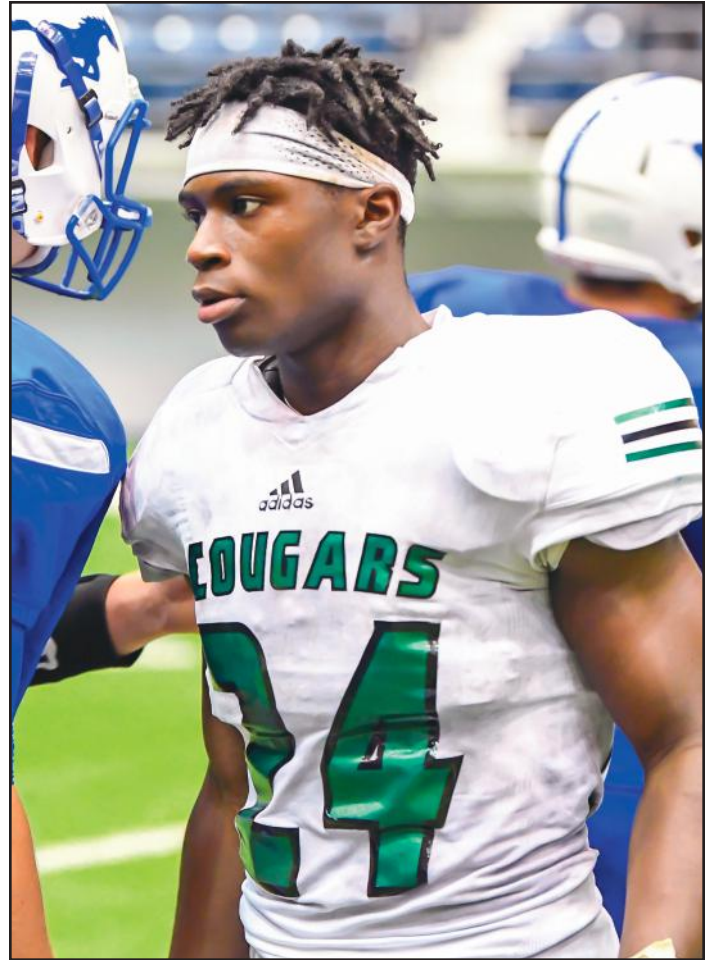
**Years as school's head coach:** 1st year as coach.

**2018 record:** 1-8.





**QB Cooper Arndt, Tonopah Valley** (photo by Darin Sicurello of maxpreps.com)



**Man-Man Freeman, Phoenix Christian** (photo by Mark Jones of maxpreps.com)

**Returning starters on offense:** Sr. OL Andrew Lam 5-10, 195; So. QB Sam Terpstra 6-0, 155; Jr. OL Elijah Mizysak 6-0, 185; Jr. WR Malachi Mizysak 6-2, 165; Jr. WR Zander Jones 6-5, 165; Jr. OL Anthony Levinson 5-10, 165; Jr. RB Austin Thorp 5-8, 155; WR DB Caleb Ferguson 6-0, 144; Jr. RB Arlen Alter 5-9, 140.

**Returning starters on defense:** Jr. RB/DB Arlen Alter 5-9, 140; So. DB Caleb Ferguson 6-0, 144; Sr. DL Andrew Lam 5-10, 195; Jr. DB Zander Jones 6-5, 165; Jr. DL Anthony Levinson 5-10, 165; DL Elijah Mizysak 6-0, 185; Jr. LB Malachi Mizysak 6-2, 165; So. DB Sam Terpstra 6-0, 155; Jr. LB Austin Thorp 5-8, 155.

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. RB WR/DB Charlie Addicott 5-10, 145; Sr. QB/RB/WR/LB Matthew Hawkins 6-2, 190; So. K OL/DL Jacob Keane 5-5, 165; So. C/DL Brenden Lawrence 5-10, 212; So. K WR/DB Tyler Page 5-8, 135.

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Players are picking up the new offense very well. We have talented WRs and QBs.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Defensive line, talented, aggressive players as well as solid LBs.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** With limited numbers how we will hold up with players playing both ways as well as how the players buy into the system.

**2019 expectations:** Players to execute on an individual basis for the success of the team. Winning season.

**Parker**

**Head coach:** Jeston Lotts.

**Years as school's head coach:** 8.

**2018 record:** 6-4.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Jr. RB Emmanuel Alaniz 6-0, 165 (716 yards rushing 7 TDs, 4 receiving TDs); Sr. OL Matthew Baumann 5-10, 255; Sr. DL Fernando Gonzales 5-7, 190; Sr. TE Jake Hill 5-11, 165; Jr. ATH Fabian Lamas 58, 155 (220 rushing yards 2 TDs); Sr. WR Christian Lopez 5-8, 135; Sr. RB Manuel Najera 6-0, 170.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Jr. S Emmanuel Alaniz 6-0, 165 (41 tackles); Sr. DL Matthew Baumann 5-10, 255; Sr. DL Fernando Gonzales 5-7, 190; Sr. LB Jake Hill 5-11, 165 (48 tackles); Sr. DB Christian Lopez 5-8, 135; Sr. DB Manuel Najera 6-0, 170 (130 receiving yards 2 TDs); Sr. DL Joseph Willig 6-0, 175.

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. OL/DL Juan Carlos Figueroa 6-1, 215; Jr. LB/RB Uriah Martinez 5-9, 160; So. OL/DL Abraham Silva 5-10, 230; So. LB/RB Anthony Taylor 6-1, 195.

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Speed and size.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Speed and knowledge.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Inexperience at the varsity level. Leaders. Numbers.

**2019 expectations:** Region champs. Host a playoff game. Win a playoff game.

**Tonopah Valley**

**Head coach:** Dustin Johnson.

**Years as school's head coach:** 7.

**2018 record:** 7-3.



**RB David Marquez, Trivium Prep (photo by Steve Paynter of maxpreps.com)**



**Dano Lopez, Bisbee (photo by Mark Jones of maxpreps.com)**

**Returning starters on offense:** Sr. QB, Cooper Arndt, 5-11, 175 (528 passing yards, 524 rushing yards 9 TDs); Sr. OL, Jason Beltran, 6-0, 260; Sr. OL, Carlos Espinoza, 5-10, 200; Sr. TE, Tayton Davenport, 6-3, 205 (115 receiving yards 3 TDs); Sr. OL, Kolby Goetz, 6-1, 225; Sr. OL, Daniel Lopez, 5-10, 235; Sr. RB, CJ McClure, 5-9, 165 (536 rushing yards 9 TDs).

**Returning starters on defense:** Sr. DB Cooper Arndt 5-11, 175 (61 tackles); Sr. DL Kolby Goetz 6-1, 225 (50 tackles); Sr. LB Carlos Espinoza 5-10, 200 (77 tackles); Sr. LB CJ McClure 5-9, 165 (74 tackles); Sr. DE Gage Cafarelli 6-0, 190 (32 tackles); Sr. DL Jason Beltran 6-0, 260 (33 tackles); Sr. DB George Albers 6-0, 155 (25 tackles); So. DB Prince Robertson 5-9, 145.

**Also keep an eye on:** 12, OL, Kevin Hernandez, 6'0, 250; 12, WR, Tucker Warner, 6'0, 155; 11, LB, Oakland Webb, 5'8, 160.

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Offensive line. Returning starters. Knowledge. Continuity. Team speed.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Size. Returning starters. Team speed. Solid tackling. Knowledge.

**What are your team's biggest questions marks heading into the summer:** Lack of depth. Lack of youth. Receiver experience. Defensive backfield. Overall team size.

**2019 expectations:** Have over 75 percent in the weight room. Come together at camp. Stay healthy. Go 1-0 every day/practice. Come together as one.

**More about the program:** The team truly likes one another. I have never had a group of young men that truly like being around one another like this group.

#### **Trivium Prep**

**Head coach:** Michael Spencer.

**Years as the school's head coach:** 3.

**2018 record:** 10-1.

**Returning starters on offense:** Sr. FB Kade Gutierrez 5-10, 215 (300 all-purpose yards, 78 tackles); Sr. RB David Marquez 5-8, 185 (1,175 rushing yards 23 TDs, 40 tackles); Sr. C Zion Gamilla 5-8, 240; Sr. T Dylan Wirth 6-4, 260; Jr. G Luke Hirth 6-2, 210; Jr. G Rocky Ramirez 5-10, 250; Jr. WR August Hubbard 6-3, 175 (672 receiving yards 11 TDs).

**Returning starters on defense:** Sr. LB Max Cabral 5-10, 180 (29 yards); Sr. DE Jason Degraives 6-5, 210 (24 tackles); So. DB Josh Degraives 6-2, 180; So. NG Caleb Hamilton 5-10, 310; Sr. DT Nate Vasiloff 6-5, 250.

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. DB Josh Kottiri 5-8, 160; Jr. DB Kaleb Robinson 5-8, 170.

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** We return four of five offensive linemen, so there will be a lot of experience that will benefit us. Our running backs also return behind an experienced line. First team all state WR August Hubbard returns.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Our front 7 are all returning to a defense that was learning a new system last year.

**What are your team's biggest questions marks heading into the summer:** We need to find a replacement for our QB. We need to find DBs who are ready to compete.

**2019 expectations:** Our goal is to repeat as region champions and continue the early success we had in our first year of 2A last year.



**Region note:** Camp Verde finished 4-6 last season but had a good chance to end 6-4 an complete its first winning season since 2011. Its leading rushers last year were junior Cale Cook and junior Peyton Kelly, who had 62 tackles. Jacob Oothoudt, a freshman last year, led the team with 64 tackles.

## **SAN PEDRO REGION**

### **Benson**

**Head coach:** Chris Determan.

**Years as school's head coach:** 17.

**2018 record:** 7-5.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. RB Carson Barney 5-7, 165 (507 rushing yards 5 TDs); So. G Ryan Francione 5-10, 165; So. T Joe Jackson 6-0, 265. Sr. G Colton McFarland 5-10, 180; Sr. G Josh Sparkman 5-11, 170; Sr. QB Talon Palmer 5-9, 175; Sr. RB D'ondre Villalobos 5-9, 175 (646 rushing yards 9.9 ypc 13 TDs, 118 receiving yards 2 TDs).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. LB Carson Barney 5-7, 165 (61 tackles); So. DE Ryan Francione 5-10, 165 (43 tackles); So. DT Joe Jackson 6-0, 265; Sr. DT Colton McFarland 5-10, 180 (56 tackles); Sr. DE Josh Sparkman, 5-11, 170; Sr. LB Corey Thum 5-7, 145 (47 tackles); Sr. DB D'ondre Villalobos 5-9, 175.

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Experience

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Experience.

**2019 expectations:** We expect to compete and play well week in and week out.

### **Bisbee**

**Head coach:** Brian Vertrees.

**Years as school's head coach:** 2nd.

**2018 record:** 4-6.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. WR D'Marco Chavez (5-9, 170); Jr. RG Christian Contreras (6-3, 280); 10th, Left Tackle, Eddie Holly, 6-4, 230; Sr. LG, Max Mendez, 6-2, 245; Sr. C Alex Miranda, 5-10, 235; Sr. TE/H-Back Bug Molina, 5-10, 205; Sr. WR Dano Lopez 5-10, 180 (1,009 receiving yards and 11 TDs); Sr. WR CJ Sherman 5-8, 150 (430 receiving yards 5 TDs); Sr. RT Carlos Silva 6-4, 260; Sr. RB Hunter Perry 5-11, 172 (327 rushing yards, 439 receiving); Sr. QB Frank 'RJ' Wright 5-10, 170 (701 yards passing).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. OLB David Ballesteros 5-9, 150; Jr. NT Christian Contreras 6-3, 280 (54 tackles); Sr. DT Jonny Dabovich 5-9, 220; Sr. SS D'Marco Chavez 5-9, 170 (64 tackles); Sr. OLB Bug Molina, 5-10 205; Jr. ILB Tyler Shasteen 5-9, 182; Sr. CB CJ Sherman, 5-8, 150; Sr. S Hunter Perry 5-11, 172 (59 tackles); Sr. DE Carlos Silva 6-4, 260.

**Also keep an eye on:** Fr. FB Diego Chavez 5-10, 150; So. DT/OG Tino Greene 5-10, 210; So. OG/DE EJ Hernandez 6-2, 240; So. OLB/OT Jesse Schabacker 6-3, 170.

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Experience- Returning 10 players that started at least 5 games, as well as multiple 3rd year starters. Dano Lopez- Despite missing 2 games in 2017, and 1 game in 2018 due to injury, has put up back-to-back 60+ rec. seasons, with 900+ yards as a sophomore and a 1,000 yd season as a Junior. Offensive Line- returning an entire offensive line unit that has a combined 104 starts, a great deal of size, and depth.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Experienced Secondary- Returning 3/4 DB's. Team Speed- Overall Unit speed is a strength going into 2019. Christian Contreras- Christian emerged as a sophomore to become a force to be reckoned with in the middle of the defense in 2018.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Graduating 2, 3-year starters at ILB, how their successors fair this season is a big factor in the success of our defense. Who is going to step up over the course of spring and summer workouts. Defensive Play- We must improve defensively in 2019 in order to meet expectations. Attrition- Have to stay healthy, strong depth on the offensive line, but less depth at the skill positions. Separating ourselves from the pack- The top end of the 2A conference is clearly defined. The rest of the conference is up for grabs, with our seniors needing to step up and play consistent, smart, and tough football all season.

**2019 expectations:** Strong spring and summer commitment. Improve everyday. Prepare every week at a high level. Score enough to win each week. Be the more Physical Team Each Week.

**More about the program:** With the majority of starters returning in 2019, expectations are high. However, our message is that all teams go into pre-season with their expectations high, and for us to have a special 2019 season we have to stay focused and prepare well every single week. We have to do what it takes to emerge as a top tier team in 2019, especially after a disappointing 2018 campaign.

**Region notes:** Coach Richard Sanchez's first season at **Santa Rita** didn't turn out the way he wanted, but it takes more than just one season to turn a program around. But expect a better performance as Santa Rita returns everybody except three seniors. The team will look to snap a 19-game winless streak. ... **Tombstone** jumped from zero wins in 2017 to five victories last year. But its workhorse, Tyler Wilridge (2,393 rushing yards 29 TDs), graduated and so did WR Deandre White (9 TDs). But leading tackler Jacob Bonilla (109 tackles) was a junior last year. ... Coach Alonzo Highsmith continued to bring **Willcox** back to prominence. Last year, the program finished 7-4, its first winning season since 2012. The team reached the playoffs, losing to a quality St. Johns team in the first round.

## **BLACK REGION**

### **Morenci**

**Head coach:** NEW COACH.

**2018 record:** 9-3.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB Brandon Blair; Sr. WR Chris Deck; Sr. T Zachary Esparza; Sr. WR Chris Deck; Sr. C Omar Ortega.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DB Angel Arrelin; Sr. DB Carlos Bray.

**Also keep an eye on:** Jr. DT Joseph Hernandez; Jr. RB Lance Morey.

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Fullback. QB returning.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Not sure yet. Only two on defense returning.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Offensive line. Linebacker play. Running back. Defensive line. Kicking game.

**2019 expectations:** With so many new starters we're just looking to compete.

### **St. Johns**

**Head coach:** Mike Morgan.

**Years as school's head coach:** 30.

**2018 record:** 9-4.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. RB/LB Mark Ballejos 6-1, 175 (333 rushing yards); Sr. RB Tanner Crosby 5-7,



**Senior C/LB Tate Skousen, St. Johns (photo by Jim Willittes of maxpreps.com)**

145 (834 rushing yards 8 TDs); Sr. OL/DL Eli Jessop 6-1, 230; Sr. OT Joe Lucero 6-0, 235; Jr. OG/RB Nick Patterson 6-1, 235; Sr. WR Graham Nielson 6-3, 185 (476 receiving yards 7 TDs); Sr. QB Ramon Sanchez 5-10, 195 (1,479 yards passing 18 TDs, 644 rushing 17 TDs); Sr. C Tate Skousen 5-11, 195; Sr. WR/RB Case Udall 6-2, 180.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. LB Mark Ballejos 6-1, 175 (63 tackles); Sr. LB Tanner Crosby 5-7, 145 (81 tackles, 3 INTs); Sr. DL Joe Lucero 6-0, 235 (49 tackles); Sr. FS Graham Nielson 6-3, 185 (29 tackles, 5 INTs); Jr. DL Nick Patterson 6-1, 235 (59 tackles, 4.5 sacks); Jr. DB Dion Perry 5-6, 130 (447 all purpose yards); Jr. LB Jake Skousen 5-11, 175 (82 tackles, 3 sacks); Sr. LB Tate Skousen 5-11, 195 (110 tackles); Sr. DE Case Udall 6-2, 180 (43 tackles, 7 sacks).

**Also keep an eye on:** So. DB Joseph Bushman; So. RB Afton Cox; Jr. OL Cornelio Cuirez; Sr. DL Wyatt Cox 6-2, 200; Jr. DB Gage Heap; Jr. TE Slade Nevin; Jr. DL Brady Overson; Jr. DB Tate Parker; Sr. OL/DL Sean Perry; So. DB JJ Thomas; Jr. DL Andy Torbet; Jr. RB/FS Ira Tullous; So. K Gage Trickey 6-0, 155.

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Upperclassmen dominated and third year starter at QB (Sanchez).

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Eight seniors.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Low numbers due to declining enrollment and fall soccer.

**2019 expectations:** To get the playoffs and have a winning season.

## Thatcher

**Head coach:** Ramon Morales.

**Years as school's head coach:** 1.

**2018 record:** 14-0.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. TE Spencer Stevens 6-4, 210 (143 receiving yards 1 TD); Sr. C Graeson Schreck 5-9, 220.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. S Bretton Dodge 5-10, 175 (21 tackles).

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. RB/LB Gavin Bryce 5-9, 175 (252 rushing 2 TDs, 23 tackles); Sr. WR/S Kyle O'Donnal 5-11, 150 (19 tackles); 12 TE/DE Collin Thompson 6-2, 220.

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Few players who had significant playing time.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Few players who had significant playing time.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Can last year's young guys step up this year. Do we have enough depth for the long haul.

**2019 expectations:** Weather the storm of the early season schedule because we will have very few starters returning. Can we elevate our play to be successful against good teams.

**More about program:** Last year is in the rear view mirror. These players have practiced day in and day out against some of the best players in 2A for the last 2-3 years. So they are ready to embrace the challenge.

**Region notes:** Pima finished 3-7 in John Bryant's first season as coach, but Pima wasn't overmatched in most of the games it played.

## GILA REGION

### Chandler Prep

**Head coach:** Chris Goodman.

**Years as school's head coach:** 5.

**2018 record:** 8-3.

**Returning starters on offense, defense and 2018 stats:** Sr. WR/DB Andrew Cook (Leading receiver, 18.1 ppc-5 Defensive INTs); Sr. RB/LB Aidan Daly (led team with 75 tackles); Jr. FB/DL Keanu Flores; Sr. C/LB Jake Hathaway; Jr. TE/DL Daniel Peake; Jr. RB/LB Sam Martin (Led team with 732 rushing yards, 13 TDs); Sr. OL/DL Griffin Serra; Sr. OL/DL Isaiah Usher; Jr. QB/DB Reese Vilaboy (Threw a TD in every game started.); Sr. WR/K Carson Zilmer (Receiving D-1 interest for kicking).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** The strength of our offense is in the number of returners coming back that are familiar with our system and the seniors' excitement for their last high school football experience.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** The strength of our defense going into the summer is the hiring of our new defensive coordinator, Mike Guizar. He comes to Chandler Prep after spending many years in the golden era of Tempe Prep football. We are excited about the new addition to our staff and excited for the future!

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** The biggest question mark going into the summer is can this team's excitement for 2019 be maintained and be built upon heading into the season.

**2019 expectations:** Our expectations for 2019 are the highest we have ever had at Chandler Prep. We believe if this Titan team plays up to its potential we can beat anyone. We want to win every game we play. We want to win the first playoff game in school history. We want to show Great Hearts teams can play football just as Trivium showed 2A last year.



## Globe

**Head coach:** Mark Openshaw.

**Years as school's head coach:** 1.

**2018 record:** 5-5.

**Returning starters on offense:** Jr. RB Avirum Curiel 5-10, 145; Jr. RB Seth Durbin 5-6 (373 rushing yards 4 TDs, 260 receiving yards 3 TDs, 71 tackles); Jr. QB Caden Hansen 5-10, 165 (1,544 passing yards 17 TDs, 579 rushing yards 12 TDs).

**Returning starters on defense:** Sr. LB Abraham Aragon 5-9, 180 (100 receiving yards 2 TDs); Sr. DB Michael Marquez 5-10, 158 (79 tackles 7 INTs; 378 receiving yards 5 TDs); Jr. LB Dylan Olson 5-10, 153 (78 tackles); Sr. LB Gavin Williams 6-3, 170 (49 tackles).

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** We are young team with a lot of talented players in important positions. We have many players who can make plays with the ball in their hands.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Our linebackers are going to be a strength for our team as we return some talented players with good experience. We are also returning some talented defensive backs.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Any time there is a new coach there are a lot of questions marks. It will be interesting to see the fronts on both sides of the football and how well they perform, but I am excited to see this team perform at a high level.

**2019 expectations:** We were 5-5 last year and hope to improve on that record. We expect to win our region and be a threat in the state playoffs.

## Miami

**Head coach:** Brandon Powell.

**Years as school's head coach:** 3.

**2018 record:** 5-5.

**Returning starters on offense:** Jr. OL Jayven Badilla 5-11, 210; So. RB Justin Cook 5-10, 165; Jr. OL Skyler Guerrero 6-1, 255; Sr. OL Michael Paul 5-11, 225; Jr. OL Luis Ramirez 5-10, 205.

**Returning starters on defense:** Sr. LB Austin Higginbotham 6-1, 245; Sr. LB Brian Goss 6-2, 210; Jr. LB Ryan Powell 5-9, 200.

**Also keep an eye on:** Jr. OL Johnathon Badilla 6-0, 230; So. QB Gabe Escobedo 6-0, 145; Sr. Slot Jayden Goss 5-11, 145; Jr. DL Edward Reynolds 6-6, 330; Jr. DL Jerome Wallace 5-7, 190.

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** OL is young but should be the strength of the offense. QB is fast but has no football experience. No depth at any position. RB is sophomore and fast.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** LB crew will be strength of defense. Only seniors on D will be 2 LB's.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Youth and inexperience. If they can comprehend the O & D philosophies brought by myself and my DC, a Miami HS graduate that was LB coach at Skyline as well.

**2019 expectations:** I expect to finish the year stronger and smarter then when we start.

**Region notes:** Most of San Manuel's skills players were underclassmen last year, including its starting QB and three leading receivers. ... Last year, Tempe Prep suffered its first non-winning season since 2005. But the numbers are down at the program. It went from 50 players in 2016 to 19 last year on its roster.

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## 1A Conference Football Preseason Rankings



*Williams heads into the football season with high hopes for 2019 (photo by Jim Willittes of maxpreps.com).*

**By Jose Garcia**  
**azpreps365.com**

**1. WILLIAMS:** Williams and Superior were on a championship collision course until injuries derailed Williams' championship dreams last year. This year, with almost everybody returning and healthy, there's no arguing that the Vikings are the favorites. "We understand that totally," coach Jeff Brownlee said. "It's a fresh start, but what happened last year is fueling our kids. Our kids are in full throttle mode and excited about coming back." Williams' work-horse, RB/MLB Chance Pearson, has fully recovered from from a first-round leg injury and is bigger and faster. "I feel like this is the year of unfinished business that we need to take of," Pearson said. The left guard position is the only hole Williams' senior laden team needs to plug. On defense, the same faces return after last year's disappointing state semifinal ending. "I don't want to sound overconfident," Brownlee said. "But we are a solid team in all phases."

**2. BAGDAD:** Is Bagdad getting that three-year championship itch? The program won it all in 2013 and 2016 and in 2019 is well-equipped for another championship run. Bagdad returns every starter except for one from a 2018 state quarterfinal team. That one missing cog, center Owen Barton, was an exceptional

one, though. Owen never fumbled a snap during his 4-year starting career. Junior Kendrick Guthrie spent some time at center last year and will move there permanently. On defense, Bagdad's strength, the team's strongest player, Jayse McDonald, steps in for Barton at nose guard. There's depth on the defensive line, allowing the team to two-platoon there. But the disrupter, OL/DL Brady Finnerty, won't see much time on the bench. The 6-3, 245-pound Finnerty is arguably the best player in 1A this year and is getting college attention. The team's leader is senior RB/LB Carson Jeans. Speaking of seniors, the 8 or 9 on the team are a united bunch that have played on the same teams for quite a while now. "This is the last ride for the seniors," coach Dalton Mills said. "They won the title as freshmen and in baseball two years ago. I look for them to finish strong in both sports this year."

**3. SUPERIOR:** The program, which has lost just four games in the past four seasons, is reloading not rebuilding, coach Ryan Palmer said. The winning culture Palmer and his boys established was rewarded last year with the school's first official state championship victory. It's time to defend the title. In Week 2, Superior gets its first big test, Bagdad, and by Week 5 it should know where it stands. Team speed, the play making ability of junior Adam Navarrette and senior leadership of G/DE Daniel McConnell will help the team win and stay in tough games. Also, RB



Gabriel Otero is coming off an impressive playoff run, and for the first time under Palmer (10th year as coach) his team's offensive strength will be its o-line. Soph. center AJ Lara (6-2, 270) is strong and started as a freshman. One of the biggest 1A questions is who will be Superior's QB. Soph. Matthew Cruz, who was injured in the first games last year, or Sr. DB Sammy Lopez will likely get the starting nod at QB. "We had some depth last year and are eager to prove those players can play this year," Palmer said.

**4. HAYDEN:** Coach John Estrada's program took another big step last season after reaching the 1A title game. It's something he always strived for at Hayden before leaving the program in 2009. Estrada restored the program's championship hunger since returning four years ago, but he hasn't had his fill just yet. He's got a big incoming freshmen class, and don't be surprised if they get a shot to play immediately. The rebirth of Hayden football also led to 38 kids signing up for football. Estrada didn't see that many new players even while Hayden was in 2A. But with 11 starters returning, he won't have to rely just on the youngsters. Look for the Rodriguez brothers to continue to lead the way. One of the Rod Bros, Jorge (RB/LB), needs to step up and fill the shoes of his brother, Joel, a senior last year, Estrada said. With Hayden graduating two starting running backs, another Rodriguez, Josiel, will likely carry the backfield load. A.J. Castillo, a first-year QB last year, blossomed during the playoffs last season and returns.

**5. SALOME:** The seniors can't wait to take the field to prove they are better than last year. They also want to wipe away that bad playoff taste. Five turnovers in their second round exit didn't sit well with them. QB Pedro Velasquez, RB/MLB Octavio Martinez, RB/LB Joel Gonzalez and WR/S Fabian Perez are the seniors ready to lead the charge. "This senior group of about 7-8 players have started since they were freshmen," Salome coach Bryan McCarty said. "They've played in huge games." Last year, Salome beat Bagdad for the first time in the past 16 years and had a seven game win streak. It did so despite playing with only 10 players during one stretch. Depth won't be an issue this year, when it welcomes a talented freshman class that won a youth state championship game as 8th graders. The biggest challenge for the team will be finding two offensive linemen, but a majority of the starters are back on defense. Another senior leader is two-year starter Tatum Milts. She lines up at tight end or slot receiver and is a defensive end as well. "She's been amazing," McCarty said. "She's a big leader on the team."

**6. MOGOLLON:** Ron Tenney is back in the saddle. He was coaching at Mogollon for about 25 years before giving Snowflake a shot. Tenney eventually returned to Mogollon in 2015 to serve as an assistant coach and the superintendent of the Heber-Overgaard Unified School District. Tenney now will wear the head coaching hat again after former coach Tim Slade accepted a position with American Leadership Gilbert North. Mogollon isn't the Mogollon Tenney knew during his first head coaching rodeo. Enrollment has dropped. That means depth will be a big question, and Tenney is shaking the bushes to see if he can find more bodies. "It's a huge challenge," he said. "I'm trying to reach out to kids in the halls and trying to bring back some of that pride of putting on the Mustang uniform." What he won't have to worry about is senior leadership, with Rhett McLaws, Dallin Rice, the Porter cousins, Timmy and Denin, and Bruno Corales on the roster. "I'll lean on those boys and two-year starter Jayk Kelton and Caden Owens, who are juniors," Tenney said.

**7. ARETE PREP:** Once the new offensive linemen settle in, the offense will be ready to take off once again with QB Matthew McDonald at the controls. The destination: playoffs. Last year, the program won its first playoff game in the school's 10-year history while McDonald, a freshman, piloted the team's air-raid offense. His co-pilot this year just happens to be his brother, Noah, the new No. 1 target for the taller and stronger McDonald. Noa, a senior, will be moved around so opponents won't key in on him as he searches for openings. The biggest challenge is retooling a defense that gave up more than 40 points per game last year. That job goes to the new defensive coordinator, Joe Crawford, the head coach of Apache Junction Imagine Prep last year. Crawford and his crew will have their hands full against some tough region opponents this season. Up first is ranked Mogollon.

**8. FORT THOMAS:** Last year, the Apaches won their first region championship in 20 years. They intend to defend it with a familiar name running the offense. Todd Stringfellow (25 TD passes last year) is the third Stringfellow brother to run Fort Thomas's offense since 2013. An injury kept Stringfellow from running much in the early part of last season but he's free to take off from the start this season. Fort Thomas also returns its leading rusher, Zack Walker, the reigning region player of the year and son of the head coach. Walker and WR/RB Malachi Rodger will be Stringfellow's main targets in the early going as the team develops a No. 2 option at WR. LG Christian Titla anchors an offensive line that returns three starters. NG Colby Pina (6-2, 340) is also in the trenches to help stop the run and get to the QB. The team will carry about 12-14 seniors, down from the 18 it had last year. But this year's senior class is still big for 1A and big enough to help it win its first playoff game since 2010.

**9. JOSEPH CITY:** "Last year it was the Cameron Baldwin show," coach Eldon Larsen said. "This year it's more of a team show, and the kids realize that." But don't expect Joseph City to miss the playoffs just because Baldwin and his 1,000-yard rushing-18 TD-100-tackle season is gone. The 2019 Joseph City football committee will still have a director, Latrell Kinlicheenie. The senior threw 16 touchdowns last season in his first year behind center. Look for Joseph City to throw the ball more this year, and they should since it'll start 6-7, 217-pound tight end Jay Edwards as the state's biggest target. But Edwards and Kinlicheenie aren't the only two that have Larsen feeling giddy. "This is one of the first times in a long time that I'm feeling confident in the o-line," said Larson, whose been at Joseph City for about 20 seasons. Reinforcements will come in the form of 12 freshmen, a big class for 1A football.

**10. DUNCAN:** "I think we are going to start where we left off," said second-year coach Mark Bejarano. "I think we should be in the playoffs. We will be more stronger this year compared to last year." The Wildkats came close to advancing to the second round last year. Its pass defense, the team's Achilles heel last year, should improve with the experience it's returning. The offense now has a year under Bejarano's system and should also improve. The team's starting QB, Jason McGrath, and leading rusher Lucas Basteen return. The offensive line is young and will look to returning center Spencer Smith for leadership. Bejarano graduated from Duncan in 1987. "Go Wildkats," said Bejarano at the end of the phone interview.

By Jose Garcia and Oree Foster  
 azpreps365.com

## EAST REGION

### Arete Prep

**Head coach:** Cord Smith.

**Years as school's head coach:** 2.

**2018 record:** 7-3.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB Matthew McClelland 6-1, 150 (31 TDs, 9 INTs); Sr. WR Noah McClelland 6-1, 155 (565 receiving yards); Jr. WR Ryan Schade 5-11, 165; Sr. OL Jack Spano 6-2, 195;

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** So. FS Matthew McClelland 6-1, 150 (33 tackles); Sr. LB James Varner 5-10, 155 (82 tackles); Sr. LB Jack Bellomy 5-10, 160; So. LB Joseph Connelly 5-10, 170 (68 tackles); Jr. DB Owen Kremer 6-0, 170 (42 tackles); Sr. DB Noah McClelland 6-1, 155 (33 tackles, 3 INTs). Also keep an eye on: Sr. OL Carson Labban 6-1, 205; So. DB Tyler Driggs 5-8, 150; So. OL Alex Hoffman 6-0, 195; Sr. DE Jacob Smedegaard 6-1, 180.

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** No. 1 1A passer in the state in M. McClelland (2,577 yds.). N. McClelland 32 rec. for 562 yds last year. New receivers developing into starters. A core of key players with character, desire and unity.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Many returning starters with playoff experience. James Varner returning at LB with 12 tackles average per game. Many key players with playoff experience.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Who will replace Brennan Wier as the main receiving target for Matthew McClelland. Will lower classmen step up to fill the roles on defense. Can we compete with the best teams in the state (Superior and Hayden), which happen to be in our region. Can we prove that being a state quarterfinalist last year was not a fluke.

**2019 expectations:** Compete for the Region title. Be a top 10 team and qualify for the state playoffs. Develop a culture of constant improvement. Be a team that wins and loses with class and shows respect for the game. Create citizen-athletes based on the Greek concept of Arete (Excellence).

### Fort Thomas

**Head coach:** Bracken Walker.

**Years as school's head coach:** 4.

**2018 record:** 6-3.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB Todd Stringfellow 6-0, 160 (2,891 Total Yards, 36 Total TDS); Sr. WR Malachi Rogers 5-8, 180 (282 receiving yards); Sr. RB Zack Walker 5-11, 185 (1,259 Total Yards 15 Total TDs); Sr. OL Christian Titla 6-2, 245; Sr. OL Jeremiah Bullis 6-3, 225; Sr. OL Jaden Preston 6-1, 210.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. LB Zack Walker 5-11, 185 (74 tackles); Sr. LB Desmond Cheney 5-8, 185 (104 tackles); Sr. DB Malachi Rogers 5-8, 180 (36 Tackles); Sr. DE Ramont Talgo 6-1, 225 (38 tackles); Jr. DE Terrold Robertson 6-0, 200 (5 Sacks); Jr. NG Colby, Pino 6-2 340 (14 Tackles)

**Also keep an eye on:** Sr. DL Latrell Titla 6-6, 240.

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** State leader in passing yards per game Todd Stringfellow (321.2yds per game.). Three senior offensive lineman that have been starting since they were Sophomores. Good senior class and leadership.



Quarterback Matthew McClelland, Arete Prep (photo by Zach Alvira of the East Valley Tribune)

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Defensive Line and Linebackers.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Need to have younger kids step up at WR, RB and DB.

**2019 expectations:** Compete for the region title. Qualify for state.

### Hayden

**Head coach:** John Q. Estrada.

**Years as school's head coach:** 10.

**2018 record:** 8-4.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DE Gibby Carmelo 5-9, 170; Sr. RB Jorge Rodriguez 5-10, 180; Sr. C Peter Kame 5-11, 220; Jr. QB A.J. Castillo 5-10, 170 (721 passing yards, 680 rushing yards); Jr. G Josiel Rodriguez 6-0, 190.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DE Gibby Carmelo 5-9, 170 (30 tackles, 3 sacks); Sr. LB Jorge Rodriguez 5-10, 180; Sr. CB Vincente Aguirre 5-8, 165 (39 tackles); Jr. DE Josiel Rodriguez 6-0, 190 (37 tackles); Jr. CB A.J. Castillo 5-10, 170; Jr. DT Moses Gonzales 5-11, 205.

**Strengths of offense and defense heading into summer:** Work ethic, weight room participation, passing games, etc.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Starters will need to step it up on offense and defense.

**2019 expectations:** Stay healthy, have fun and compete.

### Superior

**Head coach:** Ryan Palmer.

**Years as school's head coach:** 10.





**Senior Daniel McConnell, Superior** (photo by Jim Willittes of maxpreps.com)

**2018 record:** 11-0.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** So. C AJ Lara 6-2, 270; Sr. G Daniel McConnell 5-11, 180; Jr. Flex Adam Navarrette 5-6, 140 (435 receiving yards, 9 TDs); Sr. RB Gabriel Otero 5-8, 170 (417 rushing yards, 8 TDs).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DE Daniel McConnell 5-11, 180 (11 sacks); Sr. NG Gabriel Castillo 5-11, 215 (39 tackles); Jr. LB Adam Navarrette 5-6, 140 (48 tackles); Jr. LB Matthew Diaz-Gonzalez 5-6, 140 (65 tackles, 6 sacks); Sr. DB Sammy Lopez 6-0, 155 (33 tackles, 6 INTs).

**Also keep an eye on:** So. QB Matthew Cruz 5-11, 170; Jr. WR Joshua Marquez 5-11, 165; Sr. G Julian Navarro 6-0, 185; Jr. DE Marc Mendoza 5-9, 160.

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Speed. Experienced offensive line.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Speed. Five of eight returning starters. Defense gave up only 7 points per game last season.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** QB, WR, DB, DE.

**2019 expectations:** Compete for state championship and win region.

**Region notes:** Ray, 5-5 last year, started the 2018 campaign 4-1 but struggled to score in the second half of its season against eventual playoff teams. Four teams that reached the playoffs last year are on Ray's 2019 schedule. ... **NFL Yet** and Ray are in one of the toughest regions. East sent Superior and Hayden to the 1A final last year and region mate Arete Prep also reached the playoffs. NFL Yet suffered its worst season two years ago but showed improvement last year.



**Latrell Kinlicheenie, Joseph City** (photo by Mark Jones of maxpreps.com)

## **NORTH REGION**

### **Joseph City**

**Head coach:** Eldon Larson.

**Years as school's head coach:** 4.

**2018 record:** 6-4.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB Latrell Kinlicheenie 5-7, 197 (1,456 passing yards 16 TDs, 760 rushing yards 12 TDs); Sr. RB BJ Martineau 6-0-160 (566 all purpose yards); Sr. OL Porter Thomas 5-10, 250; Sr. WR Sammie Hendricks 6-2, 161; Jr. TE Jay Edwards 6-7, 217 (411 receiving yards 6TDs); So. OL TJ Westover 5-8, 207.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. LB Latrell Kinlicheenie 5-10, 197 (49 tackles, 4 INTs); Sr. DB BJ Martineau 6-0, 160 (35 tackles); Sr. DL Porter Thomas 5-10, 250; Sr. DE Sammie Hendricks 6-2, 161; Jr. DE Jay Edwards 6-7, 217; So. DL TJ Westover 5-8, 207.

**Also keep an eye on:** So. RB Terrell Kinlicheenie 5-3, 110.

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Passing game. Line.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Line. Stopping the run.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Stopping the pass.

**2019 expectations:** Make the playoffs.

### **Mayer**

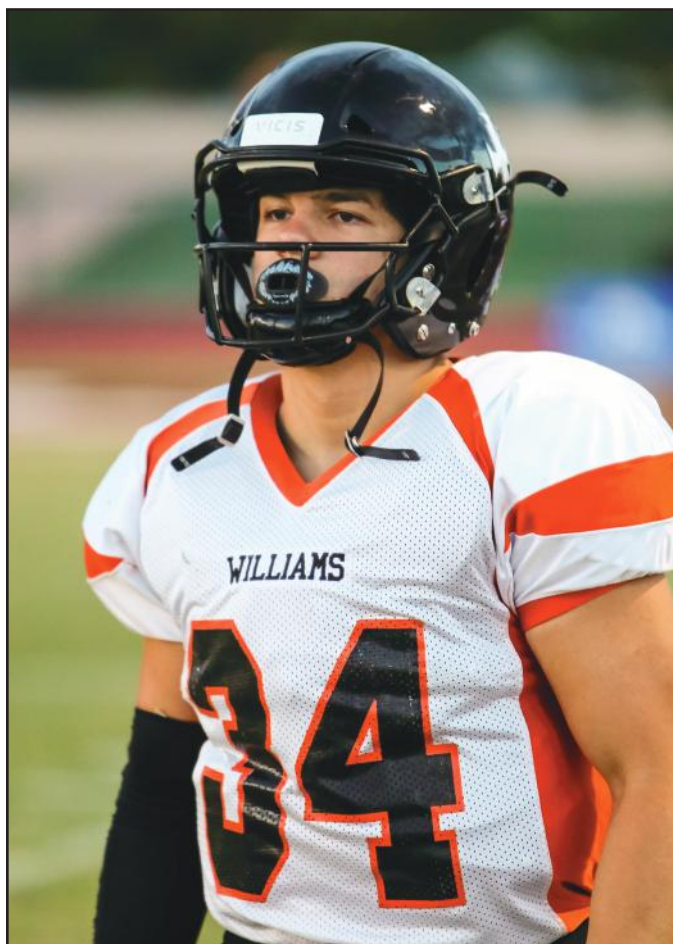
**Head coach:** Mike Gutierrez.

**Years as school's head coach:** 3.

**2018 record:** 1-7.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB Garrett Urquides (221 receiving yards); Sr. G/C Gage Statler; Jr. TE

## Pearson Delivers Touchdowns, Hits and Milk at Williams High



**RB/LB Chance Pearson, Williams** (photo by Darin Sicurello of maxpreps.com)

By Jose Garcia  
azpreps365.com

Chance Pearson delivers the vitamin D to his school and touchdowns against the D of opponents.

His mom owns a milk delivery business, and Pearson helps his

mom unload the heavy milk crates early in the morning at different locations. When school starts, one of Pearson's milk stops will be at his school, Williams High in Williams, a city about 30 minutes west of Flagstaff.

On the football field, 1A Conference teams are already planning how to halt Pearson and preseason No. 1 Williams. But stopping the hard-working Pearson and his very experienced and motivated team won't be easy.

Injuries to key starters, including Pearson, hampered Williams' chances of playing for the 1A title last year.

"I'm really ready," Pearson said. "That's been my whole summer, thinking about this season."

There was no summer break for Pearson.

He spent a good portion of his summer in Utah training and recovering from a lower leg injury he suffered in the first round of the 2018 playoffs. The 18-year-old lived on his own for two months while training at Stroformance, a high-performance training facility in Utah, and flipping pizzas at a Domino's.

He was supposed to stay at the Utah home of relatives but didn't want to stay in a big house by himself. So his parents helped him find an apartment.

"I did mature a whole lot," he said. "I think it got me prepared for college and be able to fit right in with the college flow."

The 5-foot-10, 196-pound running back/linebacker also got stronger and faster, improving his bench press from 270 to 305 pounds. Pearson has rushed for 2,314 yards, scored 50 touchdowns and accumulated 193 tackles in 28 career games.

The heavy workload is expected to continue for Pearson on and off the field this season. In the morning, during the school week, he'll load his truck with milk crates and make deliveries to a middle school once or twice a week and then also to Williams High.

"It's the same milk I drink at lunch," he said. "I've definitely enjoyed doing it (the job). I know for a fact it has really disciplined me, getting up early. It's hard work lifting 50-60-pound milk crates. It's more of the school of hard knocks."

The 3.4 GPA student wants to continue playing football in college.

Working with a sports rehab specialist during his recovery inspired him to want to study sports medicine.

"My biggest goal is to get a scholarship so my mom doesn't have to pay for college and not have that burden," he said. "I love the game of football and have been playing it since I was four or five. I want to show that no matter where you come from you can do big things. I would like to be a role model for folks. I don't like seeing people go down bad paths. They can do good."

Blake Drew (146 receiving yards).

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DE Garrett Urquides (44 tackles, 3 sacks); Sr. DL Gage Statler (25 tackles); Jr. CB/ILB Blake Drew (21 tackles).

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Experience, depth.

**2019 expectations:** Commitment.

### Williams

**Head coach:** Jeff Brownlee.

**Years as school's head coach:** 10.

**2018 record:** 9-1.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. QB Kolby Payne 5-8, 180 (850 passing yards, 13 TDs); Jr. RB Alex Garrett 5-7, 185 (697 rushing yards, 20 TDs); Sr. TE David Lozano 6-0, 195; Sr. RB Chance Pearson 5-8, 195 (802 rushing yards, 23 TDs); Sr. C Xavier Leonet 5-11, 190; Jr. OL Mike Kessler 6-1, 319; Sr. WR

Angel Ayala 5-11, 170.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Jr. LB Alex Garrett 5-7, 185 (462 receiving yards, 5 TDs, 68 tackles, 6 INTs); Sr. CB David Lozano 6-0, 195; Jr. DE Luis Lara 6-1, 190 (41 tackles, 12 sacks); Sr. CB Mario Vazquez 5-9, 175 (38 tackles, 4 INTs); Sr. LB Chance Pearson 5-8, 195 (49 tackles); Sr. DE Dorian Ayala 5-9, 185; Jr. NG Mike Kessler 6-1, 319.

**Also keep an eye on:** Jr. RB/LB Blake Smith 5-8, 165; Jr. OL/DL James Eischen 5-8, 200; Sr. DE William Mcmenamin 6-6, 215; Jr. OL/DL Ceaser Santana 6-3, 215; Sr. OL/DL John Bryant 6-3, 320.

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** Core group returns. Strong run game. Solid pass game. Should be a physical team.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** Core group returns. Quick. Physical.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** None.





**Brady Finnerty, Bagdad** (photo by Mark Jones of maxpreps.com)



**Joel Gonzalez, Salome** (photo by Mark Jones of maxpreps.com)



**Bryan Lynch, PDS** (photo by Paul Campbell of maxpreps.com)

Need to fill one position on offense and defense.

**2019 expectations:** Play one game at a time. Win our region. Get into the playoffs. Win a state title.

**More about the program:** Injury bug hurt us last year and could not compete in the semifinal game after going 9-0. We had five starters out. The team is hungry to get back on the field.

**Region note:** El Capitan will look to continue the momentum it gained during last season's 42-26 season ending victory over Fredonia.

## WEST REGION

### Bagdad

**Head coach:** Dalton Mills.

**Years as school's head coach:** 8.

**2018 record:** 7-4.

**Returning starters on offense, 2018 stats:** Sr. WR Kaylab Owings 5-11, 165 (405 receiving yards 5 TDs, 1,080 all-purpose yards); Sr. RB Carson Jeans 5-10, 180 (957 rushing yards, 10 TDs); So. QB Connor Watson 5-10, 165 (606 passing yards, 575 rushing yards 7 TDs); Sr. OL Weston Harrison 5-10, 225; Sr. WR Zaac Vasquez 5-10 (243 receiving yards, 3 TDs), 130; Sr. TE Riley Young 5-10, 170; Sr. OL Brady Finnerty 6-3, 245; Sr. OL Jayse McDonald 6-2, 260.

**Returning starters on defense, 2018 stats:** Sr. DB Kaylab Owings 5-11, 165 (29 tackles, 6 INTs); Sr. LB Carson Jeans 5-10, 180 (67 tackles); So. DB Connor Watson 5-10, 165; Sr. DB Elias Jauregui 5-7, 150 (53 tackles, 3 INTs); Sr. LB Riley Young 5-10, 170 (42 tackles); Sr. DL Brady Finnerty 6-3, 245 (66 tackles, 17 sacks); Sr. OL Jayse McDonald 6-2, 260.

**Also keep an eye on:** Jr. QB Rocky Sandoval 5-7, 155; Jr. OL/DL Steven Peterson 5-11, 180; So. DL Garret Reeves 5-11, 165; So. LB Elijah Aguilar 5-8, 165; So. DB Aden Pillsbury 6-0, 155.

**Strengths of offense heading into summer:** QB Connor Watson has a year experience now. We have 2 good Running Backs in Carson Jeans & Elias Jauregui. We have experience at every position except center.

**Strengths of defense heading into summer:** We return seven starters. Carson Jeans is the leader of this unit. Kaylab Oweings

was a leader in 1A in interceptions last year. Look for Brady Finnerty to dominate this side of the ball.

**Team's biggest question marks heading into summer:** Not sure who the leaders are. Looking for a starting center. It's time for the senior class to prove themselves.

**2019 expectations:** To put the work into this season to be a favorite. Win a state championship. Stay healthy. Be more of an explosive offense this year.

**Region notes:** Phoenix Day School for Deaf junior Brian Lynch got off to a great start last year, rushing for 724 yards and 14 touchdowns after the first month of play. PDS won three games last year, its best win total since 2012. ... **San Pasqual** will see if it can continue to score like it did in two of its three final 2018 games, when it scored 94 points in the final weeks of the regular season. The team failed to find the end zone much in the first half of the season. ... **Mohave Accelerated** snapped its two-year winless streak last year. ... **Anthem Prep** had one of the best turnarounds in 2018, when it won a program high four games after a winless season two years ago.

**1A South Region notes:** Baboquivari didn't win a game two years ago but had a promising 2018 after winning two games. ... With a 5-4 record, Coach Braden Davis' boys at St. David bounced back last year after a 1-7 year in 2017. Logan Davis, a junior, threw 17 touchdowns last year and completed 68 percent of his passes. **St. David** graduated its leading rusher but Talon Haynie, who rushed for 358 yards last year, was a sophomore. St. David returns five receivers who each had at least 15 receptions last year. Junior Kason Jacquez had 87 tackles last year. ... At 2-6 last year, **Valley Union** suffered its first losing season since 2013. But the team was very young with only two seniors on the roster.

### TOUCHDOWNS (Game)

6A 8; Edward McClendon	Mesa vs. Dobson	2018
8; Ty Grigsby	Rincon/University vs. Buena	2016
5A 7; Ethan Johnson	Westwood vs. Higley	2015
7; Ted Bland	Tucson vs. Bisbee	1931
7; Coury Hankins	South Mountain vs. Central	1994
7; Antrel Bates	Amphitheater vs. South Mt.	1997
4A 10; D.J. Foster	Saguaro vs. Sunrise Mountain	2011
3A 8; Trent Thompson	Chinle vs. Red Mesa	1986
2A 9; Christian Velasquez	San Manuel vs. Tombstone	2017
1A 10; Vincent Alvarado	Seligman vs. Canyon State	2004

### TOUCHDOWNS (Season)

6A 39; TJ Green	Chandler	2016
5A 41; Bobby Wade	Desert Vista	1998
4A 51; Nathan Wize	Sabino	1997
3A 38; Scooter Sprotte	Blue Ridge	1994
38; Brandon Long	River Valley	2014
2A 44; Jabari-Felton Smith	Orme School	2000
1A 49; Scotty Finnerty	Bagdad	2017

### TOUCHDOWNS (Career)

6A 55; DeCarlos Brooks	Chandler	2016-18
5A 76; Mike Mitchell	Brophy Prep	1990-92
4A 103; Christian Kirk	Saguaro	2011-14
3A 98; Brandon Long	River Valley	2011-14
2A 112; Casey Jahn	Northwest Christian	2008-11
1A 95; Chuck Antoni	Salome	1977-80

### POINTS (Game)

6A 48; Edward McClendon	Mesa vs. Dobson	2018
48; Ty Grigsby	Rincon/University vs. Buena	2016
5A 42; Ethan Johnson	Westwood vs. Higley	2015
42; Ted Bland	Tucson vs. Bisbee	1931
42; Coury Hankins	South Mountain vs. Central	1994
42; Antrel Bates	Amphitheater vs. South Mt.	1997
4A 60; D.J. Foster	Saguaro vs. Sunrise Mountain	2011
3A 48; Trent Thompson	Chinle vs. Red Mesa	1986
48; Richard Zuniga	Arizona Boys Ranch vs. Miami	1997
2A 54; Christian Velasquez	San Manuel vs. Tombstone	2017
54; Carlos Villa	Maricopa vs. San Pasqual	2004
1A 60; Vincent Alvarado	Seligman vs. Canyon State	2004

### POINTS (Season)

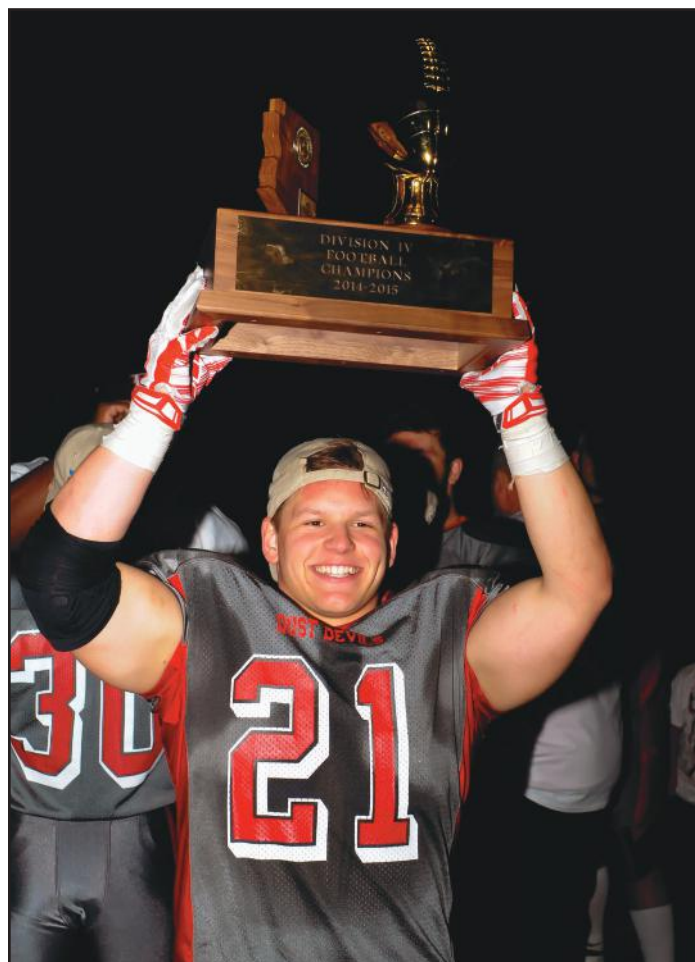
6A 234; TJ Green	Chandler	2016
5A 246; Bobby Wade	Desert Vista	1998
4A 306; Nathan Wize	Sabino	1997
3A 258; Richard Zuniga	Arizona Boys Ranch	1997
2A 266; Jabari Felton-Smith	Orme School	2000
1A 332; Scotty Finnerty	Bagdad	2017

### POINTS (Career)

6A 330; DeCarlos Brooks	Chandler	2016-18
5A 456; Mike Mitchell	Brophy Prep	1990-92
4A 626; Christian Kirk	Saguaro	2011-14
3A 404; Jeremy Hathcock	Blue Ridge	1988-90
2A 666; Casey Jahn	Northwest Christian	2008-11
1A 688; Arley McNeil	Patagonia	1985-88

### RUSHING YARDS (Game)

6A 376; Mike Rogers	Cesar Chavez vs. B. Fairfax	2016
5A 566; Ethan Johnson	Westwood vs. Higley	2015
4A 516; Sean Fitzsimmons	Empire vs. Catalina	2013



**Brandon Long, River Valley (photo by Mark Jones of max-preps.com)**

3A 469; Stanley Jackson	Chinle vs. Red Mesa	1976
2A 514; Christian Velasquez	San Manuel vs. Tombstone	2017
1A 477; Ozzie Anaya	Valley Union vs. Bowie	1985

### RUSHING YARDS (Season)

6A 2,267; TJ Green	Chandler	2016
5A 2,740; Mario Bates	Amphitheater	1990
4A 3,573; Marcus Thomas	Tolleson	2002
3A 2,961; Scooter Sprotte	Blue Ridge	1994
2A 2,583; Casey Jahn	Northwest Christian	2010
1A 2,494; Dallyn Despain	Mogollon	2013

### RUSHING YARDS (Career)

6A 3,863; DeCarlos Brooks	Chandler	2016-18
5A 5,669; Mike Mitchell	Brophy Prep	1990-92
4A 5,878; Marcus Thomas	Tolleson	2000-02
3A 6,750; Brandon Long	River Valley	2011-14
2A 7,544; Casey Jahn	Northwest Christian	2008-11
1A 5,760; Arley McNeil	Patagonia	1985-88

### TOUCHDOWN RUSHES (Game) [since 2007]

6A 7; Ty Grigsby	Rincon/University vs. Buena	2016
5A 7; Ethan Johnson	Westwood vs. Higley	2015
7; Chris Cofield	Agua Fria vs. Washington	2015



5A 7; Taren Morrison	Desert Ridge vs. Mt. View	2013
4A 10; DJ Foster	Saguaro vs. Sunrise Mountain	2011
3A 7; Dante Anderson	Amphitheater vs. Rio Rico	2014
2A 9; Christian Velasquez	San Manuel vs. Tombstone	2017
1A 9; Cale Merrell	Duncan vs. Superior	2012

#### TOUCHDOWN RUSHES (Season) [since 2007]

6A 35; TJ Green	Chandler	2016
5A 38; Taren Morrison	Desert Ridge	2013
4A 54; DJ Foster	Saguaro	2011
3A 38; Seth Ellis	Coolidge	2011
2A 42; Shad Bride	St. Johns	2008
1A 43; David Soto	Patagonia	2008

#### TOUCHDOWN RUSHES (Career) [since 2007]

6A 51; DeCarlos Brooks	Chandler	2016-18
5A 83; Jamal Miles	Peoria	2006-08
4A 82; Ka'Deem Carey	Canyon del Oro	2007-10
3A 110; Casey Jahn	Northwest Christian	2008-11
2A 102; Shad Bride	St. Johns	2005-08
1A 72; Dallyn Despain	Mogollon	2010-13

#### TOUCHDOWN PASSES (Game)

6A 7; Miguel Valdovinos	La Joya vs. Kofa	2018
7; Jacob Conover	Chandler vs. Red Mountain	2017
5A 7; Dalton Sneed	Horizon vs. Mountain Ridge	2013
4A 10; Mario Armendarez	Washington vs. Agua Fria	2015
3A 9; Rathen Ricedorff	Show Low vs. Chinle	2009
9; Gabe Losada	Saint Mary's vs. Camelback	2013
2A 8; Dallin Edwards	ALA (QC) vs. Ben Franklin	2015
1A 10; Bailey Anderson	Gilbert Christian vs. Mesa Prep	2013

#### TOUCHDOWN PASSES (Season)

6A 57; Brock Purdy	Perry	2017
5A 46; Bryce Perkins	Chandler	2014
4A 61; Luke Rubenzer	Saguaro	2013
3A 64; Gage Reese	Yuma Catholic	2018
2A 53; Jack Miller	Scottsdale Christian	2016
1A 59; Israel Loveall	Bagdad	2016

#### TOUCHDOWN PASSES (Career)

6A 102; Jacob Conover	Chandler	2016-18
5A 115; Daniel Bridge-Gadd	Paradise Valley	2012-15
4A 137; Chase Cord	Sunrise Mountain	2013-16
3A 112; Rathen Ricedorff	Show Low	2008-10
2A 115; Jagan Cleary	Yuma Catholic	2012-14
1A 167; Israel Loveall	Bagdad	2014-16

#### PASSING YARDS (Game)

6A 580; Spencer Rattler	Pinnacle vs. Chandler	2017
5A 668; Will Plummer	Gilbert vs. Sunrise Mountain	2018
4A 756; Mario Armendarez	Washington vs. Agua Fria	2015
3A 609; Gage Reese	Yuma Catholic vs. ALA (QC)	2018
2A 483; Jagan Cleary	Yuma Catholic vs. Thatcher	2013
1A 571; Bailey Anderson	Gilbert Christian vs. Mesa Prep	2013

#### PASSING YARDS (Season)

6A 4,405; Brock Purdy	Perry	2017
5A 4,265; D. Bridge-Gadd	Paradise Valley	2015
4A 4,662; A. Hernandez	Desert Edge	2013
3A 4,661; Gage Reese	Yuma Catholic	2018
2A 3,653; Jack Miller	Scottsdale Christian	2016
1A 3,479; Israel Loveall	Bagdad	2017

#### RECEPTIONS (Game)

6A 17; Vodrey Gates	Valley Vosta vs. Perry	2016
5A 21; John Mistler	Sahuaro vs. Sabino	1975
4A 21; Kyle Watkins	Cactus Shadows vs. Higley	2006
3A 18; Randy Nikolaus	Show Low vs. Holbrook	1982

2A 21; Paul Hardiman	Valley Christian vs. Valley Luth.	2002
1A		

#### RECEPTIONS (Season)

6A 86; Terrell Brown	Basha	2016
5A 99; Coleman Owen	Higley	2018
4A 113; Elijah Marks	Desert Edge	2013
3A 89; Randy Nikolaus	Show Low	1982
2A 101; Clifton Jones	Florence	1995
1A 83; Mark Frithsen	St. David	1984

#### RECEPTIONS (Career)

6A 206; Colby Dickie	Perry	2016-18
5A 207; Mark Andrews	Desert Mountain	2011-13
4A 203; Christian Kirk	Saguaro	2011-14
3A 149; Rod Denetso	Ganado	1994-95
149; Josh Weeks	Show Low	2008-10
2A 163; Clifton Jones	Florence	1994-96
1A 221; Paul Hatcher	Tucson Christian	1982-85

#### RECEIVING YARDS (Game)

6A 342; Ricky Pearsall	Corona del Sol vs. Gilbert	2018
5A 329; Josh Morrow	Mt. Ridge vs. SD O'Connor	2005
4A 324; Elijah Marks	Desert Edge vs. Agua Fria	2013
3A 288; Josh Weeks	Show Low vs. Winslow	2010
2A 368; Ben McKeighan	Scotts. Prep vs. Paradise H.	2014
1A 341; Matt Munsil	Scotts. Prep vs. Glendale Prep	2010

#### RECEIVING YARDS (Season)

6A 1,554; Gunner Romney	Chandler	2017
5A 1,747; Jacob Brown	Paradise Valley	2015
4A 2,153; Elijah Marks	Desert Edge	2013
3A 2,101; John Henderson	Yuma Catholic	2018
2A 1,601; Clifton Jones	Florence	1995
1A 1,944; Scotty Finnerty	Bagdad	2017

#### RECEIVING YARDS (Career)

6A 3,471; Colbie Dickie	Perry	2016-18
5A 3,674; Mark Andrews	Desert Mountain	2011-13
4A 3,943; Christian Kirk	Saguaro	2011-14
3A 3,311; Josh Weeks	Show Low	2008-10
2A 2,868; Jacob Kaite	Scottsdale Christian	2015-17
2,626; Caine Palone	San Pasquel	1994-97
1A 4,221; Paul Hatcher	Tucson Christian	1982-85

#### TOUCHDOWN CATCHES (Game)

6A 7; Edward McClendon	Mesa vs. Dobson	2018
5A 6; Garrett Billings	Ironwood Ridge vs. FW	2016
6; Josh Morrow	Mt. Ridge vs. SD O'Connor	2005
4A 5; Kyle Watkins	C. Shadows vs. Washington	2006
5; Elijah Marks	Desert Edge vs. Shadow Ridge	2013
5; J.T. Nettleton	Saguaro vs. Desert Edge	2013
3A 4; Paul Ray Powell	Santa Cruz vs. Superior	1965
4; Mike Bowling	Agua Fria vs. Bourgade	1966
4; Jake Speckhard	Estrella Foothills vs. Chino V.	2005
2A 6; Matt Munsil	Scotts. Prep vs. Glendale Prep	2013
1A 7; Scotty Finnerty	Bagdad vs. Salome	2017

#### TOUCHDOWN CATCHES (Season)

6A 20; Hendrix Johnson	Boulder Creek	2018
5A 24; Angel Ruiz	Sunrise Mountain	2017
4A 26; Elijah Marks	Desert Edge	2013
3A 29; John Henderson	Yuma Catholic	2018
2A 26; Spencer Schuller	Bisbee	2015
1A 37; Scotty Finnerty	Bagdad	2017

#### TOUCHDOWN CATCHES (Career)

6A 38; Colbie Dickie	Perry	2016-18
5A 50; Jalen Brown	Mountain Pointe	2011-13



**Emanuel Gant, Tempe High (photo by Mark Jones of max-preps.com)**

4A 52; Christian Kirk	Saguaro	2011-14
3A 41; Josh Weeks	Show Low	2008-10
2A 84; Matt Munsil	Scottsdale Christian	2010-13
1A 72; Paul Hatcher	Tucson Christian	1982-85

#### EXTRA POINTS (Game)

6A 11; Jacob Veach	Pinnacle vs. Desert Mountain	2017
5A 11; Dylan Audsley	Chaparral vs. McClintock	2011
11; Ed Brooks	Phoenix Union vs. Prescott	1914
4A 12; Griffin Roehler	Agua Fria vs. Washington	2015
3A 12; Derek Auclair	Casteel vs. ASU Prep	2017
12; Alex Shores	Page vs. Monument Valley	1974
2A 11; Joey Mariscal	Florence vs. Seton Catholic	1987
1A 12; Damian Jauregui	Bagdad vs. Orme School	2010

#### EXTRA POINTS (Season)

6A 80; Cash Peterman	Chandler	2017
5A 84; Joe Navarro	Centennial	2012
4A 100; Peter Douds	Saguaro	2011
3A 94; Derek Auclair	Casteel	2017
2A 95; Austin Booker	Joy Christian	2015
1A 58; Damian Jauregui	Bagdad	2010

#### EXTRA POINTS (Career)

6A 179; Ben Abercrombie	Mountain Pointe	2016-18
5A 181; Joe Navarro	Centennial	2012-14
4A 274; Matthew Rosedale	Saguaro	2013-16
3A 184; Talen Rider	American Leadership (QC)	2016-18
2A 169; Josh Lane	Phoenix Christian	1994-97
1A 160; Arley McNeil	Patagonia	1985-88

#### LONGEST FIELD GOAL

6A 58; Brayden Narveson	Desert Mountain vs. Mesa	2017
5A 63; Jeff Locke	Mountain Ridge vs. Sunnyside	2007
4A 62; Kyle Pooler	Cactus vs. Coconino	1989
3A 54; Kyle Day	Sahuarita vs. Coolidge	2004
2A		
1A 50; Eric Lathim	Fredonia vs. Joseph City	1973
50; Damian Jauregui	Bagdad vs. Paradise Honors	2012

#### FIELD GOALS (Game)

6A 3; Austin McNamara	Highland vs. Alhambra	2018
5A 5; Brandon Ruiz	Williams Field vs. Campo V.	2016
5; Jeremy Kelly	Mountain View vs. MDN	1996
4A 4; Bill Shirk	Santa Rita vs. Bisbee	1973
4; Chris Kinnamon	Globe vs. Coconino	1984
4; Andy Schiesl	Chaparral vs. Apache Junction	1993
4; Jerry Conner	Greenway vs. Prescott	1998
4; Jason Johnson	Thunderbird vs. Tolleson	1998
3A 4; Cory Lizarraga	Blue Ridge vs. Tuba City	1997
2A 7; Chris Pulsifer	St. Johns vs. Red Mesa	1999
1A 3; Joel Rodriguez	Hayden vs. Baboquivari	2018
3; Joel Rodriguez	Hayden vs. NFL Yet	2018

#### FIELD GOALS (Season)

6A 14; Trevor Eldean	Brophy	2016
5A 19; Mike Cortright	Saint Mary's	1985
4A 19; Bubba Bradley	Cactus	2003
3A 19; Cory Lizarraga	Blue Ridge	1997
2A 13; Phil Insalaco	Phoenix Christian	1984
13; Kris Pulsifer	St. Johns	2000
1A 10; Joel Rodriguez	Hayden	2018

#### FIELD GOALS (Career)

6A 22; Austin McNamara	Highland	2016-18
5A 36; Mike Cortright	Saint Mary's	1983-85
4A 30; Ryan Hawkins	Sunrise Mountain	2009-11
3A 30; Talen Rider	American Leadership (QC)	2016-18
2A 24; Kris Pulsifer	St. Johns	1999-00
1A 10; Joel Rodriguez	Hayden	2016-18
10; Damian Jauregui	Bagdad	2009-12

#### INTERCEPTIONS (Game)

6A		
5A 7; Gabe Lumas	Kingman vs. Flagstaff	2011
4A		
3A		
2A		
1A 5; James Loveall	Bagdad vs. Ash Fork	2011

#### INTERCEPTIONS (Season)

6A 10; Elijah Pharrams	Mesa	2016
10; Isaiah Pola-mao	Mountain Pointe	2016
5A 18; Rudy Quihuis	Pueblo	1967
4A 16; Max Tabach	Saguaro	2006
3A 15; Mike Vere	Bourgade Catholic	1972
2A 16; Brandon Tomerlin	Superior	1996
1A 17; Randy Fish	Joseph City	1978

#### INTERCEPTIONS (Career)

6A 13; Jose Escalera	Central	2016-17
5A 25; Rudy Quihuis	Pueblo	1966-67
4A 27; Angel Corona	Flowing Wells	1983-85
3A 26; Phillip Echeverria	Buckeye	1985-87
2A 32; Brandon Tomerlin	Superior	1995-97
1A 25; Joe Campbell	Seligman	1973-75
25; James Loveall	Bagdad	2011-14

#### COACHING VICTORIES

334-70	Paul Moro, Marcos de Niza
332-120-3	Jim Rattay, Cesar Chaver
331-159-6	Vern Friedli, Amphitheater
331-100-3	Larry Fetkenhier, Cactus
327-89-4	Mike Morgan, St. Johns
309-139-4	Jesse Parker, Gilbert
308-138-3	Karl Kiefer, McClintock/Mountain Pointe



# 2018 6A State Championship Bracket

Fri, Nov 2

Fri, Nov 9

Fri, Nov 16

Sat, Dec 1

Boulder Creek (#16)

Chandler (#1)

Brophy (#9)

Mountain Pointe (#8)

Cesar Chavez (#12)

Highland (#5)

Westview (#13)

Liberty (#4)

Chaparral (#14)

Desert Vista (#3)

Basha (#11)

Perry (#6)

Red Mountain (#10)

Queen Creek (#7)

Desert Ridge (#15)

Pinnacle (#2)

Chandler

(64-14)

Mountain Pointe

(40-7)

Highland

(45-7)

Liberty

(56-21)

Desert Vista

(40-14)

Perry

(38-21)

Red Mountain

(37-34)

Pinnacle

(38-17)

Chandler

(49-21)

Highland

(15-12)

Perry

(49-20)

Pinnacle

(41-20)

Chandler

(36-35)

Chandler

(65-28)

Perry

(45-14)

**2018 5A State Championship Bracket**

Fri, Nov 2

Fri, Nov 9

Fri, Nov 16

Sat, Dec 1

Sunnyslope (#16)

Centennial (#1)

Marana (#9)

Cienega (#8)

Ironwood Ridge (#12)

Higley (#5)

Horizon (#13)

Casteel (#4)

Gilbert (#14)

Notre Dame Prep (#3)

Flowing Wells (#11)

Millennium (#6)

Campo Verde (#10)

Sunrise Mountain (#7)

Maricopa (#15)

Williams Field (#2)

Centennial

(49-10)

Cienega

(49-28)

Higley

(47-21)

Casteel

(49-10)

Notre Dame

(46-30)

Millennium

(58-7)

Sunrise Mountain

(38-24)

Williams Field

(42-7)

Centennial

(55-7)

Higley

(34-27)

Notre Dame

(14-0)

Williams Field

(21-14)

Centennial

(48-13)

Centennial

(60-7)

Notre Dame

(21-14)





# 2018 4A State Championship Bracket

Fri, Nov 2

Fri, Nov 9

Fri, Nov 16

Fri, Nov 30

Apache Junction (#16)

Salpointe Catholic (#1)

Mingus (#9)

Bradshaw Mt. (#8)

Glendale (#12)

Sahuaro (#5)

Seton Catholic (#13)

Peoria (#4)

Walden Grove (#14)

Desert Edge (#3)

Prescott (#11)

Greenway (#6)

Canyon Del Oro (#10)

Cactus (#7)

Estrella Foothills (#15)

Saguaro (#2)

Salpointe

(56-7)

Mingus

(21-17)

Sahuaro

(49-48)

Seton

(54-49)

Desert Edge

(49-7)

Greenway

(40-29)

Cactus

(37-26)

Saguaro

(49-0)

Salpointe

(62-22)

Sahuaro

(63-19)

Desert Edge

(49-19)

Saguaro

(69-6)

Salpointe

(53-6)

Saguaro

(42-16)

Saguaro

(61-6)



# 2018 3A State Championship Bracket

Fri, Nov 2

Fri, Nov 9

Sat, Nov 17

Fri, Nov 23

Winslow (#16)

NW Christian (#1)

Benjamin Franklin (#9)

Wickenburg (#8)

Coolidge (#12)

Valley Christian (#5)

Pusch Ridge (#13)

Page (#4)

Fountain Hills (#14)

Snowflake (#3)

Blue Ridge (#11)

Sabino (#6)

Safford (#10)

Odyssey Institute (#7)

Show Low (#15)

Yuma Catholic (#2)

NW Christian

(49-6)

B. Franklin

(35-6)

Valley Christian

(44-6)

Page

(48-2)

Snowflake

(32-0)

Sabino

(38-6)

Safford

(34-0)

Yuma Catholic

(49-20)

NW Christian

(35-7)

Valley Christian

(28-20)

Sabino

(30-14)

Yuma Catholic

(65-28)

NW Christian

(27-6)

NW Christian

(40-37)

Yuma Catholic

(75-43)



# 2018 2A State Championship Bracket

Fri, Nov 2

Fri, Nov 9

Sat, Nov 17

Fri, Nov 23

North Pointe Prep (#16)

Thatcher (#1)

Benson (#9)

Alchesay (#8)

Scottsdale Chr. (#12)

Phoenix Christian (#5)

Parker (#13)

Morenci (#4)

Pima (#14)

Round Valley (#3)

Chandler Prep (#11)

Arizona Lutheran (#6)

Willcox (#10)

St. Johns (#7)

Red Mesa (#15)

Trivium Prep (#2)

Thatcher  
(56-0)

Benson  
(46-42)

Phx. Christian  
(35-21)

Morenci  
(57-6)

Round Valley  
(45-0)

AZ Lutheran  
(55-7)

St. Johns  
(29-8)

Trivium Prep  
(36-26)

Thatcher  
(50-6)

Phx. Christian  
(27-14)

Round Valley  
(49-7)

St. Johns  
(47-7)

Thatcher  
(35-7)

Thatcher  
(35-12)

Round Valley  
(44-12)

# 2018 1A State Championship Bracket

Fri, Oct 19

Fri, Oct 26

Sat, Nov 3

Sat, Nov 10

Joseph City (#9)

Fort Thomas (#8)

Joseph City  
(66-58)

Williams (#1)

Williams  
(58-16)

Anthem Prep (#12)

Hayden (#5)

Hayden  
(34-21)

Salome (#4)

Hayden  
(36-14)

Hayden  
(30-6)

Duncan (#11)

Arete Prep (#6)

Arete Prep  
(46-42)

Mogollon (#3)

Mogollon  
(69-13)

Superior  
(70-20)

Ray (#10)

Bagdad (#7)

Bagdad  
(58-0)

Superior (#2)

Superior  
(36-18)

Superior  
(50-20)





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