

GHSA January Newsletter

Items of Interest - Vol. 43 No. 5

Greetings from Dr. Tim Scott, Executive Director GHSA



Happy 2025 from the GHSA Office!

We hope everyone is having a fantastic start to the new year! As we reflect on 2024, we are proud to celebrate an incredible year that concluded with our state championship football finals for both flag and tackle football, held on December 16-18 at Mercedes-Benz Stadium, as well as the 2024-25 Fall Esports State Championships and the 2024 Game Day Cheer State

Championships. These events were truly memorable, and we couldn't be more excited about what our students have accomplished.

In football, we are deeply grateful for our ongoing partnership with the Arthur Blank Family Foundation and the Atlanta Falcons. Their support has been invaluable, and we are thrilled to announce that the Arthur Blank Family Foundation and the Falcons will be offering grants for schools interested in starting a girls' flag football team or expanding an existing girls' team. These grants will be available starting January 6, and we are excited to continue building these important partnerships. We look forward to seeing the growth of girls' flag football programs in the coming year.

As we continue our journey in 2025, we are excited for the upcoming state championships in:

- **Wrestling Team Duals:** Boys - January 17-18, Girls - January 24-25, Traditional - February 13-15
- **Swimming:** February 4-5 and February 7-8
- **Dance:** February 22
- **Basketball:** March 5-8
- **Riflery:** March 15
- **Literary:** March 15 and March 22

We look forward to the journey ahead in 2025 and thank you for being part of this exciting adventure!

Staff & Responsibilities

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GHSA's January Licensed Products

This month's featured licensees are: **RiverOak Photography**, **Athletic Image** (theathleticimage.com), **Unforgettable Moments** (unforgettablemoment.com), official action photographers; **GameChanger** (<https://gc.com>), Official scorekeeping and team management partner of softball and baseball; **Armilla Tech** (<https://armillatech.com>) Official Baseball & Softball Coach to Catcher Electronic Communication Device; **Cheerfest**, (www.flipfest.com/additional-camps/cheer-fest) Cheer Fest is bringing top professional instructors from across the country; and some of the biggest names in the cheer industry; **Thrive Spirit** provides high-intensity, holistic cheer and dance training and experiences with a focus on the whole athlete: mind, body, and spirit

(cheerdancethrive.com); RefReps (<https://www.refreps.com>), RefReps is the exclusive standardized officiating education partner. View complete list of GHSA licensees at www.ghsa.net/licensing.

Inclement Weather Announcement



Due to possible inclement weather arriving into north Georgia Friday January 10th, the Georgia High School Association have provided alternative dates for region/area dual wrestling tournaments. All GHSA wrestling programs are permitted to move dates to earlier this week, allowing schools the opportunity to utilize a plus one allowance to schools that move their

tournaments before Friday. If your Region/Area is moving the event, the host should notify all schools ASAP, concerning the change of date and the +1 allowance.

GHSA Winter Sports Officials Appreciation Week

NFHS Winter Sports Officials Appreciation Week will take place, January 12-18, 2025. Participation in officials appreciation weeks can be as simple or as extravagant as schools want it to be. We encourage schools to get their student body involved in finding ways to thank officials during this week for their tireless efforts.



2025 State Tournament Basketball Semifinal Sites & Dates



The semifinal round games in the GHSA State Basketball Tournament will be played February 28 - March 1, 2025 at five different sites across the state. Exact matchups and contest times for specific teams will be listed at a later date on the individual playoff brackets here: [Boys](#) & [Girls](#).

Friday, February 28

Class A, Div. 2 - Georgia College & State University
Class 2A - Georgia Southwestern State University
Class 3A - Fort Valley State University
Class 5A - Georgia State University
Private (A-3A) - University of North Georgia

Saturday, March 1

Class A, Div. 1 - Georgia College & State University
Class 4A - Fort Valley State University
Class 6A - Georgia State University

GHSA 3 Point Shot and Slam Dunk Contest

3-POINT CONTEST - The 2024 GHSA Girls and Coed Basketball 3-Point Contest registration is available on the GHSA website.

To participate you must be a student at a GHSA member school and complete the registration waiver form on the website. The event instruction as well as preliminary and semifinal sites are listed on the registration form.

SLAM DUNK CONTEST - Video entries for the 2024 GHSA Basketball Slam Dunk contest will begin January 17th. To participate you must be a student at a GHSA member school. Videos from games will not be accepted.



CLICK HERE TO REGISTER FOR GIRLS AND BOYS:

<https://www.ghsa.net/2025-slam-dunk-3-point-contest-presented-bsn-sports>

<https://www.ghsa.net/2025-ghsa-girlscoed-3-point-shooting-contest-registration>

Congratulations GHSA eSports State Champions!



Congratulations to the 2024-25 Fall Esports State Champions: North Gwinnett (League of Legends), Brookwood (Smash Bros. Ultimate 5A-6A), East Forsyth (Smash Bros Ultimate 3A-4A), Mount Vernon (Smash Bros. Ultimate 1A-2A) and Lowndes (Mario Kart 8). Brookwood captured back-to-back fall title. North Gwinnett, East Forsyth, Lowndes, and Mount Vernon were first

time Fall Esports state winners. Thanks to facility and staff at Bartow County Esports Arena, teams, coaches, fans, GHSA staff and PlayVS, official eSports partner.

Results

League of Legends - North Gwinnett 2, Northview 1

Mario Kart 8 - Lowndes 2, Brookwood 0

Smash Bros. Ultimate (5A-6A) - Brookwood 3, Discovery 1

Smash Bros. Ultimate (3A-4A) - East Forsyth 3, Northview 2

Smash Bros. Ultimate (1A-2A) - Mount Vernon 3, Burke County 1

Previous GHSA Champions



Smash Bros. Ultimate (1A-2A) - Mount Vernon



Smash Bros. Ultimate (3A-4A) - East Forsyth



Smash Bros. Ultimate (5A-6A) - Brookwood



Mario Kart 8 - Lowndes



League of Legends - North Gwinnett

Wendy's

**ALL-BEEF
LINE**

**NO MATTER THE
SCORE YOU WIN**

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Student Section Spirit Challenge Winners

Every Friday night in the fall, football rules the gridiron. And the fans in the stands, help cheer on their football teams whether in victory or defeat. Once again, the GHSA Student Athlete Advisory Council sponsored the “**Student Section Spirit Challenge**” to see who is the strongest 12th man in the state. Allatoona High School took home top honors in Classes A-4A. The student section affectionately known as the “Scallywags” has claimed first place in back-to-back seasons. And in the 5A-6A classification, Lassiter was the last student section standing. “Trojan Nation”, take a bow you are the best of the class this year.



And last but not least the GHSA mascot of the year is none other than Mary Person's bold, beloved bulldog, SaMPson. Whether he's waving the MP flag, barking at the opponents, or knocking out pushups after a Mary Person's touchdown, SaMPson is the top dog in the Peach State. Congratulations to all GHSA member schools who participated in the 4th annual contest.

Allatoona: https://youtu.be/BZwQAAz_o2c

Lassister: <https://vimeo.com/1036780569/09dd6279dd?share=copy>

Mary Persons: [MaryPersonsMascotFall2024.mp4](#)



Atlanta Falcons, Arthur M. Blank to Further Support GHSA Football in 2025



**ATLANTA
FALCONS**

**Arthur M. Blank
Family Foundation**

ATLANTA – In partnership with the Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation, the Atlanta Falcons are furthering their support for high school football across Georgia through two new initiatives. In 2025, every Georgia high school will be eligible to receive a grant to either launch a girls flag football program or support its existing program for the upcoming 2025 season. Additionally, Georgia high school tackle football programs will have the opportunity to receive up to 50 Guardian Caps per school in an effort to enhance health and safety at the high school level. Guardian Caps will be

provided in partnership with the NFL Foundation.

The Falcons have been at the forefront of growing girls flag football in Georgia over the past six years, beginning with a pilot program for 19 high schools in Gwinnett County in 2018. This fall, more than 7,000 girls participated in girls flag football at more than 270 high schools throughout Georgia.

Guardian Caps are the leading soft shell helmet cover engineered for impact reduction. Created in 2010 by Erin and Lee Hanson, Guardian Caps bring a padded, soft-shell layer to the outside of the helmet and reduce impact of hits. According to the Georgia High School Association, 13 percent of Georgia high school football teams currently utilize Guardian Caps in practice.

"We are honored to continue to play a role in fueling the growth of high school football throughout our state for young men and women," said **Atlanta Falcons President Greg Beadles**. "Arthur Blank, his family foundation and the Atlanta Falcons recognize the profound impact football has on all those involved. We hope this is a positive step in increasing participation of the game we are all so passionate about and ensuring a safer, strong football experience at the high school level."

"We are incredibly grateful for the partnership we have with the Atlanta Falcons and the Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation," said **Tim Scott, Executive Director of the Georgia High School Association**. "The success and growth of Flag Football in the Georgia High School Association would not be possible without the support we receive from these outstanding organizations. Thanks to their generosity, our teams now have the opportunity to be equipped with Guardian Caps, and our schools can both start and strengthen their Flag Football programs. This continued collaboration enables us to provide the best possible experience for our student-athletes in Georgia."

The interest form to receive a grant application will be distributed to Georgia high schools on Monday, Jan. 6, 2025.

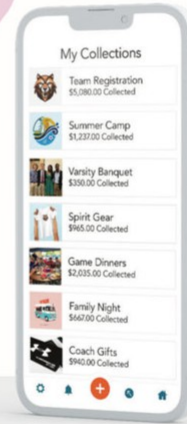


Cheddar Up is the ultimate teammate for collecting online payments and forms

GHSA members get our premium features for free. Your community can pay online in a click—no app or account needed. When the game's over, Cheddar Up keeps the team running.

Collect everything in ONE place:

- **Team Registrations**
Collect player information and waivers with or without payment.
- **Volunteer Sign Ups**
Track who's bringing snacks and who's working the concession stand.
- **Tournament Fees**
Collect fees and travel waivers together.
- **Spiritwear and Fundraisers**
Sell spiritwear (or anything!) to raise funds for your team.



Cheddar Up is the  Official Payment Partner



BIG DEAL ALERT: GHSA Members get Cheddar Up's Team plan and all premium features—worth over \$420.00 per year—for FREE! Just follow the QR code or go to getcheddarup.com/ghsa and start collecting today. Try a sports template to set up your collection in minutes!

Getting started is easy: getcheddarup.com/ghsa

GHSA Flag Football Considers Protective Head Gear

Padded helmets and head gear may be on the way to the Peach State. WMAZ (Macon, GA) sports reporter, Cecily Stoute, spoke with Gamebreakers' Kyle Evergird, about the future of girls flag football with this possible new equipment.

<https://gamebreaker.com/sports/flagfootball/>

Flag football considering new safety gear as sport grows in Georgia



Football Finals Attendance Breaks GHSA State Record



The biggest event of the GHSA football season did not disappoint! The 3-day event hosted at Mercedes Benz Stadium in Atlanta, broke previous attendance records according to ticket sales. More than 56,000 (56,051) including 51,588 fans attended 8 tackle football championships and 4 girls flag football title contests starting on December 16th through December 18. The numbers have improved from a total of some 52,000 in 2023.

Way to go, GHSA State Football Champions!

Congratulations to the 2024 GHSA/Tommy Guillebeau Football State Champions. The championships, presented by Alfa Insurance, were held on December 16-18 at Mercedes-Benz Stadium. State titles were won by: SE Bulloch (Flag Division 1), Greenbrier (Flag Division 2), Pope (Flag Division 3), McEachern (Flag Division 4), Bowdon (1A, Division 2), Toombs County (1A, Division 1), Carver, Columbus (2A), Calhoun (3A), North Oconee (4A), Milton (5A), Grayson (6A) and Hebron Christian (Private A-3A).



RESULTS

Dec. 16

Flag Div 1, SE Bulloch 13 | Columbus 6

Flag Div 2, Greenbrier 18 | N Oconee 0

Class A-Div II Bowden 34 | Brooks County 14

Class 4A, North Oconee 14 | Marist 7

Dec. 17

Flag Div 3, Pope 19 | Pace Academy 6

Class A-Div I, Toombs County 38 | Northeast, Macon 18

Class 2A, Carver, Columbus 52 | Burke County 14

Class 5A, Milton 56 | Langston Hughes 35

Dec. 18

Flag Div 4, McEachern 26 | Lambert 6

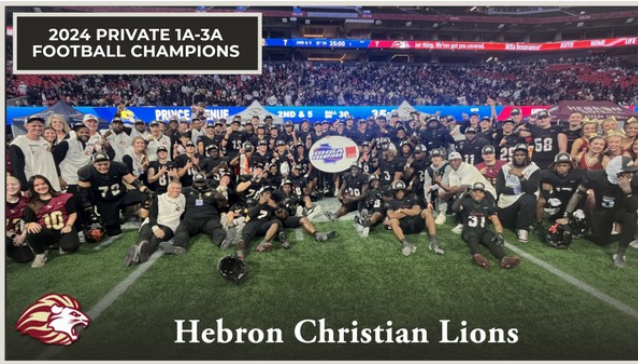
Class Private A-3A, Hebron Christian 56 | Prince Avenue Christian 28

Class 3A, Calhoun 20 | Jefferson 7

Class 6A, Grayson 38 | Carrollton 24

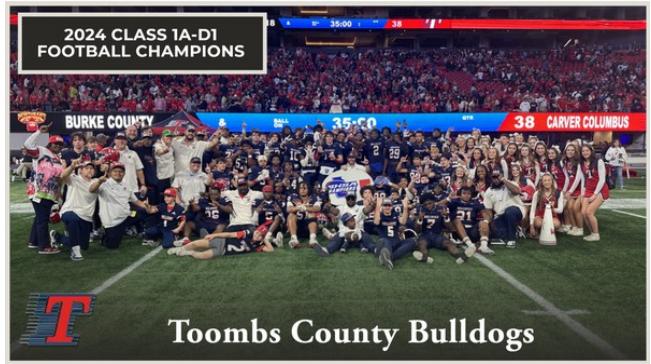
Statistics

State final statistics by West Georgia SID Services. ghsa.statbroadcast.com



Hebron Christian Lions

Private - Hebron Christian Lions



Toombs County Bulldogs

Class AD1 - Toombs County Bulldogs



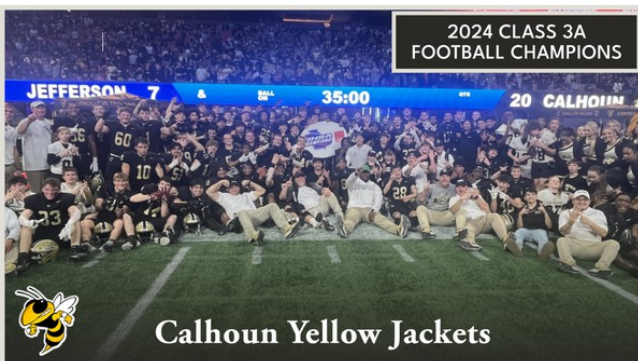
Bowdon Red Devils

Class AD2 - Bowdon Red Devils



Carver, Columbus

Class 2A - Carver Columbus Tigers



Calhoun Yellow Jackets

3A - Calhoun Yellow Jackets



North Oconee Titans

Class 4A - North Oconee Titans



Milton Eagles

Class 5A - Milton Eagles

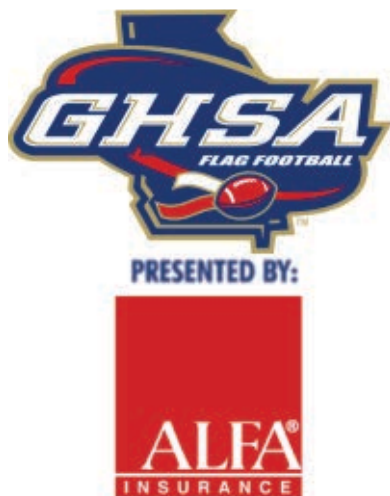


Grayson Rams

6A - Grayson Rams



Congratulations Girls Flag Football State Champions!



Much thanks to all the fans, teams, players, coaches, school administrators, bands, cheerleaders, Mercedes Benz Stadium staff, GHSA staff, Georgia Public Broadcasting crew, 680 The Fan radio team, officials, sponsors, TeamIP, media, official photographers, GHSA event staff, Northside Hospital trainers & doctors, PA announcers and many more who enthusiastically supported a successful three-day event.

Video

Watch on-demand on [NFHSNetwork.com/GHSA](https://www.nfhsnetwork.com/GHSA) & [GPB.org/sports](https://www.gpb.org/sports).

Order digital copies on <https://www.nfhsnetwork.com/store/nfhs-network>

Merchandise

Order state championship merchandise at [Team IP](https://www.teamip.com) / GHSA Store.

Event Fan Guide

[Download Digital Fan Guide](#) Produced by Score Atlanta.

Photos

Order action photography at [GHSA Photo Gallery](#)

Brackets

[Championship Football Brackets](#)

[Championship Flag Brackets](#)



Division 1 - SE Bulloch Yellow Jackets



Division 2 - Greenbrier Wolfpack



Division 3 - Pope Greyhounds



Division 4 - McEachern Indians

Special GHSAA Ticket Offer for G-League Skyhawks



Join us in College Park for GHSAA Night! The College Park Skyhawks are the G League Affiliate team for the Atlanta Hawks and play at Gateway Center Arena.

For a limited time, all GHSAA players, families and friends will have access to discounted tickets. Tickets start as low as \$13 with the option to choose from one of the games below:

Sunday, January 12th @ 2pm

Sunday, January 5th @ 2pm

Saturday, February 8th @ 3pm

Visit the link below to secure your seats today!

[SKYHAWKSGROUPS.COM/GHSA](https://skyhawksgroups.com/ghsa)

Want to bring out your entire team and participate in a fan experience? Groups of 10+ contact De'Shaun Taylor at DESHAUN.TAYLOR@CPSKYHAWKS.COM. Tickets are based on availability and prices are subject to change.

January Dates to Remember

- (5, 6) Dual Wrestling Region/Area Tournaments
- (7) Hardship/Appeal Meeting
- (10,11) Dual Wrestling Sectional Tournaments
- (17,18) Dual Wrestling State Tournaments for Boys
- (20) Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day - (office Closed)
- (21) Hardship/Appeal Meeting
- (24,25) Dual Wrestling State Tournaments for Girls
- (27) Earliest date for Baseball, Lacrosse, Tennis Soccer, Track and all Spring sports practice.



Marvin James

January 2025 - Happy New Year!