



PHOTO BY KIM ULLOM

Monday, the Aces were among teams across the state who began training during the first official day of high school football practice to be better prepared for the season ahead.

Media day previews season

BY CRAIG MOYER
For the Chowan Herald

New coaches, new team leaders, new play styles and a new conference highlighted the third-annual high school football media day at Elizabeth City State on Friday morning.

A total of 11 schools from the Northeastern Coastal

Conference and the newly-founded Albemarle Athletic Conference took part in the event, as teams appeared in reverse-alphabetical order.

Coaches and players from Perquimans, Pasquotank, Northeastern, Edenton, Currituck and Camden spoke about their upcoming seasons at the event.

Here are the highlights

from each team's time at the podium:

Edenton

For the defending 2A state runner-up Aces and third-year head coach Paul Hoggard, there is a lot of change from last season, with a new conference and the loss of some talented players, but the team is re-

maining confident.

Edenton fell in the state championship 58-12 to Reidsville last season, but Hoggard says his team is not worried about last season's results.

"We got beat by a great football team and that's the way it goes, you put that

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PHOTOS BY ERIN BRABBLE

Edenton's Little League softball team joins the winner's circle of teams from Chowan County who have gone the distance by taking home a state title.

Little League team captures state title

BY MILES LAYTON
Editor

Edenton's Little League 8U All-Star softball team defeated its rivals to win the state championship at the Tarheel State Tournament held recently in Smithfield.

"There were a lot of plays made throughout the tournament that will be remembered by the girls," Coach Mike Pippins said. "One big thing that stood out to me was how well we hit the ball from top to bottom. All 11 girls contributed to us winning the championship."

The road to success starts with a lot of time on the field as this talented team played in three tournaments including an invitational tournament in Suffolk, Va. where the girls finished with a 5-0 record and won the championship. They won the Tarheel League District 7 tournament in Currituck with a 4-0 record. They finished the season undefeated with a 3-0 record at the Tarheel League State Tournament in Smithfield. During the state tournament, they defeated Roanoke Valley 15-9, next Currituck 16-8 moving them into the final game.

As it was said from the movie "Highlander" — "There can be only one."

After a final hard fought



Heavy hitter Lilly Brower knocks one out of the park at the state championship game.

duel, Edenton defeated Roanoke Valley 11-4 to capture the girls' first Tarheel League 8U machine pitch state title. Memories were made and lessons were taught by coaches — Holly Evans, Chad Cobb, Darren Halstead and Pippins — that will last a lifetime.

"I hope the things that we as coaches taught them will carry over into their playing future whether its recreation or school ball and other things they pursue in the future as

well," Pippins said.

The coaches and team thanked sponsors Ray and Theresa Bateman/Bateman Logging and Sunshine of Elizabeth City.

"We would really like to thank them for all the support they have given to this group of girls," Pippins said. "We also would like to thank the parents who stepped in and helped when we needed them."

Pippins said he had a good

team to work with this season.

"I really enjoyed coaching this group of girls. From start to finish, they worked hard, did what we asked and they had fun. That's all you can ask for," he said.

Players on the team: Sarah Logan Cobb #6, Camy Pippins #15, Harper Evans #4, Chloe Chappell #2, Caroline Halstead #24, Emily Sawyer #7, Shelby Brabble #14, Lilly Brower #11, Ava Bunch #8, Hailey Roberson #9, Ashleigh Swain #17.

Press Box

Takeaways from HS media day

The last Friday in July has become a high school football tradition in northeast North Carolina.

Along with it being the unofficial end of the offseason, the day allows for area players, coaches and media to meet in one setting.

Elizabeth City State's WRVS 89.9 FM once again hosted the NENC High School Football Media Day at the ECSU new student center on Friday.

With all six members of the new Class 1A Albemarle Athletic Conference and five of the six teams from the 2A Northeastern Coastal Conference in attendance, there were five items from media day that caught my interest:

5. New coaches: The Albemarle Athletic Conference will have three new coaches on the sideline.

Manteo selected veteran coach Sport Sawyer to lead the Redskins.

Sawyer comes to Roanoke Island after a successful tenure at Washington, where in 2014 he led the Pam Pack to the 2AA east regional championship and a berth in the state championship game.

One of the benefits that new Camden head coach Joshua Blood noted was that he has taught or coached the majority of the players on the team when they were in middle school.

First-year Perquimans head coach Ian Rapanick boasts having increased number of athletes during offseason workouts.

4. Sense of normalcy: Along with the success of Edenton and Plymouth earned on the field last season, all schools in the area had to deal with severe weather altering schedules. The third week of last season was impacted because of tropical weather.

It was a point that Currituck coach John Wheeler noted his team faced last fall. Because of field conditions, the Knights had their Week 3 home contest against Hickory (Va.) moved from Barco to Virginia Beach and had to play on Labor Day instead of the previous Friday. Flooding in Bertie County during the middle of the season put the Falcons' field under water.

Last October, damage from Hurricane Matthew led the North Carolina High School Athletic Association to extend the fall athletic season by a week to allow schools in the eastern part of the state time to recover and complete their seasons.

The altered schedule led to short weeks to practice and squeeze in games.

Let's hope Mother Nature will be kind to the area this fall.

3. Media day missed Creswell's coach Rodgers: With the Coastal 10 Conference dissolving this summer, five former schools from the league along with Bear Grass Charter formed the Atlantic 6 Conference.

Creswell was one of the Coastal 10 schools that landed in the Atlantic 6.

One of the more colorful personalities at

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Columnist



Malcolm Shields

Mattera recognized as top Athletic Director by national association

BY MILES LAYTON
Editor

Aces' Athletic Director Wes Mattera joins an elite group of athletic administrators, but Chowan County has always known its athletic director was top notch.

Mattera was recognized as a Certified Athletic Administrator recently by the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA). The NIAAA is a national professional organization consisting of all 50 state athletic administrator associations and more than 10,000 individual members. It is dedicated to promoting the professional growth of high school ath-

letic administrators and preserving the educational nature of interscholastic athletics and the place of these programs in the secondary school curriculum.

"This achievement is a direct byproduct of a Superintendent, Dr. Rob Jackson, an Asst. Superintendent, Tanya Turner, and JAHHS Principal Steve Wood all of whom support and promote professional development and growth for its administration, teachers and coaches," Mattera said.

To earn this distinction, Mattera has demonstrated the highest level of knowledge and expertise in the field of interscholastic athletic administration, accord-

ing to the association. The voluntary certification process included a thorough evaluation of the candidate's educational background, experience and professional contributions, as well as a rigorous, comprehensive written examination.

As the Aces' football coach a few years back, Mattera led the Aces to three-straight conference championships in a four-year period. Though Mattera left for a short stint as Thomasville's football coach, he came back to Chowan County in 2015 to serve as athletic director. Since Mattera's return, many Aces' sports teams have achieved sports success

during his time at the helm. Most recently, the football and baseball teams have had amazing seasons and achieved glory at the state level. The softball team and athletes from cross country to tennis have been able to pursue their ambitions because Coach Mattera "kept the lights on" by doing any job required.

"Coach Mattera is an excellent athletic director. Under his leadership, the Aces achieved historic success in multiple sports in last year," Superintendent Rob Jackson said. "The state determined that school was too small to fairly compete at



FILE PHOTO

An Ace through and through, JAHHS Athletic Director Wes Mattera has achieved prestigious national recognition as a Certified Athletic Administrator from the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association.

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