

# MOTTO Athletics Top 15 Area Football Teams



Jamaal Fowler

PICKS BY JAMAAL FOWLER

|                              | Points For | Points Against |
|------------------------------|------------|----------------|
| 1. Reidsville (2-0)          | 90         | 14             |
| 2. West Forsyth (2-0)        | 89         | 21             |
| 3. Dudley (3-0)              | 130        | 26             |
| 4. Mt. Tabor (3-0)           | 141        | 21             |
| 5. Grimsley (3-0)            | 103        | 13             |
| 6. Davie (3-0)               | 139        | 64             |
| 7. Western Alamance (3-0)    | 129        | 35             |
| 8. Walkertown (3-0)          | 121        | 36             |
| 9. Reagan (2-1)              | 90         | 57             |
| 10. Eastern Alamance (3-0)   | 98         | 42             |
| 11. Winston-Salem Prep (3-0) | 140        | 39             |
| 12. Glenn (2-1)              | 77         | 31             |
| 13. Northwest Guilford (3-0) | 120        | 18             |
| 14. Northern Guilford (2-1)  | 118        | 34             |
| 15. Randleman (3-0)          | 133        | 27             |

Honorable Mention: Forbush (3-0), North Forsyth (2-1), Oak Grove (2-1), North Davidson (2-1), Southeast Guilford (2-1),

## Wolfpack

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board and to just keep playing hard and not give up. I tell them they have to play with some passion, you have to play with some pride, and you have to play with some purpose. That's what I tell my guys, just to keep on keeping on and we tried, but things just got out of hand for us."

Following that kick return touchdown from Brown, the Vikings opened up the offense a bit and began to move the ball. After an impressive drive, Jones connected with Lyons in the endzone for their second touchdown hookup of the evening, bringing the score to 29-20 with 3:23 left in the third.

Walkertown punched it in two more times in the fourth quarter to put the game out of reach. The Wolfpack defense clamped down when it mattered most and shut down any comeback efforts from the Vikings late to seal the victory. Coach McKoy was happy with the defensive performance, but knows improvements must be made.

"We didn't play as well as I expected defensively, but you can tell we kind of got a little tired, but that's football," he said. "You can't take nothing away from Coach Williams, because that no huddle, hurry up offense was effective, and he is a good football coach and North is a good football team. To get this win against them tonight was huge."

Even though the Vikings suffered their first loss, Williams found some positives that he could take away from the game to help the team improve. He credited Walkertown for their coaching game plan and is excited to coach his team up for next week's game.

"We played a very good team tonight in Walkertown and they are well-coached and they did a great job tonight," Williams said. "We asked our guys to just do what they have been coached to do and play within our offense and we asked our quarterback to lead the team. We got some things done and I am very proud of them."

Williams was also impressed with the maturation of his quarterback and how Jones stepped up as the game progressed.

"Last week, he kind of had a tough game and I went to him and I told him, 'Hey, I need you to lead this team.' I kept telling him all week, I said, 'You can do it, you can do it' and to keep working hard and keep trusting Coach (Oscar) Ledbetter and your offensive line. He did mature tonight, and he did show some great gains by showing some progress and I can't be more proud of him."

Coach McKoy says he is happy with his team's 3-0 record, but says his team needs to play well in all four quarters of the game to reach the level they want to achieve. He credits the kids and the coaching staff for their great start to the season.

## HBCU

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the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference or the Southwestern Athletic Conference in recent years.

Thankfully, over the last few years, several things have taken place that have put HBCUs back on the map. Most recently, HBCUs were heavily featured during the 2021 NBA All-Star Game. The game is generating over \$3 million for HBCUs through donations to scholarship funds, but the larger impact of national exposure will prove to be much more valuable to HBCUs in the long run.

The ability to see those colleges and universities on a national stage is something that is not often done. It reminds young people of color of the value these institutions still hold. Mo Williams, first year head coach of Alabama State and former NBA All-Star, knows how much exposure the NBA All-Star game can provide.

"Everything's about exposure," said Williams in an article with NBA.com. "Being that the All-Star Game is putting an emphasis on HBCUs, it gives us exposure and it helps in a lot of different areas, a lot of different ways, a lot of different schools."

"It's no different from Super Bowl commercials. People spend millions of dollars to put their commercial on the Super Bowl for the exposure. And, you know, the exposure we're getting this weekend from the NBA All-Star Game, it only can help."

Almost every element of the game was set to highlight HBCU culture. The court for the All-Star Game was designed in collaboration with artists from HBCUs. Gladys Knight, a Shaw University graduate, sang the "Star-Spangled Banner." The well-known bands from Florida A&M University and Grambling State University performed during the introductions. Even the refereeing crew were all HBCU graduates.

"It was part of the reason why we're here in Atlanta," said Adam Silver, NBA commissioner. "This was an opportunity to focus on the HBCUs."

NBA All-Star and NBA Players Association President, Chris Paul, has been one of the biggest supporters of HBCUs recently. Paul sported a jacket representing all 107 HBCUs during All-Star weekend. He is also finishing his degree at Winston-Salem State University.

Earlier this year, Paul spoke with CBS News about the importance of HBCUs. As he has matured, Paul has researched the history of many of these important institutions of higher learning.

"I just want to make sure everyone understands that HBCUs are not less than, they're very capable and important to our history, to our culture, to everything," said Paul in the interview.

Paul also collaborated with Stephen A. Smith of ESPN for the "Why Not Us" documentary. The film focuses on the obvious lack of resources and funds many HBCU sports programs deal with by following the North Carolina Central



Chris Paul

submitted photo

University men's basketball team for the 2020-21 season.

Another recent high note for HBCUs was the hiring of Deion Sanders as head football coach at Jackson State University (JSU). Sanders is an NFL Hall of Famer that played college football at Florida State University. His presence at the school brings instant attention and notoriety to the school.

Sanders won his first game with the school and the potential benefits he can bring to the school can be exponential. He has already proven that he can flip players to Jackson State that more than likely were headed to PWI's (predominately white institutions).

Since the arrival of Sanders, donations have spiked dramatically for the school. The constant attention, along with the fact they are playing football in the spring, has also brought attention from the media.

The buzz surrounding the program has helped push the game between JSU and Mississippi Valley State to be aired on ESPN 2. Now let's think about the last time a regular season game between two HBCU programs has been shown on ESPN 2. I am not sure what the exact number is, but I'm sure you could probably count on one hand the amount of times that has happened on that station. For Sanders to have such a tremendous impact in only year one is a great start for what could positively impact HBCUs for years to come.

Athletes are also heading to HBCUs. It is not just the football and basketball players who are joining the movement, either. What has been interesting is the attention non-revenue sport athletes have been giving to HBCUs. The football and basketball players get all the publicity, but when non-revenue athletes are also choosing HBCUs, it's really saying something.

For instance, North Carolina A&T State University has been able to build one of the best track and field programs in the nation. Head coach, Duane Ross, has snatched several athletes from Power 5 PWIs to build his program. I never

thought I would see the day an HBCU would have enough talent to compete with PWI powerhouse track and field programs as a team and not just in individual events.

I am so happy to see this resurgence in attention given to HBCUs. Those of us who have attended one know and feel the pride and importance these institutions

provide. Yes, they are still needed, and I hope more of our youth and attention continues to go toward them, especially since it's the minority kids that are generating the vast majority of revenue for PWIs. I hope more minority athletes attend HBCUs so that revenue can swing back to where it's needed most.

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