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# SUNDAY HUDDLE

## TOP TIER

*The Daytona Beach News-Journal announces all-area soccer, basketball teams.*



Gabe Glatt



Katherine Ouellette

Hailey Sammons



Iniya Reddicks



Kade Manley

PHOTOS BY NADIA ZOMORODIAN/NEWS-JOURNAL, PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY ALEXIS LINDENMAYER/USA TODAY NETWORK

**NFL DRAFT**

Florida products all over draft. Did we see this coming?

**Page 7B**



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PAGE TWO

# PHOTO OF THE WEEK



Seabreeze's Wrigley Zweifel (9) catches the ball in the outfield against Deltona during the Five Star Conference Tournament quarterfinals on March 30. NADIA ZOMORODIAN/NEWS-JOURNAL

**SPORTS ON TV SUNDAY, APRIL 12 (ALL TIMES EASTERN)**

**AUTO RACING**

**3 p.m.**  
FS1 — NASCAR Cup Series, Food City 500, Bristol, Tenn.

**BOWLING**

**1 p.m.**  
CW — PBA Tour, New York Classic, Rochester, N.Y.

**COLLEGE BASEBALL**

**12 p.m.**  
BTN — Indiana at Maryland  
SECN — Florida at Georgia  
**12:30 p.m.**  
ESPN2 — North Carolina at Clemson

**1 p.m.**  
ACCN — Stanford at Louisville

**3 p.m.**  
ESPN — Radford at High Point

SECN — Kentucky at Auburn

**3:30 p.m.**

ESPN2 — Arizona at TCU

**COLLEGE LACROSSE (WOMEN'S)**

**12 p.m.**  
ESPNU — Michigan at Johns Hopkins

**COLLEGE SOFTBALL**

**12 p.m.**  
ESPN — Arizona at LSU

**2 p.m.**

ESPN — Oklahoma at Texas

**3 p.m.**

BTN — Ohio State at Michigan

**4 p.m.**

ACCN — Virginia Tech at Virginia

**5 p.m.**

BTN — Purdue at Indiana

**6 p.m.**

ACCN — California at N.C. State

SECN — Kentucky at Tennessee

**GOLF**

**12 p.m.**  
PARAMOUNT+ — DP World Tour/PGA Tour, 89th Masters, Final Round, Augusta, Ga.

**2 p.m.**  
CBS/PARAMOUNT+ — DP World Tour/PGA Tour, 89th Masters, Final Round, Augusta, Ga.

**HORSE RACING**

**1 p.m.**

FS1 — America's Day at the Races

**2 p.m.**

FS2 — America's Day at the Races

**MLB BASEBALL**

**1:35 p.m.**

MLBN — San Francisco at Baltimore

**1:40 p.m.**

ESPN UNLIMITED — N.Y. Yankees at Tampa Bay

**2:10 p.m.**

PEACOCK — Washington at Milwaukee

**4:30 p.m.**

MLBN — Texas at L.A. Dodgers (JIP)

**7:20 p.m.**

NBC/PEACOCK — Cleveland at Atlanta

**MLR RUGBY**

**9 p.m.**

ESPN2 — Chicago at California

**NBA BASKETBALL**

**6 p.m.**

ESPN — Orlando at Boston

**8:30 p.m.**

ESPN — Denver at San Antonio

**NHL HOCKEY**

**3 p.m.**

TNT/TRU TV — Pittsburgh at Washington

**6 p.m.**

NHLN — Boston at Columbus

**9 p.m.**

NHLN — Whip-around coverage of Ottawa at New Jersey, Vancouver at Anaheim and Utah at Calgary

**SOCCER (MEN'S)**

**9 a.m.**

USA — Premier League, Tottenham Hotspur at Sunderland

**11:30 a.m.**

USA — Premier League, Manchester City at Chelsea

**7 p.m.**

FS2 — CPL, Forge at Vancouver FC

**TENNIS**

**6 a.m.**

TENNIS — Monte Carlo Doubles Final

**7:30 a.m.**

TENNIS — Billie Jean King Cup, Qualifiers, USA vs. Belgium

**9 a.m.**

TENNIS — Monte Carlo Singles Final

**11:30 a.m.**

TENNIS — Linz-WTA Singles Final

**UFL FOOTBALL**

**12 p.m.**

ABC — Columbus at Dallas

**3 p.m.**

ABC — Birmingham at St. Louis

**VOLLEYBALL (WOMEN'S)**

**3 p.m.**

VICE — MLV, Atlanta at Indy

**Florida softball's Reagan Walsh**

**COLLEGE SPORTS COVERAGE ONLINE**

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**Bethune-Cookman football's Cam'Ron Ransom**

**HEY, WILLIE!**

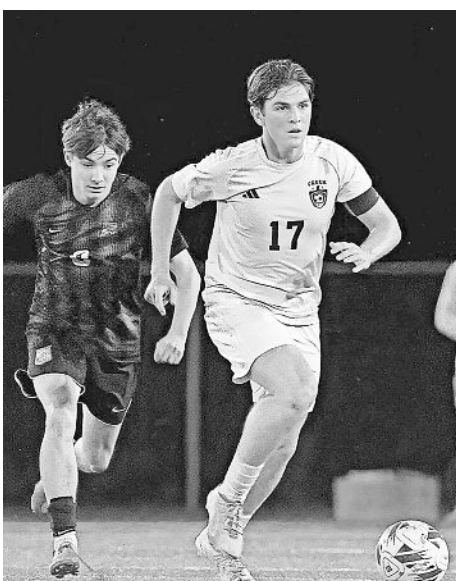
Keep up with Daytona Beach News-Journal sports columnist Ken Willis by scanning the QR code with your smartphone or by submitting questions to his mailbag column at [ken.willis@news-jrnl.com](mailto:ken.willis@news-jrnl.com)

## HIGH SCHOOL BOYS SOCCER



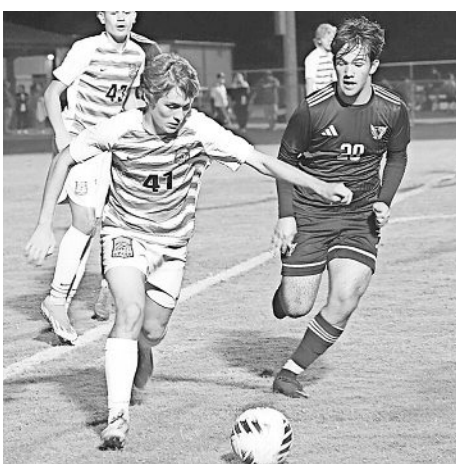
Flagler Palm Coast's Rami Amiri breaks for the goal to score during a match with DeLand at FPC High School, Wednesday, Jan. 8, 2025. NIGEL COOK/NEWS-JOURNAL

# The All-Area Boys Soccer Team



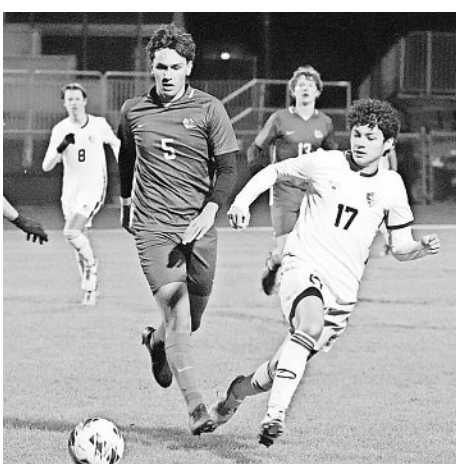
Spruce Creek's Tanner McClelland (17) dribbles the ball during the boys Five Star Conference Tournament.

NADIA ZOMORODIAN/NEWS-JOURNAL



New Smyrna Beach's Rance Morgan (41) looks to kick the ball against Matanzas High on Dec. 3, 2025.

NADIA ZOMORODIAN/NEWS-JOURNAL



DeLand's Samer Ponce (17) defends against Flagler Palm Coast on Jan. 8, 2025. NIGEL COOK/NEWS-JOURNAL

**Zach Allen**

Daytona Beach News-Journal  
USA TODAY NETWORK

The 2025-26 boys soccer season is in the books, and it's time to unveil the All-Area teams. • Just like on the girls side, New Smyrna Beach was the last team remaining in the postseason with an appearance in the Class 5A regional semifinals. But there was variety of the trophy winners this season. • Spruce Creek was the Five Star Conference champion, and Seabreeze took the District 6-5A crown. Both won their respective titles over New Smyrna Beach. • Still, the Barracudas were the winningest program in the area with a 16-4-2 record. • Without further ado, here are the Volusia-Flagler All-Area teams.

### First Team

**Evan Achterberg, GK, New Smyrna Beach:** Achterberg had 114 saves for the Barracudas, including six consecutive clean sheets at one point in the season. Achterberg and New Smyrna Beach allowed only 17 goals in 22 matches.

**Declan Botting, D, New Smyrna Beach:** Botting had one goal and seven assists as a wingback for the 'Cudas.

**Gabe Glatt, D, New Smyrna Beach:** Glatt was arguably the best center back in the Volusia-Flagler area, but he was also an offensive weapon for the Barracudas. He scored 11 goals, including four game winners.

**Maksym Zherukha, D, Spruce Creek:** Zherukha was Spruce Creek's captain and centerback that led the Hawks to their best season since 2021. He had one goal and tied for the team lead with five assists.

**Rami Amiri, M, Flagler Palm Coast:** Amiri scored 18 goals for a Flagler Palm Coast team that finished 12-8-1.

**Jonathan Costa, M, Matanzas:** Costa led Matanzas with 15 goals and also registered seven assists. The Pirates voted him as their team MVP.

**Luke Harrell, M, Seabreeze:** Harrell led Seabreeze to a district championship with an impressive 15 goals and 17 assists.

**Tanner, McClelland, M, Spruce Creek:** McClelland had eight goals and three assists for Spruce Creek out of the midfield. His efforts helped the Hawks win the Five Star Conference trophy.

**Nico Segovia, M, New Smyrna Beach:** Segovia led New Smyrna Beach's midfield with eight goals and 13 assists.

**Emmanuel Benitez, F, Taylor:** Benitez recorded 13 goals and three assists early in the season for a Taylor squad that finished 10-9.

**Samer Ponce, F, DeLand:** Ponce had 13

goals and four assists playing every game for the Bulldogs.

**Erlin Yahir-Avila, F, Atlantic:** Yahir-Avila led Atlantic with 14 goals, including a six-goal game against Eustis.

### Second Team

**Teagan Paulo, GK, Flagler Palm Coast:** Paulo recorded 100 saves in 20 games.

**Holden Brown, D, DeLand:** Brown was a primary defender for a Bulldogs squad that allowed 28 goals in 18 matches. His efforts helped DeLand hold opponents under two goals eight times, including four shutouts.

**Rance Morgan, D, New Smyrna Beach:** Morgan added to Glatt's offensive efforts from the back line, scoring nine goals for the Barracudas.

**Spencer Zogg, D, Flagler Palm Coast:** Zogg manned the Bulldogs' back line for a squad that allowed fewer than 1.5 goals per game.

**Matthew Ciminera, M, Matanzas:** Ciminera had seven goals and nine assists for Matanzas this season.

**Trent Golden, M, New Smyrna Beach:** Golden had 11 goals and seven assists to tie Segovia for NSB's team lead of 29 points.

**Leo Mazzola, M, DeLand:** Mazzola scored 11 goals and six assists in just 11 games. He joined the team after DeLand's eighth game of the season.

**Eli Remsburg, M, Atlantic:** Remsburg was the Sharks' primary facilitator with 10 assists. He also scored four goals and was a pesky defender with 55 steals.

**Jack Runnoe, M, Flagler Palm Coast:** Runnoe had seven goals and three assists for the Bulldogs.

**RJ Cerasi, F, Matanzas:** Cerasi tied for the Pirates' second-leading scorer with nine goals. He also recorded seven as-

sists.

**Daneel Martinez Pulido, F, University:** Martinez Pulido scored 11 goals for University.

**Christian Sweeney, F, Spruce Creek:** Sweeney scored 12 goals and had five assists for Spruce Creek, leading it to a 14-9-3 record.

### Honorable Mention

**DeLand:** Braden English, Kelvin Saucedo, Colin Tooley

**Deltona:** Anthony Lizarazo

**Father Lopez:** Alessandro Coblentz, Sutton Greathouse

**Flagler Palm Coast:** Dylan Hardesty, River Rodriguez, Garrett Tucker

**Mainland:** Diego Cruz

**Matanzas:** Jose Cortes, Jackson Grace, Sergio Posada

**New Smyrna Beach:** Elliott McCartha

**Seabreeze:** Owen Applegarth, Chandler Klepper, Sebastian Mendoza

**Spruce Creek:** Leonardo Bianchi, Asher Sjoblom, Thomas Wylie

**Taylor:** Alejandro Caro, Evan Hernandez

**University:** Liam LaCorte

### Coach of the Year

**Brandon Cisneros, New Smyrna Beach:** New Smyrna Beach was at the top of the Volusia-Flagler area boys soccer hierarchy once again. The Barracudas, led by Cisneros, were the winningest local team with 16 wins, four losses and two ties. New Smyrna Beach was the last local program remaining in the postseason with an appearance in the Class 5A regional semifinals.

The Barracudas also appeared in the Five Star Conference and district finals. Although they were upset in both games, New Smyrna Beach was the most consistent contender in local and postseason competitions under Cisneros' leadership.

### Player of the Year

**Luke Harrell, Seabreeze:** Harrell stuffed the stat sheet for the Sandcrabs. The senior midfielder and Brown University soccer commit led Seabreeze with 15 goals and 17 assists, putting him among the most productive players in the Volusia-Flagler area. And his efforts didn't go unrewarded. One of Harrell's goals earned the Sandcrabs the District 6-5A trophy in a 1-0 upset victory over New Smyrna Beach, clinching a bid to the regional playoffs.



Cisneros

## HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS SOCCER



Seabreeze's Olivia Chase (7) works through New Smyrna Beach's defense, Tuesday, Feb. 4, 2025 during the Region 2-5A girls soccer quarterfinals at the Ormond Beach Sports Complex. DAVID TUCKER/NEWS-JOURNAL

# The All-Area Girls Soccer Team

Zach Allen

Daytona Beach News-Journal  
USA TODAY NETWORK

The usual suspects — Flagler Palm Coast, New Smyrna Beach and Seabreeze — ranked among the premier Volusia-Flagler girls soccer programs once again. • But there was a new addition during the 2025-26 campaign: the University Titans. • University earned the title as the winningest team in the area with a 16-3-2 record. After struggling from the 2019-20 season to the end of the 2023-24 season, the Titans won 14 games last winter before making another jump during their most-recent campaign. • However, University was eliminated from the postseason in the district semifinals, paving the way for New Smyrna Beach to be the last local team remaining in the regional semifinals. FPC and Seabreeze also made it to the playoffs. • Without further ado, here are the the Volusia-Flagler All-Area girls soccer teams.

## First Team

**Natalie Neal, GK, Flagler Palm Coast:** Neal led Flagler Palm Coast to a 14-3-5 record, including a 17-match unbeaten streak to start the season. The senior allowed just over one goal per game and had nine clean sheets.

**Jade Erikson, D, Spruce Creek:** Erikson led Spruce Creek's defense, earning multiple votes from coaches around the area. The Hawks surrendered just 1.9 goals per outing.

**Eva Sites, D, Flagler Palm Coast:** Sites anchored Flagler Palm Coast's back line as the team's center back. Combined with Neal's efforts in net, the Bulldogs allowed 21 goals in 22 games.

**Paige Wooley, D, University:** Wooley scored 10 goals and recorded 10 assists. As one of University's fullbacks, Wooley was also tasked with stopping her opponents on the other side of the field.

**Ava Castro, M, Taylor:** Castro was a force for a Taylor team that finished 9-9-1. The senior midfielder scored 23 goals and added another eight assists in 19 games.

**Alaina Harden, M, New Smyrna Beach:** Harden championed the 'Cudas midfield and tied for a team-high 12 goals and nine assists. She stood alone at the top of New Smyrna Beach's roster with 33 points.

**Valentina Orozco, M, University:** Orozco led University to 16 wins, a Volusia-Flagler best, with team highs in goals (14) and assists (17).

**Hailey Sammons, M, Flagler Palm Coast:** Sammons was responsible for 28 scores this season split between 11 goals and a whopping 17 assists. She combined for a team-high 39 points.

**Olivia Chase, F, Seabreeze:** Chase played in only 13 matches, but it didn't stop her from being the Volusia-Flagler area's leading goal scorer. The senior striker netted 26 goals, good for two per contest.

**Lauralee Macleod, F, Flagler Palm Coast:** Macleod led the Bulldogs with 16 goals.

**Chloe Waldo, F, Spruce Creek:** Waldo led Spruce Creek's offensive attack, which included a four-goal performance against Orangewood Christian.

**Katherine Ouellette, Flex, Flagler Palm Coast:** Ouellette scored 14 goals and had eight assists as the Bulldogs' second-leading goal scorer.

## Second Team

**Payton Drexler, GK, Spruce Creek:** Drexler made 190 saves for the Hawks, averaging 10.6 per match.

**Bella Glatt, D, New Smyrna Beach:** Glatt scored two goals and tacked on four assists. She starred as part of a back line that allowed 24 goals in 21 matches.

**Aubree Hickman, D, New Smyrna Beach:** Hickman was part of NSB's back line that made an appearance in a regional semifinal possible. She also scored two goals this season.

**Marlee O'Fallon, D, Flagler Palm Coast:** O'Fallon helped anchor the Bulldogs' lockdown defense.

**Abbey Atkinson, M, University:** Atkinson also recorded double-digit goals and assists to lead University to a 16-win season. She recorded 13 goals and 10 assists.

**Elizabeth Barry, M, New Smyrna Beach:** Barry had nine goals and nine assists for 27 points.

**Kenley Hale, M, New Smyrna Beach:**

Hale was one of three Barracudas to score double-digit goals this season, beating opposing goalkeepers 10 times.

**Valeria Lopez, M, Taylor:** Lopez recorded 12 goals and eight assists for the Wildcats.

**Madelynn Davis, F, New Smyrna Beach:** Davis was tied with Harden for a team-high 12 goals. One of those was the winner in the District 6-5A final against Seabreeze.

**Zaida Dumas, F, DeLand:** Dumas netted 18 goals as a freshman for the Bulldogs.

**Viera Ferguson, F, University:** Ferguson scored 10 goals and dished out four assists.

**Natalie Hubert, Flex, Pine Ridge:** Hubert did everything for Pine Ridge, leading the Panthers with 16 goals and six assists.

## Coach of the Year

**Duane Danchuk, University:** From the start of the 2019-20 season to the end of the 2023-24 season, the Titans won a combined 15 games. But Danchuk, a longtime head coach for the Titans, led University to its most successful season since an 18-2 campaign in 2018-19. Danchuk's squad was the winningest local team this season with a 16-3-2 record.

## Honorable Mention

**DeLand:** Julia Yocum

**Deltona:** Kathleen Farran

**Flagler Palm Coast:** Makayla Barbel, Laura Herrera, Isabella Kummernes, Skyler Strickland

**Matanzas:** Carsyn O'Linn, Emma Skinner

**New Smyrna Beach:** Piper Amato, Molly Andriola, Zoe Kosmas

**Pine Ridge:** Katie Pilloud

**Seabreeze:** Emily Barnes, Ana Bom Conselho, Hunter Byers, Katie Clark, Ashlyn Colley, Gabrielle Dioquino, Kaia McFarland, Madison Opalewski

**Spruce Creek:** Bryanna Buckler, Addison Longstreet

**University:** Nichol Leon

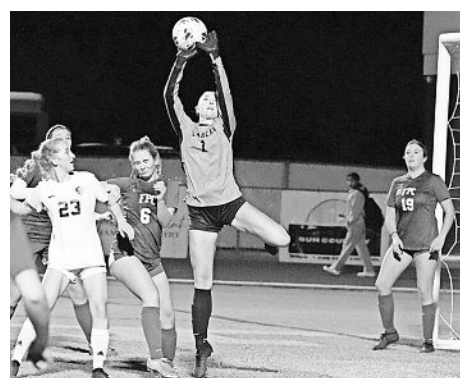
## Player of the Year

**Olivia Chase, Seabreeze:** Chase was only able to play 13 games this season, but that didn't stop the senior forward from recording numbers that ranked atop the Volusia-Flagler standings. Chase led all local players with 26 goals in only those 13 contests, and she assisted seven more for an area-high 59 points. For those keeping count, that's two goals and 4.5 points every match. Chase was the primary offensive option on a Seabreeze team that finished 9-8-1.



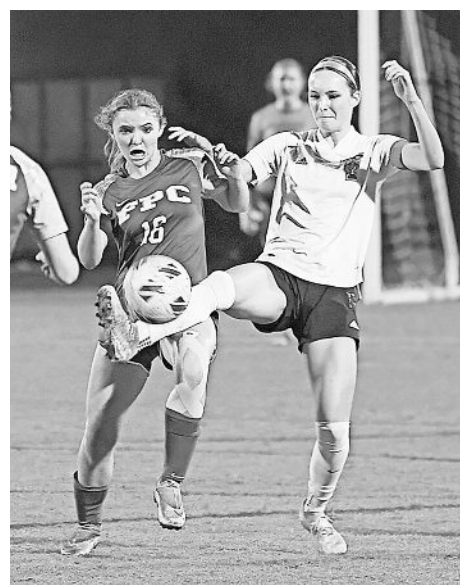
New Smyrna Beach's Alaina Harden (10), shown in the Five Star Conference semifinals against Seabreeze.

NADIA ZOMORODIAN/NEWS-JOURNAL



Flagler Palm Coast goalie Natalie Neal (1) makes the save during a game with DeLand on Friday, Nov. 22, 2024.

NIGEL COOK/NEWS-JOURNAL



Taylor's Ava Castro (11) kicks the ball away from Flagler Palm Coast's Eva Sites on Nov. 19, 2025.

NADIA ZOMORODIAN/NEWS-JOURNAL

## HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS BASKETBALL



New Smyrna Beach's Riley France (2) and Mainland's Natalie Williams (2) battle for the ball on Tuesday, Dec. 2, 2025. NADIA ZOMORODIAN/NEWS-JOURNAL

# The All-Area Girls Basketball Team



Flagler Palm Coast's Ava Works (1) saves the ball during the game against Matanzas High School, Friday, Jan. 2, 2026. NADIA ZOMORODIAN/NEWS-JOURNAL



Atlantic's Saniya Whitfield defends during a game against Mainland at Atlantic High School, Saturday, Jan. 20, 2024. NIGEL COOK/NEWS-JOURNAL



Spruce Creek's Emani Mccaskill passes to a teammate during the Region 1-7A quarterfinals against Lake Mary. NADIA ZOMORODIAN/NEWS-JOURNAL

**Zach Allen**  
Daytona Beach News-Journal  
USA TODAY NETWORK

The 2025-26 girls basketball season saw New Smyrna Beach as the last surviving Volusia-Flagler area squad for a second consecutive year. Although they didn't end with a state championship trophy like they did last year, the Barracudas made the regional final before being eliminated. They did add another Five Star Conference trophy. But the talent throughout the area is plentiful beyond the border of New Smyrna Beach High School. Here are the Volusia-Flagler All-Area teams.

### First Team

**Kelsey Assent, Deltona:** The sophomore scored 13.9 points per game for the Wolves.

**Lexi Brown, Flagler Palm Coast:** Brown averaged a double-double with 11.3 points and 11.3 boards to lead the Bulldogs to an 18-6 record.

**Serenity Cressor, Pine Ridge:** The senior center scored 12.8 points per contest for the Panthers.

**Santana Dixon, Atlantic:** Dixon recorded 14.3 points and a staggering 17.5 rebounds per game as a sophomore.

**Iniya Reddicks, New Smyrna Beach:** Reddicks averaged 18.6 points, seven rebounds and a whopping 4.7 steals per game to lead NSB to an appearance in the Class 5A Elite Eight.

**Lillian Sanchez, DeLand:** Sanchez scored 15 points per game and led the Bulldogs in every single statistic besides 3-point percentage and turnovers. She averaged six rebounds, four assists and three steals per game as well.

**Naomie Torres, Pine Ridge:** Torres averaged 15 points per game for the Panthers.  
**Madeleine Trumble, Seabreeze:** Trumble recorded 13.4 points as the Sandcrabs' leading scorer. She also grabbed 3.8 rebounds per contest.

**Kaneisha Washington, Halifax:** Washington recorded 16.6 points, 8.4 rebounds and 4.7 steals to lead the Knights to a 12-7 season as a sophomore.

**Frantashia Williams, Deltona:** Williams led Deltona with 18.1 points, 4.4 steals and 2.8 assists per game. She scored 38 against DeLand to lead the sixth-seeded Wolves to the Five Star Conference final.

**Natalie Williams, Mainland:** Williams led Mainland with 13.8 points and 6.3 rebounds per game.

**Ava Works, Flagler Palm Coast:** Works averaged 14.3 points over 23 games to lead the Bulldogs in scoring.

### Second Team

**Erin Boyle, Pine Ridge:** Boyle averaged 10.5 points per game as one of three Pine Ridge players to score in double figures this season.

**Brielle Collins, Spruce Creek:** Collins dropped 11 points per game as one of three Hawks scorers to average double figures.

**Za'myia Dixon, Halifax:** Dixon averaged 9.4 points and 3.2 steals for a defensive Halifax team.

**Ruby Fogel, Matanzas:** Fogel recorded 13.4 boards, 5.9 points and 2.3 blocks per contest for Matanzas.

**Emani Mccaskill, Spruce Creek:** Mccaskill was Spruce Creek's second-leading scorer at 11.3 points per game.

**Anastasia Neal, Mainland:** Neal scored 12 per game and averaged 2.3 steals for the Bucs.

**Camora Pate, Deltona:** Pate averaged 11.6 points and a team-high 7.5 boards for Deltona.

**Jakeyvia Semond, Spruce Creek:** Semond led the Hawks with 12.4 points per game.

**Katelynn Smith, Matanzas:** Smith averaged 11.5 points and 9.1 rebounds per game for the Pirates.

**Tori Spann, Flagler Palm Coast:** Spann averaged 11.2 points per game for the Bulldogs.

**Kaylin Spor, DeLand:** Spor averaged 11

points, four rebounds and three steals as the Bulldogs' second option.

**Skyla Thompson, Father Lopez:** Thompson averaged 11.6 points and 2.1 steals as a freshman for the Green Wave.

### Honorable Mention

**Atlantic:** Jayde Harold, Essence Johnson, Saniya Whitfield

**Deltona:** Ariel Andre  
**Father Lopez:** Scotlyn Gill, Brooklyn Tuminello, Chloe Wilen

**Flagler Palm Coast:** Stephanie Turner  
**Halifax:** Ashlyn Ivery, Ki'arah McMillian

**Mainland:** Michiyah Green, Jada Rawls

**Matanzas:** Aurora Purdy  
**New Smyrna Beach:** Sariah Ammons, Brooklin Cooper, Riley France, Zoe Haywood, Janessa Horwitz

**Pine Ridge:** Ja'nae Threatts  
**Seabreeze:** Amira Ferguson  
**Taylor:** Caydence Hassell

### Coach of the Year

**Aisha Patrick, New Smyrna Beach:** Patrick won a state championship last season before being named as our Top Coach, and she'll add another Coach of the Year honor to her collection this year. Under Patrick's leadership, the Barracudas were once again the last surviving Volusia-Flagler team with an appearance in the Region 2-5A final. It's hard to repeat as state champions, and an appearance in the 5A Elite Eight is something to be proud of.

### Player of the Year

**Iniya Reddicks, New Smyrna Beach:** Reddicks was the motor behind New Smyrna Beach's run to the Region 2-5A finals. The junior guard averaged 18.6 per game along with seven rebounds. Scoring nearly 20 points per game is impressive, but it's rivaled by her 4.7 steals per game. No matter where her opponents were, Reddicks was there to either score on them or nab the ball from their hands. She was a part of last year's state championship team, and she still has one year of high school eligibility remaining.



Patrick

## HIGH SCHOOL BOYS BASKETBALL



Pine Ridge forward Henry Robinson Jr. (5) prepares to begin the third quarter against Providence during a Reps on Reps Battlegrounds high school boys basketball game on Dec. 19, 2025. CLAYTON FREEMAN/FLORIDA TIMES-UNION

# The All-Area Boys Basketball Team

Zach Allen

Daytona Beach News-Journal  
USA TODAY NETWORK

A successful boys basketball season for the Volusia-Flagler area made spots on the 2025-26 All-Area teams hotly contested. But that's what happens when 11 squads finish the season .500 or better. ● Atlantic was the winningest and went farther into the postseason than any other local program. The Sharks appeared in the Class 4A state championship game, marking the first time they had played for a state title. ● Outside of Atlantic's run, Seabreeze has a claim for the second-most notable storyline. ● The Sandcrabs finished 21-8 after a 10-15 campaign just a season ago. It ended a nine-year streak of losing seasons, and their 21 wins were the most since they began uploading results to MaxPreps in 2005. ● Not included in the 11 teams that had a record of .500 or better was Pine Ridge, which ended up making its first regional final since 2002 after a regular-season gauntlet. ● The list goes on, and there wasn't a shortage of talent. Here are the Volusia-Flagler All-Area teams.

### First Team

**Baron Brownlee, Father Lopez:** The 6-foot-4 freshman swingman was one of two players in the Volusia-Flagler area to average more than 20 points per game with a 20.2 aggregate in his inaugural high school campaign. He also averaged 8.1 rebounds and 2.9 steals per game.

**Cris De La Pena, Atlantic:** De La Pena was the engine that led Atlantic to its first state championship game in program history. The senior point guard averaged 14.8 points per game and dropped 29 in the Region 2-4A final to send the Sharks to a state semifinal.

**Wilmer De La Rosa, Pine Ridge:** De La Rosa was a solid scoring option and a force on the boards for Pine Ridge. The senior basically averaged a double-double with 16.6 points and 9.9 rebounds per game and shot 69% from the field.

**JD Fieser, New Smyrna Beach:** Fieser was New Smyrna Beach's first option when leading scorer Tyler McKnight missed nine games with an injury down the back stretch of the season. Fieser, a junior forward, averaged 16 points and 6.7 rebounds per game.

**Beegie Gordon, Mainland:** Gordon was one of three Buccaneers to average more than 10 points per game and played a large role in their ranking as one of the best teams in the FHSAA. The 6-foot-3 guard scored 13.5 per game and shot 41% from 3.

**Jacquez Ivey, Spruce Creek:** Ivey did it all for Spruce Creek. The 6-foot-5 point guard averaged 16 points, seven rebounds, four assists and 2.1 steals per game.

**Emmanuel Martin, Atlantic:** Standing at 6-foot-8, Martin was a force in the paint all season for the Class 4A state runner-up. Still only a junior, he averaged 12.6 points and 10.7 rebounds per game.

**Kade Manley, Mainland:** Manley was Mainland's primary scorer in a season where the Bucs finished 22-4 and as the No. 18 squad in Florida. The junior guard led Mainland with 15.8 points and 3.5 assists per game, shot 47% from 3 and made 46 of his 50 free throw attempts.

**Jayden McCoy, Matanzas:** Despite the Pirates finishing 8-13, McCoy was one of the most prolific scorers in the Volusia-Flagler area with 18.7 points per game. He also averaged 8.9 boards and 2.3 steals.

**Tyler McKnight, New Smyrna Beach:** McKnight missed more than a month with an injury in late January and early February before returning for the regional playoffs. Still, he helped the 'Cudas to a 22-6 record with 17.2 points per game.

**Jeremiah Outler, Seabreeze:** Outler was the leading scorer, rebounder and pickpocket on a Seabreeze team that won the most games (21) since it started uploading its results to MaxPreps during the 2005-06 season. The junior guard averaged 16.8 points, 7.3 rebounds and 2.9 steals per game.

**Henry Robinson Jr., Pine Ridge:** Robinson dropped 53 in the first game of his junior season, paving the way for a 27.6-point average. The 6-foot-8 guard and No. 44 overall recruit in 247Sports' 2027 recruiting class led Pine Ridge to its first Elite Eight appearance since 2002.

### Second Team

**AJ Brown, Seabreeze:** Outler was the Sandcrabs' leading scorer, but Brown wasn't far behind. The junior point guard averaged 13.6 points and 2.4 steals during Seabreeze's historic season.

**Xavier Cerrud, New Smyrna Beach:** Cerrud was the primary ballhandler for the Barracudas. As a jack of all trades, he averaged 7.9 points, 6.5 assists and a whopping 3.3 steals per game.

**Curtis Giles, Matanzas:** Giles recorded 15.7 points and 5.5 rebounds per game for the Pirates.

**Anthony Hampton, Flagler Palm Coast:** Hampton was FPC's second-leading scorer with 14 points per game.

**Owen McLaughlin, New Smyrna Beach:** McLaughlin was the final part of a trio of tall New Smyrna Beach scorers. He averaged 13.5 points and 7.5 boards per contest.

**Nate Perry, Flagler Palm Coast:** Perry led Flagler Palm Coast with 15.4 points per game and grabbed an average of 4.9 rebounds to help lead the Bulldogs to a 17-11 record.

**Canyon Powers, Mainland:** Powers scored 11.2 points per game and averaged 5.4 rebounds as the Bucs' leading rebounder. Powers was also a pesky defender with two steals per game.

**Henry Singleton, Halifax:** Singleton averaged 11.2 points and eight rebounds per game to help lead Halifax to a 20-7 season.

**Tyler Smith, Atlantic:** Smith was Atlantic's primary defender tasked with shutting down the opposition's most-talented scorer. Most notably, he held Bishop Kenny's Drew Jackson to seven non-free throw points in the 4A state semifinals. Smith was also the Sharks' best 3-point shooter with a 42% mark this season.

**Adonis Thompson, Calvary Christian:** Thompson was Calvary Christian's offense and a top scorer in the area. The sophomore guard averaged 18.7 per game to lead the Lions to a 12-11 season.

**Logan Whitehurst, Spruce Creek:** Whitehurst averaged 11 points and six rebounds for the Hawks.

**Mekhi Yan, Atlantic:** Yan averaged 9.9 points per game, but that average jumped with performances of 15, 16 and 12 points in the regional final, state semifinal and state championship. Yan also had the anomalous stat of averaging more offensive rebounds (3.4) than defensive (2.1).

### Honorable Mention

**Atlantic:** David Laboy, Caleb Wiggins  
**DeLand:** Tauren Nicholson, Daniel Rodriguez, Daeshon McCloud

**Deltona:** Tim McCarthy, Marcus Spells, Cam'Ron Washington

**Father Lopez:** Westen Brownlee

**Flagler Palm Coast:** Jasiah Sanders

**Halifax:** Louis Consenzi, Calloway McCaster, Nehemiah Wigley

**Mainland:** Reece Casto, Davon Jones, Kadin Pierce-Flores

**Matanzas:** Jamel Guerrero

**New Smyrna Beach:** Jaxson Harris

**Pine Ridge:** Jyles Newman, Josiah Samuels

**Seabreeze:** Christian Simmons

**Taylor:** Jace Marcus, Christian Nichols, James Thomas

**Trinity Christian:** Quentin Berry, Eli Hudzik

**University:** Kyle Carrico, Phillip Franklin, Cruse Richard

**Warner Christian:** Robert Flores, Judah Rodriguez



Cris De La Pena cuts down the net after Atlantic's win over Eastside in the Region 2-4A final on Saturday, Feb. 28, 2026. ZACH ALLEN

### Coach of the Year

**Travis Norfolk, Atlantic:** Norfolk won this award after the 2024-25 season, and he'll do so again after outdoing an already-high standard in 2025-26.

The Sharks were the last remaining team from the Volusia-Flagler area for the second year in a row, and this time, their run ended with an appearance in the Class 4A championship game. In Norfolk's third year at the helm, Atlantic advanced farther into the postseason than any other Atlantic squad in school history, besting the 2006-07 Sharks team that made it to the state semifinals. Atlantic also led the area in wins (23) for the second consecutive season.

Atlantic advanced farther into the postseason than any other Atlantic squad in school history, besting the 2006-07 Sharks team that made it to the state semifinals. Atlantic also led the area in wins (23) for the second consecutive season.

### Player of the Year

**Henry Robinson Jr., Pine Ridge:** What can't Henry Robinson Jr. do? The junior Pine Ridge Panther was borderline unstoppable during the 2025-26 season, as he was held under 20 points only twice en route to an average of 27.6 points per game. In comparison, Robinson had nine games with at least 30 points and two with at least 40. Standing at 6-foot-8, Robinson had the ability to elevate over relatively every defender he faced, which is exemplified by his 60% shooting from the field and 42% mark from 3-point land. Robinson was also a problem on the defensive end, averaging 8.3 boards and 3 blocks per game. His efforts were rewarded with Pine Ridge's first appearance in a regional final since 2002.



Norfolk

## NFL DRAFT



Miami Columbus quarterback Fernando Mendoza (15) is pursued by Venice High defenders on Dec. 4, 2021. MIKE LANG/USA TODAY NETWORK

# Florida products all over draft

## Did we see this coming?

Jon Santucci Treasure Coast Newspapers | USA TODAY NETWORK

With the 2026 NFL Draft approaching and several players from Florida high schools expected to go in the first round, it's a good time to look backs and see which recruiting evaluations we got right and which ones we got wrong.

Francis Mauigoa was a consensus five-star recruit in high school. Carnell Tate and Rueben Bain Jr. both were five stars recruits.

Fernando Mendoza? Not even close to being considered a future No. 1 overall pick.

According to 247Sports, there were 133 quarterbacks better than Mendoza in the 2022 class, and 249 better recruits in Florida.

USA Today Florida Network recruiting reporter Jon Santucci gave his recollection on the top draft prospects from Florida high schools and what he thought their ceiling would be at the next level.

### Indiana QB Fernando Mendoza

**High school:** Columbus (2022 class)  
**USA TODAY Florida Network top 100 rank:** N/A

**What Santucci thought Mendoza's ceiling was:** Player who could compete for playing time at the FBS level.

I saw Mendoza multiple times in high school and thought he had potential, but there was no way I ever would have predicted the kind of meteoric rise he's had over the past two years. Mendoza had good size, a good enough arm and enough athleticism to be an FBS quarterback. What was most impressive about him wasn't the physical, it was the mental. Mendoza was mature beyond his years and very smart. I came away impressed every time I spoke to him or listened to other speak about him. Mendoza committed to Cal days before the February signing window, which I thought was a perfect fit considering his ability and intellect.

### Ohio State WR Carnell Tate

**High school:** IMG (2023 class)  
**USA TODAY Florida Network top 100 rank:** No. 10

**What Santucci thought Tate's ceiling was:** Player who could be a second- or third-round draft pick.

Tate was really impressive at IMG. I still remember seeing him at the Ascenders spring scrimmage before his senior year going up against an absolutely loaded secondary and still finding a way to separate and make good catches. The one knock against Tate in my mind was that I ended up seeing one of

his few bad games. Tate dropped a couple big passes in the second half against Miami Central in that 2022 opener that almost certainly have changed the game. That game was an outlier not the norm and I saw him in person at least two other times, but I let those drops impact my evaluation a little too much.

### Miami OL Francis Mauigoa

**High school:** IMG (2023 class)  
**USA TODAY Florida Network top 100 rank:** No. 2

**What Santucci thought Mauigoa's ceiling was:** Player who could be a first-round draft pick.

Mauigoa falls into a rare category of a player who didn't really have any red flags in high school. He had a great frame at 6-foot-5, 330 pounds, moved really well and was a player I felt confident could walk out of high school and immediately compete for playing time at a Power 4 program. That's exactly what he did. I saw him live in multiple games against good competition and he was mostly exceptional. The only player I ever saw really give Mauigoa trouble? Rueben Bain Jr., whose three sacks against IMG in the 2022 season opener helped Miami Central shock IMG.

### Miami EDGE Rueben Bain Jr.

**High school:** Miami Central (2023 class)  
**USA TODAY Florida Network top 100 rank:** No. 23

**What Santucci thought Bain's ceiling was:** Player who could be an early to mid-round draft pick.

It's been three years and this evaluation still really bothers me. I saw Bain so many times in high school against legitimate competition like Mauigoa and he was always dominant. His ability to win with his hands and bend was unmatched. So why wasn't Bain much higher on the list? For the same reason NFL teams are trying to decide if they want to be the first team since at least 1999 to draft an edge rusher whose arms measured at shorter than 31 inches. I had concerns about Bain's measurables and if that meant that he would have to bump inside in college. I still thought he could be impactful but obviously bend isn't a major issue for a defensive lineman. I was wrong. Bain was a monster in college, just like he was in high school. Will the NFL be any different?

### Miami EDGE Akheem Mesidor

**High school:** Clearwater Academy



IMG Academy's Carnell Tate celebrates a punt return for a touchdown against American Heritage in Plantation on Aug. 20, 2021. Tate's touchdown was called back because of a penalty, but the Ascenders won 35-15. JON SANTUCCI

International (2020 class)

**USA TODAY Florida Network top 100 rank:** N/A

**What Santucci thought Mesidor's ceiling was:** Player who could start at a Power 4 program.

I didn't see Mesidor in person during his one year at CAI, but his film was impressive. He lined up primarily at defensive tackle and had several skills that would translate to success at the next level. He was athletic, had the ability to move really well, used his hands well to shed blocks and made plays in the backfield. I also liked his penchant for making violent hits and showing his ability to convert speed to power.

### Toledo S Emmanuel McNeil-Warren

**High school:** Lakewood (2021 class)  
**USA TODAY Florida Network top 100 rank:** N/A

**What Santucci thought McNeil-Warren's ceiling was:** Player who could compete for playing time at the Power 4 level.

I didn't get a chance to see McNeil-Warren in person in high school, but his talent was clear on film. He was a tall cornerback, sticky in man-to-man coverage and had the ability to come downhill and hit like a safety. A couple of his interceptions were simply because he could read the play and understood where the ball was going and where he needed to be. They weren't great throws, but he made the right decisions. While some teams like long cornerbacks, his length, instincts and hitting ability made it easier to project him as a safety.

### Oklahoma EDGE R Mason Thomas



Miami Central's Rueben Bain waits on the sideline before the Class 5A state championship game against Merritt Island in December 2021 at DRV PNK Stadium in Fort Lauderdale. JIM RASSOL/PALM BEACH POST

**High school:** Cardinal Gibbons (2022 class)

**USA TODAY Florida Network top 100 rank:** No. 29

**What Santucci thought Thomas' ceiling was:** Player who could be a mid-round draft pick.

When you're around elite players in practice, they do things differently. They're doing the exact same drills as everyone else, but it's better. The way they move, the sound when they hit a bag, the speed at which they do things. That's what it was like watching Thomas as the spring before his senior year. His status as a national recruit hadn't exactly taken off yet, but he was special. He had a monster senior year, and his ability to come off the edge and make plays in the backfield was a constant. His first step and speed made him a problem for offensive linemen and he's heading into the draft as a the top speed rusher in a deep group of edge rushers.



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