

“It’s Something I’ve Dreamed About Since Fifth Grade When I Was a Waterboy”: Coach Reid Newton Takes Over Lauderdale County Football

Most coaches' dream job is being the head coach of their alma mater. Coach Reid Newton will get to experience that this year as he takes over for Coach Jeff Mason following his retirement this offseason. “It’s something I’ve dreamed about since the fifth grade when I was a waterboy.” Coach Newton said. Coach Newton has been around the program as an assistant, but before that he was a player in the late 2000s into the early 2010s. One of his opening statements was “I’ve been a part of the school since 1999 when I started kindergarten.” He knows the standards at Lauderdale County and was on the last football team at Lauderdale County to miss the playoffs in 2009.

The standard in Rogersville is unlike most places. They expect to win each year in every sport. That standard began with football in 1974, winning a state championship. Then in the late 1980s it was taken to another level. The girls basketball program has won at least one championship in each of the last five decades, including five in a row from 2012-2016. They have also seen deep runs in baseball, softball, volleyball, and recently became the first public school to win a championship in 1A-3A, including a tennis championship (boys or girls) for four straight years from 2023-2026. Coach Newton noted how the school is full of athletes, and that has helped propel the standard. Lauderdale County football last missed the playoffs from 2006-2009. Since 2010, football has won at least one playoff game in all but four seasons.

The reclassification almost shook things up for Lauderdale County. There were rumors of going to 4A before it was announced. However, they remained in 3A and are the 17th largest 3A in the state, averaging right around 99 students per grade. They will see some familiar opponents in Clements, Colbert Heights, Elkmont, and Rogers. The new faces will be Central, Wilson, and West Limestone, all coming down from 4A. They have played Central the last two seasons in non-region action and split the meetings. They have not played Wilson since 2021. West Limestone has not played Lauderdale County in football since 2009. In non-region games this season, they will play traditional rivals Lexington and Brooks in the first two weeks of the season. The season will conclude with Ardmore, a team they have not played since 2003.

Rogersville is a special place if you ask anyone from there. Coach Newton talked about how they have stepped up and helped so far. He mentioned how a project to fix the field wound up being done for free. They are also upgrading the facilities with a new fieldhouse that will be ready for the 2027 season, and that will turn the current home locker room into the visitors' locker room.

Coach Newton concluded by saying, "It's more personal," taking over the program he once played for, mentioning those who have done it before, like Coach (Jeff) Mason and Coach (Bob) Grisham, son of Coach Robert Earl Grisham. He mentioned how Coach Bob Grisham took the program out of some down seasons in the late 2010s. Coach Newton added, "I've got family members that will hold me accountable. I've got a brother-in-law, a brother that played football, a dad, and grandad that all played football there. That will all hold me accountable if things look a certain way."

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