

Building Blocks: How Colbert County Hopes to Build on 2025 Success

When we talk football in the Shoals, several programs come to mind immediately. Deshler, Mars Hill, Muscle Shoals, and Colbert County. Colbert County has had many great teams over the years and has only missed the playoffs twice since 1978, most recently in 2011. Is there any pressure to keep the playoff streak going? “No Pressure.” Coach Oscar Bonds answered. They are coming back to 2A for the first time since 2018-2021 and looking to build on last season's success. “We’re trying to build off (last season's success) and win the region, try to compete and win a state championship, just like Colbert County has in the past.” Coach Oscar Bonds said about entering year two as head coach.

The theme of media days was realignment, and Colbert County comes back to 2A and only retained Sheffield from last year's region in 3A, as Sheffield also comes down. There are some intriguing matchups on the schedule in the region. Games such as Tanner, where Coach Bonds faces his former school, Lexington, and Colbert County will face a former head coach from Colbert County in Brett Mask. Then there are some opponents they have not seen in a while. Winston County and Colbert County have not played since 2005 in the playoffs. The last non-playoff meeting was in 1960. They have not played Falkville since 1997 in the playoffs, and before that 1960 was the last time they played in the regular season. JB Pennington and Colbert County have never played in the regular season, only meeting in the 2022 and 1994 playoffs. They have played Sheffield and Phil Campbell recently as well.

Before they enter region play, they will play two longtime county rivals, both on the road. Colbert Heights on August 21 and Deshler on August 28. “It’s exciting to play them early in the season before region play. It’s a good measuring stick to see where we are at.” Coach Bonds added about the non-region schedule. They will close the season with Wilson on October 30.

Making the playoffs is great, but these seniors want more. “The past 15 years or so have been 6-4, 5-5, just making the playoffs. I want last year to be a building step, bringing this program back to what it was in the 1990s. I’d like to be one of those who brought it back to state championships and deep playoff runs.” Syllas Quillen (senior cornerback) said. Colbert County won a playoff game in 2025 before falling to Gordo in the second round. They have not won multiple playoff games in a season since 2015, when they made the semifinals and lost to eventual state champion Piedmont.

Speaking of playoffs and deep playoff runs. Colbert County softball was the 2026 runner-up, bringing home the first trophy on the girls' side and the first trophy for any sport since 2002, when football was runner-up. “I want to be a state champion,” Quillen added. Maybe the softball run will spark football to have a deep playoff run.

Colbert County set a program record for most points in a season with 499 last season. Beating the previous record of 497 set by the 2000 team. Syllas Quillen talked about how it was good, but also they need to be better defensively, noting the Rogers game where Colbert County won 42-35 on a tip drill touchdown late. In 2025, they averaged 41.6 points per game and gave up 28.2 per game. Colbert County ended the regular season scoring 60+ points versus Clements, Elkmont, and Sheffield. Coach Bonds noted how they got rolling late and got stops on the defensive side of the ball that created a short field for the offense to be able to score.

Colbert County had a great 2025 season, but is looking for more this year. The region should be more competitive this season, which could lead to more success for this program. They have not won a playoff game in back to back seasons since 2012-2016, when they won at least one a season. It all begins on August 21 at Colbert Heights.

Zack Pounders,

Shoals Sports Report