

The Process Does Not Change: How Wilson is Approaching 3A

When a coach reaches his fourth season at one school in high school or college football, it is a special thing. The seniors that season have been with him since they were freshmen, meaning that for most, his way is the only way they know. Wilson's coach, Trey Lane, enters year four in that spot. "I think there is comfort about being with a group for four years. They were with you from the first day you walked into the program. You have a deep relationship with those kids." Coach Lane said about entering year four. Wilson saw its biggest jump with Coach Lane last season, finishing 3-7 and winning back-to-back games for the first time since 2018. The three wins were also the most since 2018.

Wilson was a winner in the reclassification, moving to 3A after spending 40+ years in 4A. Wilson's region will feature Central and West Limestone also moving to 3A. The new region opponents are Elkmont, Clements, Colbert Heights, Rogers, and Lauderdale County. This is a win for Wilson because they were in 4A for years with teams that had larger roster numbers, as they were bigger 4A schools. "It's put us in a more natural fit for our size school. We are not going to see the same depth issues. We had times last year where we had 35 guys versus 70 guys (on the other team). We have a bigger group this year, over 50+. I do not think we will lose games because of depth." Coach Lane said about the reclassification. Wilson last year was in the bottom 25 schools of 4A and was in a region with three of the four largest 4A's. This season they are a top 30 3A school.

"Learning to win may be one of the most difficult things in sports." Coach Lane added about last season's success. The record may have been 3-7, but they were in more games and deeper into games than they had been in the past. They could have had five or more wins last season if the ball had fallen certain ways. "A lot of last year was putting ourselves in that spot to be competitive and giving yourself a chance to break through. We hope how we played at the end of last season propels us into this season," he also added. Coach Lane also mentioned how late last season they were talking about the playoffs and how one win can put them in a spot to be in a tiebreaker. Wilson finished 6th in a 9-team region, but after the back-to-back wins, they were 3-5 overall and 3-3 in region. Had they won out, they would have had a chance at the playoffs. "I told them in our first meeting, the process does not change with a new region." Coach Lane added

Wilson returns a lot of production from last season. Coach Lane mentioned how they started 10 freshmen or sophomores last season. "I think it is going to start with our offensive line. They have a lot of experience and work well together," he added. They also return several skill players at receivers. Nine defensive starters return as well.

Wilson's schedule is more local this season with games versus Central, Rogers, and Lauderdale County. Plus, the farthest road games will be at Elkmont and Haleyville, at 50 and 57 miles, respectively. "I think anytime you can play locally, it's to your advantage. You have better home crowds, and it cuts down on travel. I think it's always fun to play local teams and local teams we haven't played as much." Coach Lane added.

Wilson has not been a 3A since 1980-1983 and went 26-15 over that time frame. In 2025, Wilson scored 200+ points for the first time since 2017. That was the last season they made the playoffs and won a playoff game. They hope that year four of Coach Lane and a new region can lead to more success.

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