

Winning Habits: How Colbert Heights is Creating Wins Off The Field

It's not how you start, it's how you finish. Every team wants to start the season off great with wins. Every team also wants to finish strong. Colbert Heights started 4-0 and 5-0 the last two seasons, then finished 4-6 and 5-5. Colbert Heights hopes to continue its hot start into the season. Part of the hot starts were due to scheduling, as they did not play the four playoff teams from their region until October.

"It's where we want to be." Coach Brett Vick said about the reclassification entering 2026. Colbert Heights remains in 3A and retains its entire region (Clements, Elkmont, Lauderdale County, and Rogers) aside from Mars Hill, Colbert County, and Sheffield. The newcomers are Wilson, Central, and West Limestone. Colbert Heights has played Wilson and Central this decade, but has not seen West Limestone since 2009. Coach Vick also noted how the region is still solid top to bottom despite Mars Hill (back-to-back champions) and Colbert County being put into other classes. Colbert Heights will still play Colbert County on August 21 to open the season. Colbert Heights non-region slate also includes East Lawrence and Marion County. "There's no better way to open your season than by bringing in a county rival." Coach Vick added about the opener with Colbert County. He also mentioned how the non-region schedule was intentional to go find competitive teams so they are ready for region play when it comes. Marion County has made the playoffs three of the last four seasons. Colbert County has only missed the playoffs twice since 1978

We talked about the hot starts of the last two seasons. The players want to see the hot start continue all season. Senior wide receiver Kaden Kirby said, "(We) don't want to lose momentum." Senior linebacker Dillon Counce added, "Last year we let it get in our heads." Jonah Hand talked about keeping excitement up. Jaydon Sali added it's about the little things. Coach Vick discussed how they are not talking about wins/losses directly but the habits that lead to wins on the field.

Those habits have already been exemplified this offseason. Coach Vick talked about how they had a bad day of practice recently and the players were not satisfied. The players communicated and got the word around to the coaches about having another practice in the evening. Coach Vick said they said, "Coaches, we're here, whether y'all are or not. We're going to make it right." All the coaches showed up for the additional practice. He also mentioned how he can call another practice, but it would not be the same as the players calling for it.

Despite missing the playoffs in 2025, there was some success last season. Colbert Heights finished with a plus scoring margin for the first time since 2017 (the last time they won a playoff game). They outscored opponents 296 to 290. The 296 was the most points since 2020,

when they scored 289. Coach Vick noted how they were beating teams they were supposed to beat early. Colbert Heights hopes that 2026 is when they can start hot and finish strong.

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