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Football Playoffs Begin for Oklahoma High Schools November 13th



Alexander Shook
WOK Contributor

With the regular football season coming to a close, the State Championships for Oklahoma's high school football teams are fast approaching. For all divisions, the first rounds will be held on Friday, November 13 at 7pm.

Wright.Media is providing many of your home team's games—including District qualifiers like Weatherford, Clinton, and Thomas—both live an on-demand. The Sayre Eagles, Watonga Eagles, and Hinton Comets, all A-II teams, failed to reach the cutoffs, with Sayre losing their chance in the playoffs in their second-to-last game against the Hooker Bulldogs. Here is an overview of the seasons for your local teams that qualify for playoffs, as well as where to watch their first post-season game live or on-demand:

Weatherford Eagles
wright.media/weatherfordeagles

The Weatherford Eagles currently sit at #1 in their local 4A District, coming in at #6 for 4A statewide. They are one of only two teams in the state with a perfect 10-0 (6-0 District) win-loss record, the other being the Salisaw Black Diamonds. Logan Zimmerman, a junior for the Eagles, has scored 46 points this season, making him one of the highest scorers across all teams in the state.

Weatherford will host the Harrah Panthers in the first round. Harrah is currently Rank 17 in the Class 4A bracket with a 6-4 (4-3 District) season record.

Clinton Red Tornadoes
wright.media/clintonredtornadoes

Clinton currently holds a 8-2 overall (5-1 District) win-loss record and stands at Rank 2 overall in Class 4A's First District. This season, the Red Tornadoes defeated the Bethany Broncos and the Woodward Boomers, teams that have also made it into this year's playoffs. Junior Easten Powell is amongst one of the most accomplished players in the state, having the most rushing yards (1,860 yds.) and second-most touchdowns (23) of any Division 4A player in the state of Oklahoma.

For their first round in the championship, Clinton will host the Chickasha Fightin' Chicks. Chickasha boasts a near-idential standing to Clinton, with an 8-2 overall (5-2 District) record.

Thomas-Fay-Custer Terriers
wright.media/thomasterriers

The Thomas Terriers sit at the top of their A-II District 1 rankings, holding a 9-1 (6-0 District) win-loss record. Their one loss was to the Mangum Tigers, who will be competing in the A-I District playoffs.

Thomas will be hosting the Wayne Bulldogs for their first Districts game. Wayne currently holds a 7-3 overall (3-3 District) record, putting them at Rank #4 for their division.

You can watch these games, either live or on-demand, online at wright.media. More information about the 2026 football post-season, including up-to-date brackets for all schools, can be found online by visiting ossaaillustrated.com/football.

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CADDO COUNTY / FRAUD - The Caddo County Sheriff's Office is urging older adults and their families to stay alert. Scammers may pose as law enforcement, government officials, bank representatives, tech-support agents, or family members. Common scams include impersonation and arrest threats, grandparent emergencies, romance scams, tech-support requests for payment or remote access, banking and identity theft attempts, and gift card payment demands. Among other things, never send money, gift cards, or cryptocurrency to unknown callers. Do not share personal, financial or account information and be suspicious of urgent demands or threats. Remember: scammers create urgency to prevent careful thinking.

CORDELL / SCHOOL PROJECTS - Multiple projects in the Cordell School District are beginning to wrap up, says Superintendent Sam Belcher. "At the high school, we've done a total remodel of all the staff and student restrooms, gave them a much-needed nice facelift, and that project should be winding up here the first week of November," Belcher shared. "At the Elementary, we've added a new secure entry, put a new vestibule with a new secretary and principal's offices, added a new classroom, and upgraded the Elementary playground." The projects were paid through a bond issue approved by district voters earlier this year.

CLINTON / GLANCY SIGN - The restored sign from the former Glancy Motel will soon return to Clinton "in all of its glory," according to Clinton City Manager Robert Johnston. The sign will be moved to the Oklahoma Route 66 Museum, which is located along West Gary Boulevard in Clinton.

THOMAS / SIDEWALK PROJECT - A sidewalk project in the city of Thomas is making headway. "It's on Orient Street right now, and it will go from our park to Missouri before connecting to Main Street—where we did another sidewalk—and then it'll eventually connect to the school," Thomas Mayor Jeff Gose explained, who is hopeful the project will be completed by the first of next year.

CLINTON / SHOOTING - An Elk City man is facing charges in Custer County District Court stemming from a shooting at a Clinton Apartment Complex that left two people injured. A court affidavit shows on October 27, Clinton Police responded to a shots fired call at an apartment complex. Officers observed 27-year-old Juan Urbina of Elk City on the scene, as well as a man and a woman who appeared to be injured by alleged gunshot wounds. Urbina was detained after officers removed a firearm from him. Reports indicate that the shots were allegedly fired by Urbina during an altercation. Urbina faces charges of, among other things, carrying a weapon while under the influence of alcohol. Both victims were med-flighted to Oklahoma City. The male victim remains in critical condition.

WRH / RANKING - SSM Health of Oklahoma City, which manages Weatherford Regional Hospital (WRH), was recently named "Best Regional Hospital in OKC" by a U.S. News and World Report Ranking. "National coverage and modern healthcare highlighted SSM Health's return to operating profitability in 2025 and its continued focus on workforce development, technology modernization, and rural hospital partnerships designed to preserve access to high quality, affordable care," shared WRH CEO Darin Farrell. Farrell says SSM Health was also ranked as the second-best regional hospital in the state of Oklahoma.



Donna Hewitt



Donna Marie Forsythe-Hewitt was born on February 4, 1952, in Clinton, Oklahoma, to Tommie Frances (Shindler) Forsythe and Donnel Lee Forsythe.

Donna graduated from Arapaho High School in 1970, where she enjoyed playing basketball. Even as a young girl, Donna was known for her toughness and determination. Her first job was breaking horses—a fitting beginning for a woman who would carry that same strength and resilience throughout her life.

Donna retired in 2014 from the State of Oklahoma, where she worked as an auditor with the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission. Throughout her life, family remained at the heart of what mattered most to her. She loved spending time with her children, grandchildren, and extended family, traveling, cooking large meals, and bringing everyone together. She found joy in family gatherings, sharing meals, and making memories with those she loved. She also enjoyed playing slot machines at the casino, golfing, playing cards with her in-laws, playing Yahtzee, and working in the yard. She enjoyed pulling weeds, planting, and tending to other yard work, always finding something to keep her busy.

Donna especially enjoyed putting puzzles together with her family. There was always a little surprise at the end of each puzzle when they discovered that a piece was missing. Those moments brought laughter and became the kind of family memories that would be treasured long after the puzzle was put away.

After the passing of her husband, Ronald Hewitt, Donna continued to enjoy traveling with her children and grandchildren, making memories and sharing adventures with them. She was a tough woman who faced life's challenges with determination. She fought a long, hard battle, holding on through difficult days in part because she worried about her children. Her love for them was a powerful part of who she was, and her concern for their well-being reflected the depth of her devotion as a mother.

Donna was preceded in death by her parents, Tommie Frances (Shindler) Forsythe and Donnel Lee Forsythe; her brothers, Donnel "Butch" Forsythe and Tommy Forsythe; and her husband, Ronald Hewitt.

She leaves behind her three children: Chad Eddings and Sarah McGovern of Champlin, Minnesota; Tonya Hileman-Haworth and her husband, Korey Haworth, of Luther, Oklahoma; and Amber Wilhoit and her husband, Wilson "Junior" Wilhoit, of Fay, Oklahoma.

She is also survived by her four stepchildren: Ronnie Hewitt and his wife, Patty Hewitt; Christie Benton and her husband, Todd Benton; Stacey Hamilton; and Kyle Hewitt.

Yvette Yoder



Yvette Ann Yoder was born on August 11, 1960, in Springfield, Massachusetts, to Yvonne Iron & John Knox. She was later adopted by Carl H. Dahl and Lillian Delia (Wood) Dahl in 1970. Yvette passed away on October 27, 2026, in Yukon, Oklahoma, at the age of 66.

Yvette graduated from Lookeba-Sickles High School in 1979. She continued her education at Redlands Community College, where she earned her associate's degree in 1981.

Yvette was an extremely caring, giving, and kind woman who always wanted to be known as Grandma. Her greatest joy in life was her children and grandchildren, and she cherished every opportunity to spend time with them. She loved attending their activities, cheering them on, and supporting them in all their sporting events. An excellent cook, Yvette especially enjoyed making macaroni and cheese for her grandchildren. One of her favorite activities was taking all her grandchildren out for ice cream, creating special memories they will treasure for years to come.

Yvette was a woman of strong faith who enjoyed attending church. She was also a talented artist who especially enjoyed painting landscapes and farm scenes. Her artistic ability was a special gift that she passed down to her granddaughter. When her boys were younger, Yvette was an avid wrestling fan. She proudly supported them through both wins and losses and enjoyed watching wrestling and football. Above all, she loved being present for her family and celebrating their accomplishments.

Yvette's loving heart, generous spirit, and unwavering devotion to her family made her a special part of the lives of all who knew her. She will be deeply missed by her family and all those who loved and cared for her.

Survivors include her two sons, Kyle Yoder of Weatherford, Oklahoma, and Tyson Yoder and wife, Andi, of Yukon, Oklahoma; her grandchildren, Kylynne Yoder, Kade "Kaderade" Yoder, Maximus Yoder, and Marshall Yoder; her sister, Yvonne Bare of Lookeba, Oklahoma; her brother, Bobby Knox; as well as many nieces, nephews, other relatives, and friends.

Yvette was preceded in death by her parents, Carl and Lillian Dahl, and her mother, Yvonne Iron.

Funeral services were held at the First Baptist Church in Weatherford, OK, on Monday, November 2, 2026, at 2:00 p.m., with Reverend Earl Stephenson officiating. Burial followed at Lookeba Cemetery in Lookeba, Oklahoma.

Carolyn Crawford



Carolyn Crawford, 88, of Weatherford, Oklahoma, passed away on October 30, 2026. She was born March 1,1938, in Geary, Oklahoma, to John Mervin Crawford Sr. and Esther Blum Crawford.

After graduating from high school, Carolyn began her career with Southwestern Bell Telephone Company in Clinton, Oklahoma. She later transferred to Oklahoma City, where she continued working for the company for many years, including through its transition to AT&T. When offered the opportunity for early retirement, Carolyn gladly accepted and began a new chapter in her life.

Retirement did not mean slowing down for Carolyn. She went on to hold several part-time jobs, including working for H&R Block during tax season and helping customers with telephone orders for Sears during the Christmas season. She also loved traveling across the country. Carolyn was also dedicated to her church, Trinity Church of the Nazarene. She volunteered in the church office and served for many years with the Quiz Kids Bible quizzing program.

Carolyn lived in Oklahoma City for most of her adult life. In her later years, she moved to Weatherford to be closer to her sister, Martha Crawford May and her niece, Marsha May Miller, who lovingly helped her with everything she needed. Family was the most important thing to her, and she made every effort to attend as many activities, events, and milestones as she could for her many nieces and nephews. Her Christmas and birthday cards arrived every year without fail, from the time they were little until they had families of their own.

Carolyn was preceded in death by her parents; her brother, John Mervin Crawford Jr.; her sister-in-law, Patricia Ann Crawford Dickey; her brother-in-law, John "Dub" May and her great-niece Morgandy Miller Hartman. She also mourned the loss of dear friends Mary Courtney and Gary Stokes, who were like family to her.

She is survived by her sister, Martha Crawford May. She also leaves behind her nieces, Pamela Crawford Holt, Marsha May Miller, and Judy Colclasure Hall; and her nephews, Mike May, Scott Crawford, Steve Colclasure, and Brad Crawford. Her great-nephews are Tim Holt, Newton Miller, Stenson Miller, Alex Crawford, and Houston Hall. Her great-nieces are Adrienne Crawford, Elizabeth Crawford Mason, Amy Hall Harrison, and Emily Hall. She is also remembered by her extended family, including nieces-in-law and great-great-nieces and nephews, and by the many friends she stayed close to throughout her life.

Carolyn was known for her willingness to help others, her devotion to family and friends, and her faithful service to her church and community. She gave the people she loved the gift of her care and attention. Because she was so present in their lives, she remains present in the countless memories they share of her, and in those memories she lives on.

Brenda McCornack



Brenda Gail McCornack, age 71, of Clinton, OK, was born March 9, 1955, at Weatherford Memorial Hospital in Weatherford, Oklahoma, to Lowe and Ruby Irene (Smith) Campbell, and passed away early Tuesday morning, October 27, 2026, in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Brenda was raised in Weatherford, where she attended school and graduated from Weatherford High School in 1972. On September 14, 1974, she married the love of her life, Howard McCornack, in Weatherford, Oklahoma. Together, they shared many wonderful years and built a life filled with love, family, and cherished memories.

Brenda spent more than 20 years employed with the 3M Company in Weatherford. She later went to work at Blunck's Photography, where she remained until the business was sold and closed.

Brenda was a loving mother, grandmother, sister, and friend who found her greatest happiness in spending time with those she loved. Her family meant the world to her, and she especially treasured the moments she shared with her grandchildren. One of Brenda's favorite pastimes was what she affectionately called "treasure hunting." She loved going to estate sales, always looking for that special little something that might catch her eye. For Brenda, it wasn't always about what she found, but the enjoyment of the hunt and the memories made along the way.

But perhaps the most special part of Brenda's life was the close bond she shared with her daughter, Mindy Irene. The two were practically inseparable. In fact, Brenda's favorite hobby was simply doing whatever Mindy was doing. Whether they were out treasure hunting, running errands, or just spending time together, it was unusual to see one without the other. Their relationship was more than just that of a mother and daughter; they were the very best of friends. The love and companionship they shared was truly something special.

Brenda will be remembered for her love of family, her enjoyment of life's simple pleasures, and the special memories she created with those closest to her. Her presence will be deeply missed, but the love she gave and the moments shared will forever remain in the hearts of her family.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Lowe and Ruby Campbell; her loving husband, Howard McCornack; and her grandson, Dennis McCornack II.

Brenda is survived by her loving daughter, Mindy Irene Crayton of Weatherford; her stepson, Dennis McCornack of California; her sisters, Donna Stoneman and Phyllis Montanez, both of Weatherford; and her beloved grandsons: Cole Crayton and Gunner Crayton; along with other extended family members and dear friends.

In accordance with Brenda's wishes, cremation arrangements have been entrusted to Lee Hometown Funeral Home in Clinton, Oklahoma.

Brenda's life was a beautiful reminder that happiness is often found in the simplest things: a day spent treasure hunting, time with grandchildren, and most importantly, being beside the people you love.

Although Brenda's earthly journey has come to an end, the special bond she shared with her family, especially her beloved daughter Mindy, will remain a treasured part of her legacy forever.

Aileen Martin



Aileen Rebecca Martin was born in Wister, Oklahoma on September 7, 1932, to Homer and Robbie (Bullard) Hicks. She passed away on Saturday, October 17, 2026, at her home in Erick, Oklahoma at the age of 94.

Aileen was raised in Southeastern Oklahoma. She married her first husband, Leon Pankey, in St. Louis, Missouri, and they moved to Newport, Arkansas, where they lived for twenty years. During that time she worked for an accounting firm, but dedicated most of her time to raising her family. Aileen later moved back to Wister, Oklahoma, to be close to her mother. While in Wister she worked as a waitress at The Lake Cafe. In the early 1980's she moved to Clinton and then Weatherford with her mother. Later, she met and married Bill Martin, and they lived in Weatherford until his passing. Aileen had many hobbies, she enjoyed fishing, quilting, puzzles, and reading. She truly enjoyed spending time with her best friend, Loretta Bullard, her aunt by marriage.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Homer and Robbie Hicks; her husband, Bill Martin; brothers, Elton Hicks, Thomas Hicks, Paul Hicks, Butch Hicks, Pete Hicks; and sisters, Vivian LeBlanc and Patsy Dickson. She is survived by her children, Neal Pankey and wife, Sharon, of Maumelle, AR, Susie Stanford of Erick, OK, Robert Hicks and wife, Melvinna of Moore, OK, Phillip Hicks and Glenda of Moore, OK, and Melba Atkenson of Byers, OK; grandchildren, Sara Thryselius and children, Roland and Evelyn, Kellie Lewallen; Jeremy Lewellen and wife, Amanda and children, Caleb Lewellen and wife, Alexandria, Sean Crow, Alexis Estes, Brayden and Delaney Lewallen, and Kodie Lewallen; and Zach Lewallen; and great-great-grandchildren, Chloe and Sutton; sister-in-law, Sue Hicks.

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Midterms: Big Shakeups for Clinton and Beyond



Mike Smith
News Director

Voters in the city of Clinton decided to give City Councilman Ernie Dowdell the nod to be the next mayor of the city. Dowdell defeated incumbent mayor David Berrong, getting 56% of the vote.

"This is not an easy process; having a campaign like this—in a town this size with someone that you respect—it's really, really hard," Dowdell said on the election. "David loves Clinton and has done a great job for a long time, but people are ready for change. I would say that a lot of those people don't know me, but they are probably banking on something different coming in."

"Ernie Dowdell will be in a position to be in the mayor role, obviously loving Clinton," current Mayor David Berrong shared following the election result. "I want Clinton to move forward, and I hope the very best for his tenure as mayor and certainly the new council. I hope the very best for the future of Clinton, obviously."

In the Ward 4 City Council race, Lucas Martinez returns to the council by defeating Bobby Stewart with 68% support.

"I'm excited to serve the people of Clinton again, not only Ward 4 but the entire community," Martinez expressed. "I'm looking forward to taking a step forward in the right direction, new ideas, new beginnings, and hopefully, we can make some things happen in a positive way for our community."

Outside of Clinton, voters in the town of Carnegie split on two propositions. Proposition 1 passed that allows the appointment of the town clerk; however, Proposition 2 for the appointment of the town treasurer failed.

On a statewide level, State Representative Anthony Moore of Clinton says while many seats nationally went to democrats in last Tuesday's mid-term election, Oklahoma voters made their voices heard as republicans lost a handful of seats.

"We retained a supermajority in the House, but we lost six seats from our supermajority; most of those are around Oklahoma City, with one in Broken Arrow and one in Lawton," Moore explained. "That tells us that we've got to be honest about some of the shortcomings and some of the things that we need to do better, but I think most of it was probably the national impacting the local."

On a night when several U.S. seats turned to blue, Oklahoma's delegation was re-elected to another term. Additionally, U.S. Third District Congressman Frank Lucas of Cheyenne also won his re-election bid.

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Weatherford Middle and High School Cheer Celebrate Victories at Game Day Competitions



Provided

The Weatherford High School Cheer Squad have qualified for the annual "Game Day" State Cheer Competition. The event will be held on Thurday, November 12, at Moore High School starting at 5PM.



Provided

The Weatherford Middle School Cheer recently competed at the Game Day Championship Cheer competition in Oklahoma City. This marks the second year in a row that the WMS Cheer Team has taken home first place at this competition.



Courtney Graybill / WM

The Weatherford Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting ceremony for Edward Jones of Weatherford in honor of their new location (1220 Cypress Drive.) Pictured cutting the ribbon is Edward Jones Financial Advisor Thad Wolgamott; standing at the poles are advisors Alex Waters (left) and Ashlyn Pugh (right).

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Happy Birthday Wishes for Nov. 11th - Kimberly Chervenka, T.C. Garrison, Blake Hook, Matt Lantz, Wesson Shaw, Nancy Stinson, Kenna Wise; **Nov. 12th** - Carmen Arriaga Jr., Clint Bridgeman, Jamie Carrizales, Alex Gomez, Clinton Horn, Nathan Hunn, Keith Miller, Mike Parrish, Jeff Schneberger, Stephen Short, Cody Thiessen, Harold Wright; **Nov. 13th** - Kimberly Banuelos, Larry Cagle, McKinsey Cloninger, Kobe Malone, Brittany Nix, Patty Radka, Blake Sappington, Dale Schomp, Claudia Wright, Chase Wright, Tami Young; **Nov. 14th** - Krystal Blackwell, Nelda Bonner, Pat Gatchel, Adam Hopper, Cindy Jackson, David MaCarthy, Mike Ringler, Diana Scott, Donna Smith, Maria Thorpe, Dalton Ward; **Nov. 15th** - Jessica Bandy, June Black, E.M. Bray, Nick Brennfoerder, Rodney Brooks, Gabriella Butler, David Hiler, Tessa Ingram, Addison Lyon, Mason Palmer, Cindy Ritchison, Heather Silcott, Mike Torres, Kyle Yoder; **Nov. 16th** - Madeline Baughner, Chris Cloninger, Davon Izaguirre, Cannen Johnson, Sean Lime, Jazon Ray, Steve Young; **Nov. 17th -** Vickie Adams, Hunter Gauntt, Mason Hart, Elly Kaut, Betty Mahan, Linda Myers, Clay Pope, Candy Taylor, Mary Beth Thomas.

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Topper for 2002 Chevy - $200. 405-639-9667.

2004 4x4 Trailblazer - $2,000. **2003 2WD Trailblazer -** $3,000. 405-639-9667.

2000 Infinity QX56 2012 - 165K miles. $16,000. Please contact 405-638-1773.

Rail dune buggy frame - 924 Porsche. good engine. $400. 405-639-9667.

4-Michelin used passenger tires - 20 inch. 580-393-1444.

300 Honda Trax 4x4 - Will trade. 405-639-9667.

2003 Trailblazer - Good shape. $3,000. 580-886-2980.

2011 Honda Shadow - Foot Board, Windshield, and Saddle Bags included. Low miles. $3,000. 505-635-1865.

Dune Buggy Frame - $400 OBO (willing to trade). 405-639-9667.

2015 GMC Yukon Denali - 169K miles. Very good condition. $15K OBO. 580-772-4889.

1999 Sprint 15ft Boat - Comes w/ 2016 60HP Mercury Fourstroke and Minnkota Tolley Motor. $8,500. 580-330-0349.

2-Man Bass Boat - Comes with motor, oars, and anchor. Call 405-639-9667.\

2009 Mercury Grand Marquis LS - $3,750 OBO. 580-330-3489.

FURNITURE & APPLIANCES

7-Piece Tiger Oak Dinette Pioneer hutch buffet table and 4 chairs. Devilled glass and mirrors fruit motif. $2,000. 580-772-4297.

Thomasville Bed - Comes with frame, mattress, and five-drawer chest. $450. 580-774-4000.

All-Wooden Rocker - Spindled back, comes with cushion. $60. 580-613-0108.

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Brown Couch - Manual Recline, New. $500 OBO. 580-772-3223.

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Large Massage Chair - Like new. $250 OBO. 580-772-2300.

Sharp Microwave - Display does not work. $20. 580-772-3223.

Bathtub - Porcelain covered metal. Call between 7a-11a. No afternoon calls. 580-774-0843

93" Smart TV - Mitsubishi. $250. 580-774-5771.

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Antique Lamp Table - $50. Call 580-774-4000.

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Gold Gym Treadmill - Excellent condition. $300. 580-340-3501.

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3 Handheld Vacuums - $30 each. 580-613-0108.

Curio Cabinet, Bottom Storage $50. Please call 580-774-4000.

Sofa & Loveseat - Both new. Gray. $400 each. 580-302-2780.

80s Riverside Rolltop Oak Desk $300. 580-772-7357.

Brothers Sewing Maching - Portable. $50. 580-445-6765

Large Copper Skillet - $35. Call 580-613-0108.

Good Coffee Table - Pictures available. $25. 580-613-0108.

Composite Double Kitchen Sink - $75. 580-772-5541.

92pc. China Set - Serves 12. $100. 580-309-4045.

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Food Club Sweetened Condensed Milk, 14oz.	2 for $4.00
Ritz Crackers, 13.7oz.	$3.99
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Food Club Whipping Cream, 32oz.	$3.99
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U.S. #1 Russet Potatoes, 10 lb. bag	$3.99
All Bell Peppers	$0.99 each
Yellow Onions	$0.99 lb.
Red Seedless Grapes	$2.49 lb.
Celery	2 for $1.00
Cranberries, 12oz.	$2.49
Sweet Potatoes, 2 lbs.	$1.00

Frozen

Food Club Whipped Topping, 8oz. (All Varieties)	$0.99
Food Club Fruit, 12oz. (All Varieties)	2 for $5.00
Blue Bunny Ice Cream, 46-48oz. (All Varieties)	$3.99
Ore Ida Potatoes (All Varieties)	$3.99
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Frick's Ham Portions Shank End or Large End	$3.29 or 3.49 lb.
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Oklahoma History: Two of Our State's Most Influential Veterans





Provided by the United States Air Force (USAF)



from the 71st Flying Training Wing History Office

Pictured, left: SSG Ruben Rivers with SGT Herman Taylor before shipping out for D-Day. Pictured, Right: Col. Leon Robert Vance Jr.

The front gate at the Vance Air Force Base, circa 1950.

Chase Wright
Staff Writer

On November 11th, 1919, President Woodrow Wilson gave an address to the Nation. It was the first anniversary of the signing of the armistice with Germany in the World War and the start of Armistice Day, which would become Veterans Day on June 1st, 1954. It commemorates the service of all U.S. veterans, and like previous years, in honor of those who served and those serving today, we're taking a look back at two more exemplary Oklahoma veterans.

Staff Sergeant Ruben Rivers

Ruben Rivers was born in Tecumseh, Oklahoma, on October 30, 1918, and grew up near Earlsboro in the community of Hotulka. One of 12 children, he spent his early years working on the family farm before taking a job with the railroad. He enlisted in the Army in 1942 and eventually joined Company A of the 761st Tank Battalion, known as the "Black Panthers."

The 761st was an all-Black unit serving in a military that remained segregated. Its soldiers faced discrimination at home and skepticism from some of the people responsible for training them. When the battalion reached Europe in 1944, its crews went into combat with General George Patton's Third Army. Rivers would earn a place in its history during the fighting near Guébling, France.

After arriving in France on Omaha Beach on October 10, 1944, they traveled 400 miles in six days to catch up to the Third Army. Once there, they captured the town of Vic-sur-Seille, France and began 183 days of continual fighting.

On November 16, Rivers' tank struck a mine near a railroad crossing. The explosion tore into his leg, leaving a wound so deep that the bone was exposed. He refused morphine and evacuation, then climbed into another tank and continued with his company as it pushed into the town. For three days, Rivers kept directing his tank against German positions, turning down repeated orders and opportunities to leave the battlefield.

The fighting continued as American forces advanced toward Bourgaltroff on November 19. Under heavy German fire, Rivers identified the enemy anti-tank positions and radioed his crew that they were ready to keep fighting. "I see 'em. We'll Fight'em!" His tank joined another in engaging the German guns, helping cover the rest of Company A as it withdrew. Rivers' vehicle was struck during the action. He was killed, and the surviving crewmen were wounded.

Rivers had been recommended for the Medal of Honor during the war, but the award would take decades. A Defense Department review later examined cases in which Black servicemen had been overlooked for the nation's highest military decoration during World War II. Rivers was one of seven veterans whose records were reconsidered. On January 13, 1997, President Bill Clinton presented the medal posthumously to Rivers' sister, Grace Woodfolk.

A snippet of his Medal of Honor citation reads: "Staff Sergeant Rivers' fighting spirit and daring leadership were an inspiration to his unit and exemplify the highest traditions of military service."

Lieutenant Colonel Leon R. Vance Jr.

Leon Robert Vance Jr. was born in Enid, Oklahoma, on August 11, 1916. He graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1939 and became a bomber commander in the Army Air Forces.

By the summer of 1944, he was leading the 489th Bombardment Group on missions over occupied Europe. One of those missions came on June 5, the day before the Allied landings in Normandy. Vance was leading a formation of B-24 Liberators against German coastal defenses near Wimereux, France, when anti-aircraft fire tore into his aircraft.

The pilot was killed, several crewmen were wounded, and Vance's right foot was nearly severed. Three of the bomber's four engines were knocked out. Despite his injuries, Vance stayed with the mission. With help from his crew, he applied a tourniquet and continued directing the formation toward its target. The bombers completed their run, and Vance managed to take control of his badly damaged aircraft and get it across the English Channel.

When arriving at the coast, they could not land due to a 500-pound bomb hung in the bomb bay. Vance ordered his crew to bail out over land while he maneuvered to the sea. One wounded airman could not make the jump. Rather than leave him aboard, Vance brought the bomber down in the Channel for the pair's best chance at survival. The aircraft struck the water and sank. Vance was blown clear from an explosion and was eventually rescued after clinging to wreckage in the water. Although they never found the wounded radio operator, the rest of the crew had survived.

Vance was evacuated to England, and two months later, placed aboard an aircraft bound for the United States. That flight disappeared over the North Atlantic on July 26, 1944, somewhere between Iceland and Newfoundland. Vance was never found.

For his actions during the June 5 mission, he received the Medal of Honor posthumously. Enid also kept his name close to home. In 1949, the Army Air Field near the city was renamed Vance Air Force Base in his honor.



Krystal Blackwell / WM

Weatherford East Intermediate School teacher Mrs. Morlan was recently surprised by OSU mascot Pistol Pete and representatives from Blue Sky Bank after being selected as the Teacher of the Game. The annual award recognizes an outstanding educator selected from a group of nominees. Morlan received $1,000 from Blue Sky Bank and four tickets to an OSU game in recognition of her dedication to education.

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SWOSU: Mutter, Wilson, de Sancy, and Young Recognized as Latest "Bulldogs of the Week"



Jared Steward
SWOSU Grad Asst.

Charles Mutter (Football), London Wilson (Women's Golf), Emma Young (Soccer Goalkeeper), and Philippine de Sancy (Soccer Defender) have earned the "Bulldogs of the Week" Honor for the first two weeks of November, presented by Wright Media, the official partner for SWOSU athletic livestreams and radio broadcasts.

Mutter (Spotsylvania, Va.) helped power the Bulldogs to their third straight win, dropping 499 yards on Arkansas-Monticello, 360 of which coming on the ground, the fifth most in SWOSU's DII era. Both marks are season highs for the Dawgs. Mutter led the way on the ground with a team high 147 yards on ten carries, scoring on a 56 yard burst before breaking though again for a 64 yard sprint, leading to another Bulldog Touchdown. His 147 yards rushing is the 13th most in a single game in the GAC this season.

Wilson (Ada, Okla.) Wilson opened the tournament with an even-par 72, highlighted by six birdies, before carding a 74 in the second round. She capped off the tournament with a strong final round to earn a second-place finish, marking the best finish of her collegiate career. She also tied for the most birdies in the field with 10.

Young (Mansfield, Texas) did not allow a single goal throughout the GAC Tournament and was named the tournament's MVP. She recorded a shutout against Ouachita Baptist in the Dawgs' 3-0 semifinal victory before keeping Harding off the scoreboard through 110 minutes of play, including two overtime periods, in the championship match. During the penalty shootout, Young made a crucial save on Harding's fourth attempt, giving SWOSU the opportunity to score and secure the victory, punching its ticket to the NCAA Division II National Tournament. She totaled six saves during the week and has now been part of four consecutive shutouts.

De Sancy (Issou, France) scored the first goal of her season, and the seventh of her four-year career, less than two minutes into the semifinal matchup with Ouachita Baptist. Against Harding, she played a key role defensively, limiting the Bisons' opportunities to create scoring chances. She capped off the week by converting the game-winning penalty kick on the Dawgs' fifth attempt, securing SWOSU's sixth GAC Championship, the most in conference history. She played all 200 minutes of the Tournament.





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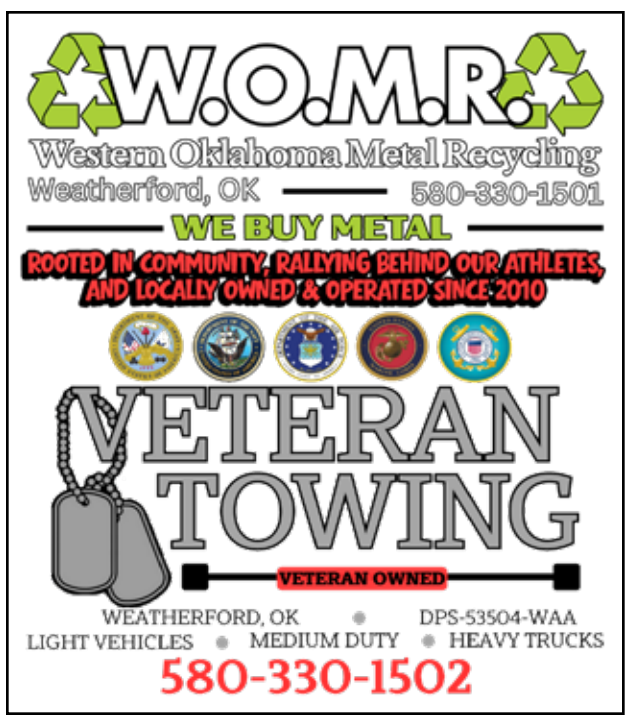





Soccer Captures Sixth GAC Tourney Title



Jon Chidester
SWOSU Media Relations

SWOSU Soccer was crowned the 2026 Great American Conference Tournament champion after defeating top-seeded Harding 4-2 in a penalty-kick shootout following 110 scoreless minutes of a physical championship battle.

With the win, SWOSU advances to the NCAA Division II National Tournament after earning the conference's automatic bid. This marks the sixth time the Bulldogs have qualified for the national tournament and their sixth GAC Championship, both of which are the most in league history.

Strong defense defined the 90 minutes of regulation and two 10-minute overtime periods, with neither side able to find the back of the net. Harding created five shots in the first 45 minutes, two of which were on goal. SWOSU produced four shots, with its lone attempt on target coming from Saoirse Hourigan. Both teams increased their offensive pressure in the second half, combining for 16 shots, but just four were on goal, all of which were saved by the two goalkeepers.

The championship matchup sent both teams to overtime for the first time this season. Unlike regular-season matches, which may end in a draw, the GAC Championship required a winner.

Just over a minute into the opening overtime period, Harding appeared to score the game-winner on a header off a corner kick. SWOSU challenged the play, and after discussion, the officials ruled that a foul had occurred before the goal and waved it off, giving the Bulldogs new life.

There was just one shot on goal between the two teams during the first overtime period. In the second and final overtime frame, SWOSU created two chances, but both shots sailed wide as players on both sides began to show signs of fatigue.

The championship came down to penalty kicks as a rowdy crowd in Searcy moved to the side of the field where the shootout would take place.

SWOSU stepped up first, with GAC Defensive Player of the Year Sarahi Delgadillo calmly placing her shot into the bottom-left corner of the net. Harding responded by finding the same spot.

The second attempt from both teams did not find the net. Harding's goalkeeper made a save on the right side, while its ensuing attempt sailed wide left. Both teams converted their third attempts, with GAC Midfielder of the Year Hourigan delivering a strike into the back of the net.

The Dawgs gained crucial momentum in the fourth round, as freshman Tory Hume secured SWOSU's third point of the shootout. Harding's attempt was then turned away by a diving save from Emma Young.

With the championship within reach, Philippine de Sancy stepped to the spot and struck the ball past the goalkeeper to secure the GAC Championship for the Dawgs.

This marks the first time SWOSU has won a GAC Championship match through penalty kicks, avenging a 6-5 shootout loss to Harding from 10 years ago.

SWOSU placed five players on the GAC All-Tournament Team: Elise LaForge, Saoirse Hourigan, Sarahi Delgadillo, Sandi Agudo and GAC Tournament MVP Emma Young.

The Bulldogs will now await their opponent for the NCAA Division II National Tournament. SWOSU will learn its first-round matchup during the NCAA Selection Show on Monday at 6 p.m. Central.

SWOSU vs. SNU Rescheduled for November 21st



SWOSU Athletics has announced that its previously canceled football game against Southern Nazarene has been rescheduled for Saturday, November 21 at 1 p.m. at Flex-Chem Field at Milam Stadium. The game was originally scheduled for October 15 before being postponed to October 17 and ultimately canceled. As a result of the schedule change, SWOSU Men's Basketball's home game against Central Oklahoma, originally scheduled for 3 p.m. that same day, has been moved to 6 p.m. at the Pioneer Event Center.

