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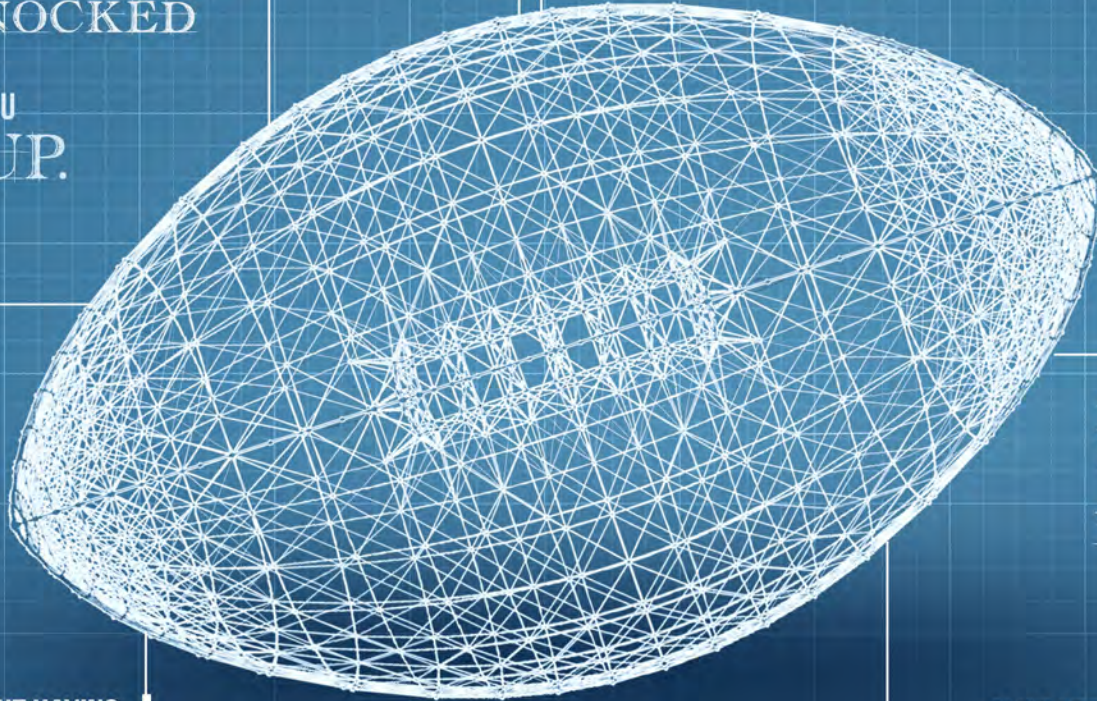
- JOE NAMATH

SUCCESS IS ABOUT HAVING, EXCELLENCE IS ABOUT BEING. SUCCESS IS ABOUT HAVING MONEY AND FAME, BUT EXCELLENCE IS BEING THE BEST YOU CAN BE.

- MIKE DITKA

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9/19/14 Chandler @ Mountain Pointe
9/19/14 Miami @ Globe - 100th Game
9/26/14 Queen Creek @ Higley
9/26/14 Salpointe @ Marcos de Niza
10/2/14 Centennial @ Deer Valley
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10/10/14 Thunderbird @ Moon Valley

10/17/14 Poston Butte @ Mesquite
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SOLLENBERGER'S PREPS REPORT POWERED BY AIA365.COM **Following in Barry's Footsteps**

By Jose Garcia, aia365.com

Barry Sollenberger dedicated his life to preserving the history of Arizona's high school sports programs and promoting the state's athletes.

One way he did so was through a popular preseason football magazine Sollenberger launched in 1971, Phoenix Metro Football Magazine. But when he passed away in 2005 on his 60th birthday, the run of one of the more successful and longest running high school preseason football magazines in the nation ended.

His publishing partner and good friend Dave Kukulski kept Sollenberger's vision alive by distributing a DVD with preseason information. But tracking down more than 200 football coaches and high school sports history isn't easy, and nobody did it better than Sollenberger, the late Arizona Interscholastic Association's historian.

When the AIA and aia365.com decided to recapture the spirit of Sollenberger's magazine by relaunching it online, naming the magazine after Sollenberger (on the cover of this magazine) was a no-brainer. It took a group effort to reintroduce an Arizona high school football staple that one man, Sollenberger, used to produce.

The AIA's Tayler Coady and Michele Staples sent out the questionnaires that Valley veteran writers Don Ketchum and Les Wilsey and I used to write about more than 155 football programs in the inaugural Sollenberger's AZ Prep Football Report. A couple of Sollenberger's Phoenix Metro Football partners, Kukulski and his family and photographer Steve Paynter, were also involved, keeping alive a connection to Phoenix Metro Football.

New partner Maxpreps.com also provided photos. One of Sollenberger's former magazine sponsors, Valle Luna Mexican Restaurants, also jumped on board to help reintroduce the magazine.

We also would like to thank our new sponsors and Parent Heart Watch state coordinator Shellie Wenhold for helping the AIA and aia365.com place defibrillators in Arizona high schools. Helping raise the awareness of getting young athletes' hearts screened will be one of Sollenberger's AZ Prep Report's goals.

In this magazine, you'll find an ad for the Anthony Bates Foundation. Bates played football at Mountain Pointe and died from a genetic heart disease when he was 20. Information about where high school athletes can get their hearts screened is in the ad.

Kukulski said Sollenberger would have been proud that his magazine will continue to evolve. This year's magazine doesn't come close to matching what Sollenberger produced.

But it's a start and a great way to continue to honor a man who gave so much to Arizona's high schools.



Barry Sollenberger was a talented decathlete at Arcadia High School (Photo courtesy of Sollenberger family).

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SOLLINGER'S PREPS REPORT POWERED BY AIA365.COM

Chandler's Turn at D-I Title May Arrive in 2014

Wolves' Firepower Unquestioned; Defense Is Fuzzy Part



QB Bryce Perkins accounted for over 3,000 yards in total offense in 2013 (photo by Jeanine Brock/maxpreps.com).

By Les Willsey, aia365.com

For the first time in a decade last season the big-school football championship was claimed by a different school for a third consecutive year. Desert Vista's triumph in 2011, Hamilton's in 2012 and Mountain Pointe's in 2013 was a breakthrough not seen since Red Mountain, Mesa Mountain View and Hamilton were champs 2001 through 2003, respectively.

Could a fourth school break into the big-win category this year and make it four schools in four years? There are a couple possibilities with the leading candidate -- dare one say -- Chandler High?

Chandler, with a 10-3 record, was right there with the big boys last year in coach Shaun Aguano's third season guiding the Wolves. Chandler reached the semifinals, losing a heartbreaker to Hamilton, its top rival it finally defeated for the first time ever early in the season after a decade of attempts. Chandler bulked up its schedule and was better prepared for a postseason run because of it. Chandler's three losses were to St. John Bosco, a California power and unbeaten champ at 16-0, eventual state champ Mountain Pointe (14-0) and Hamilton (11-3).

So what serves to qualify Chandler to advance a game farther in 2014 and win its postseason finale?

"We have a lot of speed and quickness," Aguano said, referring to all the Wolves' skill position spots. "A lot of experience. We have some linemen back, too, and that helps."

In an understatement, those attributes of speed and quickness wrap around second-year starting quarterback Bryce Perkins, running back Chase Lucas and receivers Danny Mahan and transfer wide out N'Keal Harry. Perkins, a senior with a verbal commitment to ASU, piled up 3,052 yards rushing and passing. He threw for 24 touchdowns completing 70 percent of his attempts. He added 18 rushing TDs. Lucas, a junior, is dual threat adding 36 receptions for 436 yards to his 883 yards on the ground. Mahan, a possession receiver, is the veteran of the pass catchers with 19 receptions for 267 yards. Marcos de Niza transfer Harry was one of the top targets for the Padres and supplies a big-play threat as does Justin Jan and another returner, Terrell Flanigan.

The offensive line is huge with returning guards Keola Daniels and Matthew Menlove, tackle Dustin Woodard and center Vinny Vital, a center who relocated from Marcos de Niza. They each average 285 pounds. The former trio started last year or had significant playing time.

Chandler's defense last year was one of its best in recent campaigns. Despite a potent offense the Wolves will need a defensive unit playing at the level last year's team did the final few games of the season.

"We have some players we need to replace on defense," Aguano said.

Most of the experience on defense for 2014 resides at linebacker and in the secondary. Leading the way are linebacker KT Tilini (24 tackles at middle backer) and safety Mason Moran (46 tackles). Up front are Thomas Chisholm and Basha transfer JW Windsor. Windsor, a lineman, was among the top three tacklers for Basha last year.

"Our (defensive) group is talented," Aguano said. "They are working with some wrinkle changes. Not game ready yet, but they'll get there."

Chandler has the same schedule this season, save subbing out St. John Bosco for a mid-September contest against defending Colorado 5A champ Valor Christian. Valor Christian posted a 13-1 record in taking its state's top football crown. Chandler opens on the road at Centennial, who is itching for payback from a severe 42-21 beating at Chandler. That loss was the lone regular-season defeat for Centennial until it bowed in the D-II semis to Chaparral.

"We've got three very tough games in our first four starting with Centennial," Aguano said. "Mountain Pointe and Valor are early games, too."

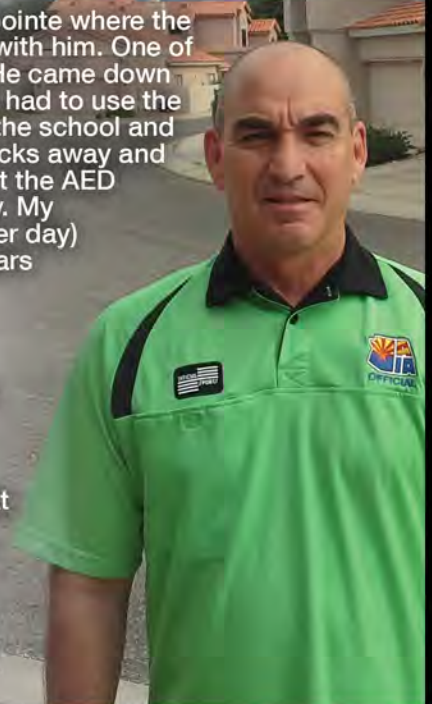
Chandler will have a good idea where they stand come mid-September. The early slate is certainly a title-worthy test.

It was a chilly night last January at Salpointe High School around 6:20 p.m. when it happened. I was the center referee during the boys varsity soccer game against visiting Sabino High School. It was a great game, with playoff implications, so I was at my best. I was running very well, was on top of all the fouls, and even had one caution. Without warning, I just dropped dead of sudden cardiac arrest. My heart stopped. There were no crushing chest pains. No shooting pains down my arm or neck. No dizziness.

Fortunately, all of my stars were aligned that night to survive. I was at Salpointe where the trainer was at the game and had an AED (automatic external defibrillator) with him. One of the fathers of a Sabino player was a Tucson Fire Department paramedic. He came down out of the stands and, along with the Salpointe trainer, did CPR on me. He had to use the AED to get my heart started again. The fire department was very close to the school and was at my assistance within four minutes. The hospital was only a few blocks away and I was at University Medical Center within 15 minutes of collapsing. Without the AED being at the field with someone trained to use it, I would not be here today. My three grandchildren would not have their "poopy" (another story for another day) to grow up with. My kids would not have their father, and my wife of 35 years would be a widow.

I can't thank the people enough who saved my life that night but just as important is the AED that was on hand to be used as designed. I would implore anyone with means to contribute as much as they can to help out the organizations whose goal is to provide AEDs to schools at no/low cost. I am just one of thousands who has been fortunate enough to be helped by an AED. There have been thousands of others who have not been so fortunate to have an AED available when needed. I am doing great these days. I had my clogged heart artery "roto-rootered" and had two stents put in. I am looking forward to getting back on the soccer field this year and continuing my officiating career.

Michael Chaison - AIA Official



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SOLLENBERGER'S PREPS REPORT POWERED BY AIA365.COM **Division I Preseason Rankings**

By Les Willsey, aia365.com

1. **CHANDLER** -- With skill-laden offense returning Wolves take aim at being the fourth team in four years to win a big-school title. Last year's section title, finally a win over rival Hamilton -- and confidence boost from its playoff run they fell just short of a championship appearance shows they may be ready to grasp the top rung.

2. **MOUNTAIN POINTE** -- Defending champs may be down slightly, but not near enough not to be up for a shot at a repeat. The running game will be potent again, but can Pride keep defenses honest via the pass with huge losses at quarterback and receiver.

3. **HAMILTON** -- Six straight title-game appearances is impressive, not to mention its seven titles in last 10 years. Huskies always a threat to contend and this year should be no different even with loss of many starters and a rugged schedule.

4. **DESERT RIDGE** -- What appeared to be a rigorous schedule last year didn't materialize with down years from many of its section foes. The Jaguars are going to run, run, run again without the Morrisons. Justin Irby and Alec Hathcock get the handoff to lead the ground game. Offense could offer a bit of a passing threat as well. Defense figures to be solid.

5. **BROPHY** -- Season opener vs. Bishop Gorman in Sollenberger Classic will be a solid test on Aug. 22 in Las Vegas. Broncos dabble with many of the top teams from other sections and its own section figures to be stronger top to bottom. Injuries played a part in 5-7 season, but it was still a playoff year. Defense figures to be stronger and a resurrection is thought to be on its way.

6. **PINNACLE** -- Led by quarterback Brian Lewerke this could be a year the Pioneers have a shot at cracking the final four. Two of its three losses last year were to Hamilton and the other was to D-II runner-up Chaparral. Pinnacle won its section last year and eyes a repeat if it can fend off Horizon.

7. **HORIZON** -- Offense wasn't a problem last year and



The Mountain Pointe Pride captured the 2013 AIA Division I State title with a 42-19 win over Hamilton (photo by Mitchell B. Reibel/maxpreps.com).

shouldn't be in 2014 with an experienced skill-set intact. A new defense and coordinator is being installed to at least try to take the heat off the offense. If it works, Huskies could be dangerous.

8. **WESTVIEW** -- New coach Joe Parker is quite familiar with the way the Knights roll and they should control their section as usual. A bulked-up non-section schedule helped last year as team held its own and then some facing Red Mountain, Brophy to name a couple. Knights came out flat in opening round of playoffs and look to use that as a starting point for new year.

9. **RED MOUNTAIN** -- Team was six up and six down playing in six-team region that featured five teams as postseason qualifiers. Mountain Lions won four of five section games (three of those teams lost in first round), but were 2-5 against other opponents -- albeit very talented ones. Best bet to challenge Desert Ridge for the section title, but needs another win or two against the likes of Pinnacle, Chaparral, Westview and Brophy to be thought of as serious contender.

10. **MESA MOUNTAIN VIEW** -- Playoff berths have returned to Toro Town the past two years, both with short stays due to sub-par defense. Strength in the new season is line play on both sides of the ball. That may result, particularly on the defensive side, with the ability to win lower-scoring games. Toros will be playing catch-up as far as skill position spots are concerned.

SULLIVAN'S PREPS REPORT POWERED BY AIA365.COM

Football Division I Preview

By Les Willsey, aia365.com

SECTION I

Chandler: The Wolves have been a playoff qualifier for the past nine years in a row. Getting over the roadblock that was Hamilton last year was a step in the right direction, but they need to find a way to reach a title game with the array of talent dotting its roster, particularly in recent years. With quarterback Bryce Perkins as its leader, the Wolves may have to do it without a dominating or intimidating defense. That's a tough task given the pedigree associated with most big-school title teams.

Hamilton: The Huskies, 11-3 last year, won't take a back-seat to any program in pursuit of the state title even with Chandler getting the preseason nod here as No. 1. Coach Steve Belles is 103-9 in his tenure since coming over from Mountain Ridge. Belles cites defensive line and skill positions as this year's strength. Senior defensive end Caleb Peart (10.5 sacks) and junior defensive tackle Garrett Rand (7 sacks) are the top returnees for that unit. Wide outs Brandon Krcilek (12 catches for 258 yards) and

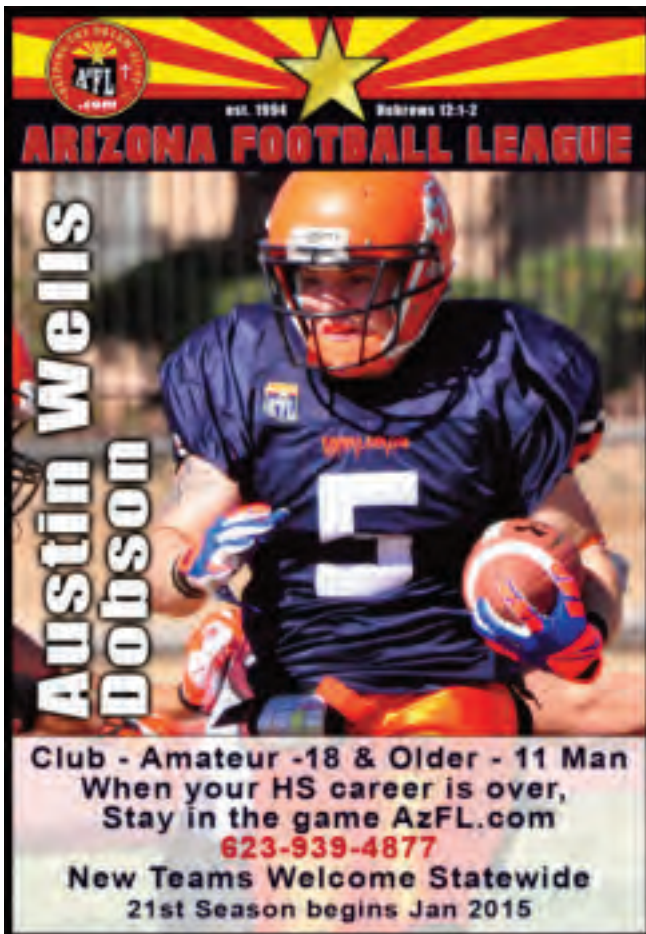
Kyler Burke (25 catches for 281 yards, 3 TDs) and defensive back Trey Robinson are key skill players. Senior James Sosinski looks to be the heir apparent at quarterback. Sosinski, 6-foot-8, received brief intervals of playing time last year completing 16 of 28 passes for 224 yards.

Basha: The Bears open a new season with new coach Gerald Todd, who takes over following the spring departure of Bernie Busken. Todd knows the players and program as a varsity assistant during the past several seasons. Basha is coming off a 6-6 season that finished with a blowout loss to Chandler. Todd has some talent to work with and is high on the Bears' passing game and secondary. Top returnee is wide out Doc O'Connor (61 catches for 1,127 yards). Joining O'Connor with varsity experience are receivers Jared Schmidt (30-487-5 TDs). Joe Storm (36-454-2 TDs), linebacker Zach Archer, defensive back Austin Williams, offensive lineman Evan Edwards and defensive tackle Alex Roteveel. While excited about the passing game, the Bears have work to do at quarterback in replacing prolific Zach Werlinger.

Highland: The Hawks advanced to the postseason last year with a short stay that completed a 6-5 campaign. They have some retooling to do this year, especially on defense -- the strength of last year's team. Coach Pete Wahlheim sees skill positions as a plus early led by running back Josh Chadwick (397 yards, 3 TDs) and wide out Preston Guzman. Veteran players who are being counted on for leadership are offensive lineman Parker Stott (6-3, 300), defensive lineman Brent Clemons and linebacker Luke Schroeder.

Perry: The Pumas ventured to D-I last year and were unable to qualify for postseason after reaching the playoffs a couple times in D-II. They had their share of injuries last year, but probably weren't D-I playoff caliber. That may change this year. Senior quarterback Austin Nightingale is back after a horrific injury (torn ACL, torn meniscus and broken femur) suffered last year at midseason. Nightingale passed for 833 yards and rushed for 369 in five games. Several players who are likely two-way performers are junior linebacker Case Hatch, tight end-defensive end Seth Clare and section two-way player of the year Alec Monte (receiver, defensive back). Monte caught 26 passes for 395 yards and one TD. Also representing the defense is junior DB Michael Parenti (41 tackles).

Gilbert: The Tigers are optimistic about turning in a strong season. They finished 2-8 last year and had plenty of diffi-



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(L to R) Hamilton's Caleb Peart (photo by Mitchell B. Reibel/maxpreps.com), Gilbert's Steve Miller (photo by Barry Shaffer/maxpreps.com) and Corona del Sol's Cassius Peat (photo by Jim Willittes/maxpreps.com)

culty moving the ball and on some nights defending the opposition. The offense should improve -- perhaps significantly. That mindset is sparked by the return of senior offensive tackle Steve Miller, 6-5, 305, who has committed to ASU and transfer quarterback from Texas -- Nick Nezami. Gilbert struggled at quarterback last year. A good corps of receivers and Nezami will translate into more points. Jamian Maes (9 catches, 178 yards), Fontae Canada (12-122), Rico Yanez (12-87) and Brycen Palmer could give defenses problems if line play is sound and QB is real deal.

SECTION II

Westview: The Knights are defending section champs and remain the team to beat in the section with a solid program and new coach Joe Parker. Parker has been around the west side school for years so don't expect a huge amount of upheaval, if any. The Knights always run the ball well and that should continue with seniors Jalen Johnson (1,601 yards, 21 TDs) and Rameihk Bowles (534 yards, 9 TDs) eager to equal or better those stats. The strength on defense is linebacker Alex Saenz, who registered 80 tackles, two sacks and an interception. Fellow senior Damian Chouteau returns on defense as does DB Jonathan Garcia. The other skill positions and defensive front are the real question marks as the Knights try to defend section honors. They are also looking to show well

in a trio of non-section games against top-10-type opponents.

Millennium: The Tigers had their first crack at the rigors of D-I last year and it resulted in a playoff berth and a 6-5 record. A loss to Westview denied them the section title. Second-year coach Jason Randels will have a team with experience up front, especially on offense. In linemen Dyson Dandurand, Gabe Estrada and Justin Lopresti the Tigers should be able to move the ball. Last year's returning leading rusher is Duane Dorsey (354 yards and 4 TDs). Jalen Cook is solid as the lone veteran in the secondary and may see some action at receiver.

Cesar Chavez: The next time the Champions register a victory it will be the 300th of veteran coach Jim Rattay's career with stops in Ohio and several in Arizona that resulted in state championships (Mesa High, Desert Vista and Phoenix Christian). The Champions managed a 3-7 record with its wins coming in section play against North, Valley Vista and Maryvale. A killer non-section slate will need to produce a couple wins if there is a chance to entertain post-season hopes. Chavez returns quarterback Daniel Lerma, who managed six starts and passed for 893 yards and seven TDs. A key two-way returner is JJ Crane at running back and strong safety.

Valley Vista: The Monsoon broke even at 5-5 in 2013, but



Football Division I Preview

need to have more success in section play to extend their season beyond October. That means finding a way to knock off Westview, Millennium or Chavez. A lot of familiar names to Monsoon fans will grace the skill spots with returning quarterback Damian Alarcon (1,923 yards, 20 TDs), running backs Izel Robinson (479 yards, 2 TDs) and Rob Bolden (399 yards, 1 TD). Alarcon will miss his prime target Terry Juniel, but Malik Moody and Chris Harris got game time and combined for 23 receptions. The defensive front has capable Abram Cook to lead it. Cook had 39 tackles and nabbed three sacks. Defensive back Elmondo McCoy (three interception) keys the secondary. Coach Josh Sekoch needs an inexperienced offensive line to come together and do it quickly.

North: The Mustangs endured a tough season in 2013. They were 2-9. North hired former Basha and Mesa Mountain View coach Bernie Busken a month ago so the workload for Busken and his team is heavy. Busken piloted three Mountain View teams to titles (1996, 1997 and 1999).

Maryvale: The Panthers were blanked last year (0-10). Maryvale is coached by George Martinez, who has a 91-71 career record and guided Ironwood to the big-school title game in 2002 where it fell to Mountain View. Martinez has several returnees hoping to help churn out a win of two. The Panthers scored just 46 points last season.

SECTION III

Desert Ridge: The Jaguars have used a powerful running game and solid defense as the recipe of late to compete for a state title. That won't change even without the Morrison brothers, who apparently have left the program. Justin Irby and Alec Hathcock are ready to step up. Both showed they were capable last year. Irby's the speedster. He picked up 765 yards and scored 7 TDs last season. Alec Hathcock is a power back and strongest player on the squad at 5-foot-8, 200 pounds. He picked up 267 yards in limited carries. Coach Jeremy Hathcock likes his running attack and defense. Five starters return on defense led by linebacker Mason Madrid (120 tackles, 61 solo), lineman Vita Taufu (45 tackles) and safety Sean Eremia (46 tackles). Desert Ridge suffered bookend losses in an 11-2 season that ended in a semifinal loss to eventual champ Mountain Pointe. The 11 wins in between were almost exclusively dominating triumphs.

Red Mountain: The Mountain Lions have continued a run as a playoff contender since coach Ron Wisniewski arrived

four years ago, but they haven't been able to realize a final-four finish in his tenure. Red Mountain is 30-17 during Wisniewski's watch. It's been hard for any schools other than Hamilton, Mountain Pointe, Chandler and Desert Ridge to reach that point so Wisniewski has company. Red Mountain was 6-6 last season. This year's team must re-tool a senior-laden defense first and foremost to keep the playoff streak alive. The top tackler returning is linebacker Austin Porter. Offensively Red Mountain will introduce a new quarterback, but does have a few skill players with varsity time. The program has the numbers to fill the holes, but given a rugged schedule the learning curve needs to be swift.

Mountain View: The Toros can't quite get in sync when it comes to possessing a balance of experience in all facets at the beginning of a season. Last year they had plenty of skill-position options, but not the depth and experience at the point of attack. This year it's pretty much the opposite. Coach Chad DeGrenier begins his fourth season with line play the strength. That comes in the form of Ryan Hakes, Isaac Tejada and Luis Andalon. Linebacker Phoenix Hollen is the top returning player on defense. He registered 52 tackles and 3.5 sacks. Mountain View was ravaged by injury last season so it was hard for skill players, or any player regardless on which side of the ball they played, to have consistency or longevity.

Mesa: The Jackrabbits are the lone school in the section with a new coach. Scott Hare, a veteran of three head coaching stops, takes over for Kelley Moore. Moore opted to return to the West Valley and coach at Buckeye. Hare previously was head coach at two schools in California and one in Nevada, his most recent. He inherits a speedy back in Turrell Pietz-Noble. Pietz-Noble rushed for 1,154 yards and 9 TDs as a junior. He's talented and versatile enough to play any skill position and it wouldn't be surprising to see him used as such. The top returnee on defense is linebacker Justin Curtis, who was in on 59 tackles last year. Hare is excited about the promise of sophomore linemen Nami Tuituu, who checks in at 6-2, 240. Samiuela Taueli, who played defensive line last year, racked up 30 tackles and 2.5 sacks.

Skyline: The Coyotes qualified for the playoffs for the first time ever in the big-school classification in 2013. That covers about a decade's time among big-school competition. They finished 6-5, losing in the opening round to high-octane Chandler. Coach Angelo Paffumi has seven players back with significant time on offense and four on defense.



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Quarterback is one position open as are running back spots. A weapon Skyline is counting on is Truman Tucker, who rushed for 362 yards and caught 27 passes for another 402 yards. Six of his receptions were for TDs. Stalwarts on the offensive line are Josh O'Brien and Aaron Nutt. The defensive line is anchored by Billy Uasike (53 tackles and two sacks). Safety Zach Olague was a playmaker with 72 tackles and four interceptions.

Desert Mountain: The Wolves have been on a pretty good roll of late with three playoff appearances in the last five years. Coach Tony Tabor, beginning his ninth season as head coach, graduated 35 seniors and has no linemen with experience and only two starters back on each side. The best, and he is outstanding on both sides of the ball, is running back/linebacker Deion Warren. Warren managed to rush for 941 yards and added 276 yards receiving. He totaled 16 TDs. Warren was equally productive on the defensive side with 61 tackles and a team-high six sacks. This section garnered five of the 16 playoff berths in D-I last year. The Wolves have their work cut out for them in that regard.

SECTION IV

Mountain Pointe: The Pride has a couple holes to fill, but they'll have nothing to do with talk of one-and-done as far as state titles go. Coach Norris Vaughan expects his team to give an able account as it brings a 14-game winning streak even in losing the likes of Jalen Brown, Wesley Payne, Antonio Hinojosa, Natrell Curtis and Timmy Hernandez to name a few. Vaughan's optimism rises from a returning a trio of offensive-line starters Nick Carman, Collin Lambdin and Davis Perrott, lightning-fast running back Paul Lucas and another solid back from a year ago in Brandyn Leonard. Lucas, a multi-time state sprint champ, rushed for 1,008 yards and 12 TDs last year while Leonard added 626 yards and 11 trips to paydirt. A transfer from Minnesota, Tyrek Cross, is a two-way talent who may be capable of filling gaps left by the same two-way Payne. Defense has its share of returnees with tackle Bruce Hester, and linebackers Keondre Churchwell and Austin Cronen. Another southpaw quarterback, Garvin Alston, is the replacement for Hinojosa. Kicker John Abercrombie figures to be solid in handling both place-kicking and punting duties. He scored 38 points as the Pride's backup last year.

Brophy Prep: The Broncos would have liked to own a better-than-.500 record last season, but the 5-7 mark they finished with wasn't bad all things considered. With a

revolving door at quarterback due to injury and injuries at other positions as well, the Broncos with any kind of good fortune could have been 7-5. Brophy is still relatively young this year with a lot of juniors already seasoned and set to start. Running back Ryan Velez darted his way to 1,189 yards and 13 TDs. Wide out Isaiah Oliver was a vertical threat with 22 catches for 413 yards and seven TDs. Cade Knox got his share of time at quarterback, the position he'll start at this year. Knox can also play receiver, safety and return kicks. Coach Scooter Molander watched Dante Diaz-Infante and Connor Murphy do good things on the defensive line as sophomores, ditto that with Walker Adams at linebacker. Even with an influx of juniors playing huge roles, Molander likes the senior leadership he's seen over the summer. The one worry is a lack of depth at some positions. Brophy's schedule helped it immensely in qualifying for the playoffs last year at 4-6. Barring another rash of injuries, the Broncos should eclipse that mark and not have to worry about qualifying.

Desert Vista: The Thunder won't showcase many big-time college recruits this season, but coach Dan Hinds thinks the collection of "good high school players" he has can get the Thunder back to the playoffs. Desert Vista finished fourth in the five-team section last year with an overall record of 4-6. The Thunder will rely on Alex Farina to lead the offense at quarterback. Farina appeared in five games behind center last year and passed for 658 yards and six TDs. TJ Roberts, the second-leading rusher in 2013, pounded out 339 yards and four TDs on 66 carries. Leading the defense are Cade Van Raaphorst and Drew McIntyre. Both will play linebacker. Van Raaphorst played some quarterback last year.

Corona del Sol: The Aztecs welcome alumnus Cory Nenaber as their new coach, their fourth in the last five years. The Aztecs, 3-7 last year, were overseen by two head coaches in their first 30 years following Gary Ventura's retirement after the 2010 season. Nenaber was head coach at Maricopa for four seasons where he posted a 19-23 record. At Corona he has a handful of veteran players to work with in his debut season. Topping the list is defensive end-tight end Cassius Peat, who has three championship rings from basketball. Peat produced 34 tackles and 6.5 sacks last year. He is still undecided for college with a boatload of suitors, including ASU. Also posting a solid defensive season a year ago was linebacker-running back Elijah Hassell (63 tackles). There are bits and pieces of experience at the skill positions -- running back Colin Freeland, receiver Tyler Stehr and quarter-



Pinnacle's Brian Lewerke should be among Arizona's best field generals (photo by Mitchell B. Reibel/maxpreps.com).

back Matt Asta. Freeland rushed for 303 yards and 6 TDs. On the offensive line Brandon Arrington is promising. Nember says the biggest question mark is experience and how those that do have playing time behind them continue to respond.

Dobson: Coach George De La Torre knew taking the reins for the Mustangs in 2012 wasn't going to be easy. Right now it's a step and win at a time. Dobson was 1-9 in 2012 and upped the ante to 2-8 last year. They return a rather small senior class to work with this year (13), but there are 32 juniors. Many of those are fresh off an 8-1 JV season. Top returnees for Dobson are wide out Anthony Ford (14 catches for 245 yards, 2 TDs), quarterback Nick Riddle (460 yards, two TDs, 5 picks) and tight end Trase Colburn. Offensive lineman Dan Verducci, at 6-4, 278, is drawing attention from recruiters.

SECTION V

Pinnacle: The Pioneers return almost half their starters on both sides of the ball, a good foundation for improving in

the playoffs and perhaps bettering a 9-3 record. Quarterback Brian Lewerke, a Michigan State commit, passed for 2,780 yards and 33 TDs in his junior year. There is a solid receiver Lewerke is familiar with in Cules Rose (17 catches for 353 yards, 8 TDs). A summer transfer from Thunderbird -- Adam Turner -- will draw defensive attention. Turner scored 16 TDs a year ago with 65 catches for 1,233 yards for the D-III Chiefs. Coach Dana Zupke likes the speed his team is blessed with, but looks to shore up losses at running back and the linebacking corps. A good set of linemen return Nick Maxey, Kent Cullumber and Ben Thomas.

Horizon: The Huskies caused a stir in the section and division last year with a surprising 8-3 record and by challenging Pinnacle for the section crown. Coach Kris Heavner's first year guiding the Huskies was a hit, especially the offense. No reason to believe the offense won't keep cranking out the points with quarterback Dalton Sneed back for a third varsity campaign. Sneed amassed 4,238 yards of offense -- 3,740 of it via the air 44 TDs and only 8 picks). Five linemen with appreciable varsity time and ability should keep the skill set protected, led by Jake Grant. Defense is where improvement is a must. Linebackers Cole Finochiarro (116 tackles, 6 sacks, and 3 interceptions) and Jonathan Nolan and defensive end Nick Paogofie put up great stats individually and are players to build on. Few if any state titles are won giving up 335 points (30 per game) as Horizon did in 2013. Only Mesa Mountain View, Basha, and Desert Mountain gave up more points among the 16 playoff teams.

Boulder Creek: The Jaguars have a new coach as Brandon Willard returns to the Valley where his coaching roots as an assistant run deep with several schools. Willard was head coach the last two seasons at Amphitheater going 1-9 and 5-5 in two seasons. He inherits a couple marquee players in lineman Nathan Eldridge (6-4, 280) and versatile Ryan Parenteau, a solid back and receiver who had 21 catches for 355 yards and another 172 yards in limited carries. Junior Gunther Johnson hopes to make strides after a learning year on the run at the position as a sophomore. Johnson passed for a modest 1,216 yards. He looks to improve on the TD-interception ratio (6 TDs to 9 interceptions).

Mountain Ridge: The Mountain Lions will lean on a strong senior class they hope will be the difference in adding a couple wins and a playoff berth this year. Coach Bobby Green begins his ninth season as Mountain Lions' mentor.

SOLLINGER'S PREPS REPORT POWERED BY AIA365.COM

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Five defensive starters led by linebacker Billy McEowen (137 tackles, 4 sacks), linebacker-end Jake Skadeland (48 tackles, 9 sacks) and interior lineman Logan Vanderleest (48 tackles) are a good starting point for a team that has to face the likes of strong offenses from Pinnacle and Horizon in the section. Robert Limmer returns with several games under his belt at quarterback as do a couple interior linemen -- Ryan Delung and Tanner Scott. The Mountain Lions question mark is sorting out options at running back and receiver as the season nears.

Sandra Day O'Connor: The Eagles finished fifth in the section last year in what was a 2-8 season. They have a smattering of experience on offense in the skill positions. Quarterback Bailin Markridge, a junior this season, managed to pass for 1,026 yards and nine TDs. Skill positions lack depth, but there are defenders at each level that can produce. Linebacker Chris Davis, safety Oscar Mills and two-way lineman James Pruitt have impressed over the summer. SDO opens the season adding a game with Hamilton.

North Canyon: The Rattlers also posted a 2-8 record



Jake Grant, Horizon (photo by Paul Campbell/maxpreps.com)

overall, but weren't able to muster a win over any of its section opponents. Their wins were over D-II opponents Lake Havasu and Arcadia. Brett Molzhon returns at quarterback where he passed for 1,067 yards and nine TDs. Top receiver and standout athlete Bryant O'Georgia graduated. End Chance Sampson, who had 48 tackles and six sacks, end Brett Kroll (42 tackles) and DB Jacob Mara (59 tackles) are the core of the defense.

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Salpointe Aims at D-II Repeat With Defense Retooling Mega Skill-Position Losses Is Greatest Task

By Les Willsey, aia365.com

Salpointe Catholic's consistency last season on its way to the Division II state football title was remarkable and eerie. The Lancers wowed with a prolific offense and its defense only needed to be about half as good as it turned out for a 14-0 title romp. Only in postseason did they give up more than a touchdown in a game.

Longtime coach Dennis Bene and his staff have the experience and makings of another top-flight defense with five starters returning. If Salpointe pieces together just an average offense this fall, it may be enough to hoist a second consecutive championship trophy come late November. The last Tucson school to claim back-to-back state titles at any level took place 37 years ago -- accomplished by Canyon del Oro. The Dorados won 4A crowns in 1976 and 1977.

"Definitely the strength of our team is defense and our front seven," Bene said. "We're very big and very fast. That may surprise some people. I think they'll be as good as any defense in the state."

Salpointe will take the veterans from its 2013 defense and run with them. The returnees occupy spots in the front seven led by senior linebacker Taylor Powell. Powell was in on a whopping 161 tackles last season and is one of the team's captains. Senior Jaylyn Juan mans an end position and will be joined on the front four by Justin Holt, Andrew Palomares and Julien Arechaga. Filling out the lineback corps with Powell are junior Jake Ksiazek and senior Chris Sullivan. Salpointe's defense allowed just 101 points in 14 games -- a touchdown per contest. The secondary will experience an influx of primarily new faces, but is led by senior captain Dom Pedrotty (safety). Teauante Nash is the other safety and the corners look to be Jason Parrish and Adrian Lizarraga.

Identifying a quarterback to pilot Salpointe is the biggest concern this fall. Andrew Cota's numbers and expertise won't be replaced this year and neither will prolific receivers Cameron Denson and Kaelin DeBoskie. Cota was accurate and made few mistakes (two interceptions). And as great as its passing game was, the running game quietly did its share giving the offense about a 50-50 split in 5,800 yards. Salpointe scored an eye-popping 697 points -- a fraction shy of 50 per game.

The Lancers quarterback battle is between senior Sam Muniz and freshman Jamarye Joiner. Muniz has experience on varsity and Joiner is a talent waiting to unload in some capacity. Joiner is the nephew of former Amphi and Oregon standout Tamani Joiner.

"Jamarye reminds me of a young Cameron Denson," Bene said. "He's already 6 feet, 170. If he does not play quarterback, he will be a receiver for us."

Taking over the running back duties will be a very busy Powell and Zach Dorame. Dorame got some carries along side the team's leading rusher last season, Jay Williams, and checked in with nearly 600 yards and six TDs. The receiving corps will be virtually all new.

"At receiver we won't be as talented, but we'll have better depth," Bene said.

Salpointe's schedule has a couple revisions from last year. The Lancers aren't playing in the Sollenberger Classic (a game they won vs. Liberty, Nev.) or against Crespi, Calif. In place of those games are a season-opener at home Aug. 22 with Buena and a road contest Sept. 19 with Campo Verde.

"After Sabino we have a bye and three road games in a row (Sunnyside), Campo Verde and Marcos de Niza," Bene said. "That stretch will be a test."

SOLLINGER'S PREPS REPORT POWERED BY AIA365.COM

Division II Preseason Rankings

By Les Willsey, aia365.com

1. **SALPOINTE** -- Making a bid for a second consecutive state title isn't a stretch with half its starting defense back plus some very capable replacements. Last year the Lancers' offense grabbed many of the headlines in its 14-0 run to a championship. It's likely to be the defense this time around with the likes of linebacker Taylor Powell and lineman Jaylyn Juan.

2. **CENTENNIAL** -- A stunning quarterfinal loss to Deer Valley last year should supply the motivation for redemption. That defeat snapped a streak of 10 straight years the Coyotes reached the semifinals or better in D-II (5A-2 or 4A) -- the division just below the big schools. Coach Richard Taylor has plenty of returning standouts led by running back Dedrick Young and on the defensive side Brett Tonz and Micah Navarette.

3. **LIBERTY** -- Who knows what might have happened if Liberty hadn't drawn Salpointe in last year's quarterfinals. That turned out to be a death-knell for any team. The Lions posted an 8-4 record and return the ample talent to sustain a lengthy postseason run. Playing in the same section with Centennial and Deer Valley makes the road to a section title rough. With multi-sport athlete Tyler Wyatt back at quarterback and key defensive personnel back in the mix coach Jason Randel's club is poised to make some noise.

4. **IRONWOOD RIDGE** -- The 2012 D-II champs endured a huge retooling job last season and still managed a 6-5 mark and a playoff berth. Chances are they'll be back in the mix with the ability to hang around longer. Coach Matt Johnson is excited about the team's strength as the new year dawns -- line play on both sides of the ball. That was a key ingredient to its championship season.

5. **CHAPARRAL** -- A late coaching change in early spring slowed preparation a bit, but new coach Conrad Hamilton has rolled up his sleeves to keep the Firebirds in the thick of the division's best. Chaparral won 12 games last year and bowed in the final to Salpointe's juggernaut. They have a handful of key returners led by quarterback Sean Brophy, but the graduation losses were pretty massive. Brophy will be guiding an offense that needs shepherding as a young group of skill players make their way. The high-powered offense of recent years may be down a click or two.

6. **MARCOS DE NIZA** -- This is another program that lost a bunch of standouts to graduation and a few to transfer. The Padres have been able to be among the elite in the D-II (5A-II) the past several seasons and have a chance to stay there despite the losses. New coach Sean Morin, who piloted the team in its two playoff games last November, is touting team speed and toughness to bring about another playoff season.

7. **CIENEGA** -- Somewhat like Ironwood Ridge, Cienega is ex-



Salpointe topped Chaparral, 46-20, in the 2013 Division II State title game (photo by Mark Jones/maxpreps.com).

pecting a bounce-back season. The Bobcats posted a 5-5 record and fell short of postseason after nine years of postseason play that saw them banging on the door to the D-II finals, but entering just once. The Bobcats will be led by versatile two-way talent Terrence Johnson (receiver and defensive back).

8. **MARANA MTN. VIEW** -- Finishing second in its section to Salpointe was no shame and its road to the playoffs was paved by beating all its other section foes who were busy beating up on one another. Coach Clarence McRae has some speed at his disposal and some capable returnees on defense -- about half from 2013. Defense may have to carry the load as McRae's concern is how much his offense can produce.

9. **DEER VALLEY** -- Can the school's best football finish ever in terms of postseason advancement have a residual effect? Can't hurt. The Skyhawks did lose an enormous group of contributing seniors, particularly on offense that's going to make the aforementioned task difficult. The Skyhawks will work in a new quarterback, running backs and most of their receiving corps. The defense should be solid, but must perform better when it matches up against the more explosive offenses -- Liberty and Centennial -- like they did the second time they faced Centennial in the D-II quarters last year.

10. **POSTON BUTTE** -- Folks will be following the first year of former Blue Ridge coach Paul Moro with keen interest. The Broncos turned in a 3-7 record last year and dropped their last six games. Moro inherits a couple of solid players on each side of the ball that are good starting points. The Broncos, however, play a schedule that features eight opponents who were .500 or better last year and five that reached postseason. They'll be tested out of the gate by last year's D-III runner-up, Queen Creek, on Aug. 22.

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Football Division II Preview

By Les Willsey, aia365.com

SECTION I

Sunnyslope: The Vikings didn't mind competing in the largest section (9 schools) in D-II. It navigated the section to perfection and topped its two non-section foes in posting a 10-0 mark. The season came to a sudden halt in the opening round of the playoffs with a resounding loss to Deer Valley. Coach Damon Pieri is eager to see if his team can recast its line, identify a quarterback and kicker. An unbeaten junior varsity team should help with a handful of starters back on each side of the ball. The Vikings have two accomplished skill players in senior running back Tim Fryson and senior wide receiver-linebacker Jacob Eshelman. Fryson rushed for 1,448 yards and 18 TDs and added 25 catches for 645 yards and 5 TDs. Eshelman tallied 24 receptions for 448 yards. Defensively he chipped in 64 tackles, two sacks and one interception.

Betty Fairfax: The Stampede managed to piece together a 7-3 campaign, but no playoff berth. In fact the only team in the section to garner a playoff berth was Sunnyslope. There was a wide gap in the section between Sunnyslope



Head Coach Paul Moro assumes the reins at Poston Butte after many championship-winning campaigns at Blue Ridge (photo by Todd Shurtleff/maxpreps.com)

and the rest of schools. Betty Fairfax is hoping to close the gap on Sunnyslope. Coach Dylan Winemiller, who recently officially took over for coach-turned-AD Kevin Belcher, cites the strength of the team as defense with seven starters back from 2013. Linebackers Dillon Proby (31 tackles) and Angelo Lopez (61 tackles) did their job cleaning up the opposition at the midpoint. Back in the secondary it's Fabian Gholston (35 tackles, 4 interceptions) and David Perez (46 tackles). The question mark is the offensive line, a work in progress. Kevin Webb (583 yards rushing) and Gholston (15 catches for 341 yards) are the top skill players from a year ago.

Tolleson: The Wolverines were in the same boat as Betty Fairfax last year. They finished 8-3, but strength of schedule and overall strength of section left them short of post-season. Coach Jason Wilke has plenty of offensive line experience back and a good collection of defenders as well. Finding running backs to operate behind a veteran line will be a primary chore. Javier Nava and Carlos Garcia are two of the top linemen. Brandon Frost is set to lead the defense. He turned in 72 tackles and three sacks at linebacker in 2013.

La Joya: The Lobos will try to climb the ladder a rung or so in the section after a 5-5 overall mark and 4-4 record in section play last season. Coach Josh Mitchell has a roster with 20 seniors and an experience offensive unit to lead the way. The team was good on the ground last year and that's the strength at the outset. Running back Javian Roebuck busted the 1,000-yard mark last year (1,212 yards, 9 TDs). Wide out Adrien Freitas can contribute in the passing game (278 yards receiving). The defense must

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mature quickly. Retooling is needed for the majority of the defensive line and middle linebacker position. Top defender back is Ke'Von Dobson (30 tackles, four sacks), a DE-OLB.

St. Mary's: The Knights love to throw and that shouldn't change with quarterback Gabe Losada in tow. Losada threw for 3,448 yards and 42 TDs as a junior. Jeremiah Sullivan and Tino Vidales are expected to reprise their roles at receiver. Sullivan caught 67 passes for 717 yards and 16 TDs; Vidales chipped in 28 receptions for 262 yards. Coach Todd Williamson likes the team's offensive tempo. Defense must improve overall and particularly vs. the run. Depth is also a concern.

Copper Canyon: The Aztecs open 2014 with new coach Shawn Kemmer at the helm. Kemmer inherits a 2-8 squad that finished in the bottom third of the section. Kemmer is impressed with the speed and athleticism he's seen, but there is much work to be done on offense with three starters back. Defensively he seeks a more physical presence. Top defenders backs are safety Glenn Gonzalez (27 tackles) and linebacker Tyree Marshall.

Camelback: Another school operating with a new field boss. It's Justin Watson as he tries his hand at getting the Spartans on the right track. They were 0-10 last year. Running back Tony Miller played quarterback and running back and was most adept running the ball. He piled up 886 yards and scored 9 TDs.

Trevor Browne: The Bruins are the fourth of the nine teams in the section introducing a new head coach. Chris Crockett, a former assistant at Cesar Chavez, takes the reins from Rich Helton. The Bruins were 5-5, but like the bottom six teams in the section could not compete with the top third of the section -- Sunnyslope, Fairfax and Tolleson.

Carl Hayden: The Falcons and fourth-year coach Jeremy Zimmerman continue to battle a numbers game. The Falcons were 2-8 last year, beating Camelback and D-IV Coronado.

SECTION II

Cienega: The Bobcats shared the section title with Sahuaro and Buena last year, but power-ranking was the deciding factor and denied them a playoff berth. Cienega was 5-5 and is eager to get back to some November football. Coach Nemer Hassey has ample experience on both sides of the ball. With its depth a factor, good health will be critical. Wide out-defensive back Terrance Johnson head-

lines the returnees. Senior quarterback Adriell Alvarado looks to offer solid play again after passing for 1,811 yards, 16 TDs and only four interceptions. Offensive lineman Joe Tavizon is a top returnee. Johnson and two-way lineman Derek Sommers (64 tackles and four sacks) are the defensive leaders. Matt Aragon is one of the better punters around. He averaged 44 yards per punt last season and can help out at other positions.

Buena: The Colts will be led by co-head coaches Frank Valdez and Brice Bernbeck. Both worked on staff as assistants in recent years. Buena was 6-5 last year and got a week's worth of postseason where it bowed to eventual semifinalist Mesquite, 42-27. A solid group of returning players gives them a shot at postseason again. Receiver Deonte Williams hauled in 1,103 yards worth of passes last year. Linebackers Seth Doser contributed with 93 tackles and Ryan Closwer added 70 tackles. Junior defensive back Jacob Valdez was busy in the secondary with 97 tackles.

Sahuaro: The Cougars sported the best overall record in the section among tri-champs Cienega and Buena. They finished 8-3. Like Buena, they fell in the first round of the playoffs to Campo Verde, 34-21. The Cougars have a good running game and a versatile performer in Derik Hall to lead that facet. Hall rushed for 792 yards and 12 TDs and was a threat receiving with 21 catches for 274 yards. Hall doesn't rest as he plays linebacker and returns as the top tackler. Omar Lloyd, a two-way player, showed playmaking ability on defense with three interceptions and three fumble recoveries.

Sunnyside: The Blue Devils have the wherewithal on paper to challenge the top three teams in the section from last year. They were 5-5 and have nearly half their offensive starters back and two-thirds of their defense. Defensive leaders are linebackers Ruben Figueroa (61 tackles, 5 sacks) and Aaron Sanders (93 tackles). The secondary boasts Mike Grijalva (5 interceptions) and Anthony Peralta (95 tackles). Peralta adds to the offense as a capable runner and receiver and could be in for a bigger role on offense. Quarterback Bobby Rodriguez churned out 1,041 yards rushing and passing last year as a sophomore. Coach Glenn Posey wants to see more consistent performances from his lineman.

Nogales: The Apaches moved up to D-II last year and pulled off a 4-6 record after a semifinal finish in D-III in 2012. They go to battle with new head coach Kevin Kuhm. Kuhm has a standout athlete in junior Coy Colgate, getting ready for his third varsity season. Colgate rushed for 635



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Football Division II Preview

yards and 12 TDs last year and led the team in tackles (112) plus three sacks. Kuhm plans on building the offense and defense around the team's greatest asset -- speed. Alan Ortega is the leading returning receiver with 32 catches for 551 yards. Ben Jaiman checked in with 585 yards on the ground and six TDs teaming with Colgate. Michael Hernandez and Francisco Sandoval are linemen to watch. Depth will be an issue if some of the younger varsity players don't develop quickly.

Desert View: The Jaguars return three offensive starters and two on defense from last year's 2-8 squad. That's not comforting for new coach Robert Bonillas, but Desert View will move forward. Returning players are defensive back Michael Meza, lineman Israel Colosio, defensive back Mark Garcia, linebacker Gabriel Villa and Arturo Cruz.

SECTION III

Centennial: The Coyotes like to run opponents right out of games and expect more of the same this year with a team physically strong and fast. Dedrick Young pounded away last year for 1,696 yards and 17 TDs. Quentin Gomez should attract attention as well after gaining 721 yards and scoring 6 times. Defensively the line should be excellent led by Micah Naverette, who was in on 52 tackles and a ridiculous 17 sacks. Another stopper up front is Brett Tonz (6.5 sacks). Coach Richard Taylor's main concern is how a mostly new offensive line will perform. Play in the trenches hasn't been much of a problem in the past. The Coyotes are the team to beat in the section after producing another double-digit win season (10-2 in 2013). That's 11 years in a row with 10 wins or more.

Liberty: The Lions have plenty of firepower and experience to make Centennial work for another section title. Liberty was 8-4 last year losing in the quarters to eventual champ Salpointe. Their talent begins with quarterback Tyler Wyatt. Wyatt, who's future in athletics likely is in baseball, passed for 2,745 yards and 26 TDs. He rushed for 653 yards and 15 TDs. Cutting his interceptions (19) in half would likely make the offense more potent. There are plenty of seasoned targets available -- in Alex Hunter, Bryce Utter and Kory Wilson. They combined for 53 reception, 871 yards and 9 TDs. Defense is stout with seven starters returning, led by lineman Aaron Blackwell, cornerback Wilson and linebackers Troy Bethsold and Chase Hulbert.

Deer Valley: The Skyhawks finished behind Centennial and Liberty in the section last year, but made the playoffs and lasted longer with a 9-4 mark. Their upset of Centennial

in the quarters earned them a semifinal berth opposite Salpointe where the season ended abruptly. Deer Valley has rebuilding to do on offense, primarily the skill positions. The defense should be solid and make it a contender in the section and division. A defensive line of Brian Calhoun (73 tackles, 13.5 sacks), Marquette Mitchell (86 tackles and 8 sacks) and Marlon Roberts (62 tackles, 9.5 sacks) is formidable. Josh Haldiman anchors the linebacking corps and Steven Fisher (78 tackles and two picks) the secondary.

Apollo: The Hawks are shorter on experience than the aforementioned teams and that may make catching up with the section elite difficult. Coach Zack Threadgill and the Hawks won't let that stop their pursuit of more victories and the main goal of a playoff berth. Four starters are back on offense and those are skill positions. Mohammed Mohammed, who toiled at receiver is likely making the move to quarterback. Steffon Canaday got some work at running back and was an effective receiver, averaging 15 yards per catch. The top receiver returning is Jesse Dezarn (33 receptions for 458 yards). Linebacker John Garcia (63 tackles), defensive end Carson Taylor (29 tackles, 6 sacks) and linebacker Canaday (38 tackles) lead what hopes to be an improved defense.

Ironwood: The Eagles posted a 2-8 record last year playing with lots of juniors and sophomores. A baptism by fire for some for sure. Their skill positions are sound led by running back Jett Robertson (1,173 yards, 10 TDs), receivers Ethan Ebersson (25-297, 6 TDs) and Jourdain Dong (22-227, 2 TDs) and quarterback Justin Cameron. Cameron shared time with Robertson. The mainstay up front is tackle Christian Godina. Ironwood coach Ian Curtis says his team must overcome its lack of size on the lines. Speed at the skill positions and a good group of linebackers are the strengths. Ironwood lost all four of its non-section games -- all to opponents .500 or better for the season and two that made the playoffs. Eight of the Eagles 2013 foes (the same for this year) were .500 or better.

Willow Canyon: The Wildcats managed one win last year (1-9). As consolation that victory kept them from finishing last in the section. Willow Canyon will look to senior captain Alex Gallaspy, receiver and strong safety, to generate plays on both sides of the ball. Gallaspy rushed for 231 yards and caught 20 passes for 222 yards. He struck paydirt four times all told. The defense has more experience and productivity heading in to the season. In the secondary Gallaspy had 47 tackles. Free safety Isac Boor was in on 38 tackles and grabbed two interceptions. Linebackers Colby Fornerette (68 tackles) and Josh Dutton (41

SOLLINGER'S **A2** PREPS REPORT POWERED BY AIA365.COM FOOTBALL FOOTBALL FOOTBALL

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(From L to R) Chaparral's Keenan Walker (photo by Mark Jones/maxpreps.com), Deer Valley's Brian Calhoun (photo by Chris Hook/maxpreps.com) and Centennial's Dedrick Young (photo by Duane Matsen/maxpreps.com)

tackles) and defensive back Jared Stangler (50 tackles) were steady.

Raymond Kellis: The Jaguars welcome new coach Shawn Copeland. Raymond Kellis was last in the section and 2-8 overall. It won't be easy navigating a substantial turnaround this season. Copeland has two starters back on offense and three on defense. The junior varsity posted a 3-6 record last year so not a lot of winning experience. Top offensive returnee is wide receiver Austin Feaster (32 catches, 367 yards). The defense is led by free safety Jacob Kessler, who amassed 65 tackles and picked off four passes.

SECTION IV

Cibola: The Raiders have managed to rule over this section the past several years and earn the one playoff berth allotted. Coach Lucky Arviso may get his toughest battle yet for section supremacy from Lake Havasu and Gila Ridge, who challenged last year. Cibola returns four starters on offense and three on defense. The Raiders biggest needs are at quarterback and all its starting line-backers, who graduated. Two talented skill players are as good as any in the section -- running back Abe Thompson and receiver Michael DeCorse-Hall. Thompson rushed for 987 yards and 17 TDs and hauled in 17 passes for 291 yards from the coach's son last year. DeCorse-Hall had 39

catches for 786 yards and 7 TDs. The best returnee on defense is safety Isaiah Brown, who had 62 tackles and three interceptions. The section has shrunk to five teams from six since San Luis no longer fields a football program. Cibola's replacement foe is Trevor Browne.

Lake Havasu: The Knights won't win the section until they find a way to beat Cibola. The teams have met as region/section opponents the last five years and Cibola is 5-1 in those meetings. Lake Havasu returns 19 lettermen and veteran coach Karl Thompson has six starters back on each side of the ball. Guys that carry and throw the ball for decent yardage are among them -- quarterback Grady Atkins (1,489 yards, 13 TDs and six picks) and running back Austin Stefick, who was 44 yards shy of 1,000 last year and scored 11 TDs. Thompson's focus is the trenches on both sides of the ball where experience and expertise are in short supply as camp opens. Lake Havasu subs D-III Kingman for San Luis on its schedule.

Gila Ridge: The Hawks are aching for a breakthrough in beating their biggest rival Cibola and in securing a playoff berth. Gila Ridge opened in 2007 and is set for its sixth varsity football season. This year's seniors are seeing a fifth varsity coach in four years. The newest mentor is Tyler Kosel, who comes from North Dakota. Kosel's installing the spread and like the number of coaches in recent years, it's also another new offense for players. Gila Ridge oper-



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ated mostly out of the wing-T last year. Top returning player is quarterback Brandon Kehl. Gila Ridge, 3-7 in 2013, nearly upended Cibola last year, dropping a heart-breaker the ninth week of the season, 16-14. Gila Ridge is 1-4 in games between the schools, winning only in 2009, 3-0. Gila Ridge is subbing D-III Mohave for San Luis in its season opener.

Yuma: The Criminals posted a 4-6 record for fifth-year coach Curt Weber, but none of those triumphs were against Cibola, Havasu or Gila Ridge in section play. Yuma has 15 lettermen in camp and close to half its starters back. Top players among the returnees are running back Chris Gonzalez (634 yards, 6 TDs), quarterback Riley McAdam and linebacker Octavio Rios. Rios was busy with 54 tackles. There is experience up front as well, though not as much with offensive tackle Alonso Soto and guard Michael Dorion. Yuma takes on D-IV Parker in the game that replaces San Luis on its schedule.

Kofa: The Kings picked up their only section win against San Luis on the way to a 2-8 finish. They also hired a new coach in the offseason, taking on Ben Franz, who hails from South Dakota. Kofa is the only team in the section subbing out a D-I opponent for San Luis. Kofa's debut under Franz will be against North High.

SECTION V

Salpointe: The Lancers are likely to have some dropoff offensively in attempting a title defense, but the defense with five returnees and others ready to fill in sounds as though it will be another tough nut to crack. Salpointe has 40 lettermen back - at least twice that of everyone in the section except Ironwood Ridge. The Lancers have become a perennial D-II threat with the likes of Centennial and Chaparral with only three losses in the last three years to Arizona schools (Notre Dame Prep, Centennial and Chaparral). With a 14-game winning streak in tow, everyone on the schedule will be out to give the Lancers their best shot. The defense features linebacker Taylor Powell and Jaylyn Juan as the top returnees.

Marana Mountain View: Like Salpointe, the Mountain Lions will be strong on the defensive side. Five starters return scattered about the line, linebackers and secondary. Leading the group are linebackers JP Ramirez (47 tackles, 2 interceptions), linebacker Sam Ross, defensive end Enrique Sparkman and safeties Justice Summerset and Justin Guana. The team is blessed overall with speed but offensive productivity is the question mark facing Clarence McRae's team. The Mountain Lions added Demetrius

Flannigan, a receiver-defensive back, recently via transfer from Tucson High. A tough non-section slate of Mesquite, Desert Vista, Poston Butte and rival Marana precedes section battles.

Tucson: The Badgers reeled off a third consecutive seven-win season, two of which resulted in playoff berths, including last year. Coach Justin Argraves (21-11 in three seasons), fields a good set of skill players. Quarterback and offensive line play are going to need time to develop. Picking up a win over Ironwood Ridge last year was huge, but may be tougher this season with a more mature Ironwood Ridge. Tucson struggled with Mountain View, and of course, Salpointe.

Ironwood Ridge: The Nighthawks acquitted themselves well as a defending state champ that lost 90 percent of its starters and played quite a few sophomores. Matt Johnson's 6-5 team made the playoffs even though it was a one-game stay. They have 30 lettermen in camp and six starters back on both sides of the ball. Senior linebacker Austin Goddard (71 tackles, 4.5 sacks) and junior defensive back Jared McKemy had good years in 2013. Junior running back Cole McLafferty rang up 669 yards rushing and 7 TDs as team's second-leading rusher. Junior tight end Matt Solverson was very productive with 34 catches for 535 yards. Linemen Chase Laurita and Kristian Becerra are solid on offense and could serve double duty. The kicking chores settle in the capable hands of Nathan Farmer -- both punting and place-kicking.

Vista Grande: The Spartans tallied a 3-7 mark in coach Tracy Stuart's first season. They won once in the section beating Rincon and triumphed over Central and rival Casa Grande in non-section games. Vista Grande has huge hill to climb to do to battle competitively with Salpointe, Mountain View, Ironwood Ridge and Tucson. The Spartans lost those four games last year by an average margin of 45-3. Top players are Keith Marson and Nate Agmata.

Rincon: The Rangers finished 0-10 last year and sport a new coach in Lucius Miller. Rincon has one winning season in the last eight years and has dropped its last 20 games in a row.

SECTION VI

Mesquite: The Wildcats managed a big season in veteran coach Jim Jones' first year on the job. They took home a section title and final-four appearance in to go with an 11-2 record after dropping from D-I to D-II. Jones added two veteran head coaches to his staff in the spring with Tom



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Joseph (East Valley stops at Marcos de Niza, Mesa Mtn. View and Corona del Sol) and Roy Lopez, an assistant under Joseph at Marcos and most recently head coach at Marcos de Niza. This year's team will need to grow and improve quickly to match last year. Three starters are back on each side of the ball, none with large roles on offense and mostly limited opportunities. Jones likes the size overall quickness and strength of the squad. Players looking to fill big shoes of graduates on offense are Mike Premraj at running back and Colton Gonzales at receiver. Linebacker Zach Lamatrice (28 tackles, 5.5 sacks) had a solid year on defense. The Wildcats need to be up to speed when section play begins in October in what should be a hotly-contested battle for the top spot.

Marcos de Niza: The Padres couldn't repeat their regular-season victory vs. Chaparral in the quarterfinals and settled for a 7-5 finish. Assistant Sean Morin, who was interim coach in the postseason, now is the coach and has much to work with in rallying the Padres. More than half the starters on both sides of the ball return. The defense has its leader in linebacker Andrew Rodriguez (147 tackles, 3 sacks) plus steady linebacker mate Jacob Hernandez (136 tackles). Spearheading the secondary is Byron Murphy (60 tackles, 3 interceptions). Luke Nguyen and Malique Sharp should serve the offensive backfield well. Nguyen had a nearly even split of touches (79) rushing and receiving with 764 yards and 8 TDs.

Campo Verde: The Coyotes have good numbers, but need to retool quite a few positions to approach last year's successful 9-3 season under coach Max Ragsdale. Campo Verde nearly turned around an ugly loss to Mesquite on the final night of the regular season two weeks later in the quarters. The defense returns some very good frontliners. The biggest -- literally -- is defensive tackle Finton Connolly (6-3, 280). Connolly was good for 90 tackles and 5 sacks. In the next wave is middle linebacker Marcus Vaivao (90 tackles). The bulk of last year's skill position standouts graduated so that leaves it to players like running back Zach Wheeler (376 yards, 2 TDs) and receiver-defensive back Erik Hildebrandt to step up. Hildebrandt had 68 tackles and three picks in the Coyotes' secondary and played a backup role on offense. Two veteran offensive linemen lead that unit -- DJ Kauer and Colton Johns.

Poston Butte: The Broncos have a new coach, not your ordinary one, either. The coach that began the program -- Mike De La Torre -- has moved on to become principal at section-rival Campo Verde. That move made way for long-time Blue Ridge coach Paul Moro to head south and try his

hand in D-II. Moro is the second-winningest coach of all-time in state history behind Vern Friedli. Moro has a stalwart running back in Brandon Hatfield (1,146 yards rushing, 322 yards receiving and 19 total TDs) and a prolific defender in linebacker Chris Musselman (117 tackles). Two good pieces at the outset, but it takes much more. Russell Corriveau played well at quarterback (1,272 yards and nine TDs) for the 3-7 Broncos. Building the type of lines Moro is used to in his tenure will be primary task and key to whether or not the Broncos can contend in the upcoming weeks.

Westwood: The Warriors enter year three with coach Spencer Stowers, who saw more success from his squad at the D-II level than at D-I. Westwood was 6-4 last year and grabbed a late win over Poston Butte for its first winning season since 2007. That marked a five-win improvement over the first season-- 1-9 in 2012 in D-I.

SECTION VII

Chaparral: The Firebirds reached the D-II (5A-II) title game for the fifth time in six years in 2013. A late departure by Dave Huffine as coach in the spring led to defensive coordinator Conrad Hamilton getting the nod as his replacement. Hamilton was head coach for a year at North Canyon in 2011 and fashioned a 6-5 campaign from the Rattlers. Chaparral returns quarterback Sean Paul Brophy, who with a talented corps of receivers, passed for 2,167 yards and 18 TDs. Brophy will be targeting mostly a new set of receivers with the top three all graduated. Running back also will feature players who have big shoes to fill after a couple senior backs completed their careers. The Firebirds have a standout offensive lineman in Keenan Walker to anchor the line. The defense has leaders in line-man-linebacker Brandon Jamison (48 tackles, 5.5 sacks), defensive back Kurt Shughart (58 tackles, 4 picks) and linebacker Robbie Kleifield (93 tackles).

Notre Dame Prep: The Saints return a small senior class in trying to bust the playoff barrier under third-year coach Gary Gregory. The Saints are 11-10 over the last two years, 6-5 in 2013. There are a smattering of players across both sides of the ball that turned in numerically good seasons. Senior running back Connor Graham rushed for 787 yards and 13 TDs and receiver Alex Manov had 21 catches for 316 yards, 4 TDs. Linebacker Brendan White and cornerback Scooter Bankofier are back on defense. A weapon if the Saints fall short in the red zone or beyond is kicker Grayson Naquin, one of the elite at his position in the state. Naquin made 5-of-7 field goals last year and connected on a 51-yarder.

Paradise Valley: The Trojans saw longtime coach Donnie Yantis exit for a shot at college head coaching at Arizona Christian. Yantis' departure led to the hiring of Greg Davis, who piloted section rival Cactus Shadows the past three years. Davis likes to utilize the spread, but rather than a pass-happy brand will opt for more running plays. He has skill-position veterans in senior quarterback Daniel Bridge-Gadd (2,410 yards passing, 27 TDs). Junior Jacob Brown was an integral part of the receiving corps and is set up to be the top target in 2014. Brown had 39 receptions for 439 yards and 4 TDs. An accomplished back returns as well, Max Vankempen (972 yards, 7 TDs). In all seven offensive starters return, a few less on defense from a 5-5 squad. Top defender is outside linebacker Zach Compestine.

Cactus Shadows: The Falcons will be guided by Mike Hudnutt after his hiring to replace Greg Davis. They posted a 6-4 record, but like Notre Dame, Arcadia and Paradise Valley couldn't crack the playoffs along with section champ Chaparral. The ground game figures to be in good hands with senior Antonio Marchica. Marchica rushed for 859 yards and 9 TDs. Nick Bobelick and Braxton Gallion, capable receivers with 23 and 22 catches last year, respec-

tively, should reprise those roles. Defensive lineman Aaron Liermann (49 tackles, 4 sacks) leads the defense.

Arcadia: The Titans have more experience back on defense from a 5-5 season. Linebacker Dylan Turelli is the mainstay of the unit with 44 tackles and three interceptions. Defensive lineman Manny Elizaldo had 30 tackles and 4.5 sacks. Eight starters – full or part-time – give third-year coach Lenny Abt good numbers. Abt's concern is an offensive line likely to feature all underclassmen. One with size and experience is junior tackle Riley Kaye (6-3, 280). Skill position returnees include quarterback Jake Sheedy, running back AJ Bates (537 yards rushing and receiving) and receiver Devon Ferguson (43 catches for 533 yards).





The 2014 Sollenberger Classic

By Jose Garcia, aia365.com

The profile of the Sollenberger Classic presented by Station Casinos and one of this year's participants continues to grow nationally.

Last year, the Sollenberger Classic, the 9th annual two-day football event that honors the late Arizona high school sports historian Barry Sollenberger, was televised nationally for the first time. What better way to celebrate the growth of the Classic this year than by watching the nation's No. 1 team play one of Phoenix's storied programs, Brophy.

It's the first time that a preseason No. 1, the ranking USA TODAY gave Nevada Bishop Gorman, will play in the Classic. The No. 1 ranking also is a first for Bishop Gorman.

The Las Vegas school will host the Classic for the second consecutive year at its college-like stadium. Bishop Gorman will play Brophy Aug. 22, and Mountain Pointe and Reed will square off the following day.

Arizona's record against Nevada's teams is 7-2 in the Classic. Last year, Bishop Gorman was also highly touted heading into the Classic, but Mountain Pointe won 28-21, helping propel the team to a memorable national top-10 undefeated season. Some off the field issues hampered Bishop Gorman before last year's game, but so far this year the team is just focused is on its next Classic opponent.

"Football is a funny game," said Bishop Gorman coach Tony Sanchez, who's won a state title every year since taking over Bishop Gorman in 2009. "I know it's a cliché, but it is really a one game at a time deal."

Sanchez's 2014 team is explosive on each side of the ball and carries a couple of high-profile athletes with big-time ties.

Alize Jones is the top-rated tight end in the nation. Four star recruit receiver Cordell Broadus' father is Snoop Dogg.

Notre Dame-bound safety Nicco Fertitta's dad is the UFC CEO. Muhammad Ali is the grandfather of

the fastest player on the team, running back Biaggio Ali Walsh.

But as Bishop Gorman found out last year, Arizona teams can also float like a butterfly and sting like a bee. Like Mountain Pointe, the odds of pulling off a Las Vegas knockout also are against Brophy.

The Phoenix school is coming off a season in which it suffered a handful of injuries.

"Last year we had more injuries than any team I've been around at any level," said Brophy coach Scooter Moolander, a former pro quarterback. "We had the worst luck."

Despite the injuries and a losing regular season record, Brophy's strength of schedule helped it reach the playoffs, as its young players matured while playing unexpected minutes.

One of those players who stepped in was junior quarterback/athlete Cade Knox, a junior with a better grasp of the team's west coast offense. Defensive end Connor Murphy (6-7, 240), a Stanford and Arizona State recruit, also was injured but is ready to go and so is Ryan Velez, who rushed for 1,189 yards last year.

Mountain Pointe will dress 14 new starters, but the team is reloading this season. A couple of the well-known commodities, Division I recruits Nick Carman and defensive tackle Bruce Hester, are in the trenches.

Another D-I recruit, speedster Paul Lucas, will line up in various spots, including running back, where there's depth. Coach Ernie Howren helped turn Reed into the dominant program in northern Nevada.

The program made its third ever trip to a state final last year and has had only two losing seasons since Howren was named head coach in 2001.

Reed High's linemen match up well against Mountain Pointe's big boys.

"It (Reed) will be one of the biggest teams we'll face this year," Mountain Pointe coach Norris Vaughan said.

By Don Ketchum, aia365.com

It didn't take long for football players from Scottsdale Saguaro to start chomping at the bit to get going again after capturing the Division III state championship in 2013.

"After about four days of being off, they started knocking down the door of the weight room," said coach Jason Mohns.

Mohns said about 80 players, current freshmen through juniors, participated in spring ball and quite a few played in seven-on-seven passing drills during the summer at various locations, including Arizona State.

Mohns and his staff are excited about the quality displayed by those players, as well as depth.

It's clear why the Sabercats are listed No. 1 by Barry Sollenbeger's Preseason Magazine with a strong chance to earn another title trophy in 2014.

The primary challengers will be state runner-up Queen Creek, Gilbert Williams Field, Goodyear Desert Edge, Gilbert Higley, Tucson Sabino, Peoria and Glendale Cactus.

"The great thing is that many of our guys are battling for jobs, and that's what you want," Mohns said.

Saguaro lost to neighborhood rival Scottsdale Chaparral (Division II) to begin last season, but then ran off 13 straight wins, including the 47-25 win over 2012 champion Queen Creek in the title game at the University of Arizona Stadium in Tucson. Saguaro now has seven state football titles.

"We've got a good corps of players coming back and a lot of them also are good leaders," Mohns said.

One player who won't be coming back, whose shoes will be difficult to fill, is quarterback Luke Rubenzer, who set season and career records for touchdown passes and was prolific running the ball. Rubenzer will be a freshman at the University of California-Berkeley this fall.

The man who served as Rubenzer's primary backup last year was Kare (pronounced Car-ay) Lyles. The 6-foot-1, 210-pound junior-to-be already is receiving a lot of attention from college recruiters.

Mohns calls him an athletic pocket passer.

"He's got a strong arm and he's athletic. He's not going to run for 3,000 or so yards like Luke did, but he is capable of hurting you with his feet.

"He certainly has a lot of potential, but he hasn't done anything in a game yet."

Somebody who has done things in games is senior-to-be Christian Kirk. He is out of the mold of former Saguaro star D.J. Foster, now at Arizona State.

"We want him to touch the football," Mohns said.

This is why:

In the state championship game, Kirk rushed 18 times for 156 yards and a pair of touchdowns, and caught five passes for 101 yards and two more scores.

Kirk has received offers from many of the major football powers across the country.

"He sets a good example. As good as he is on the field, he might be even better off it," Mohns said.

Kirk lined up as a wideout about 60 percent of the time and in the backfield about 40 percent, Mohns said, "but this year, it could be flipped or be 50-50. We don't want opponents to settle in on him being in only one place."

Kirk should have plenty of help from his teammates, which will include defensive back-wide receiver Byron Murphy.

And Mohns added to his arsenal with the transfer of senior all-purpose player Kam'ron Johnson from Tempe High.

Perhaps Kirk said it best himself after the win over Queen Creek, in regard to the 2014 season:

"We gotta come back and do this again," he said.

SOLLINGER'S PREPS REPORT POWERED BY AIA365.COM **Division III Preseason Rankings**

By Don Ketchum, aia365.com

No. 1 **SCOTTSDALE SAGUARO**. How do you figure out whether the Sabercats are capable of winning another championship? Start with 45, yes, 45, returning lettermen. All-purpose player Christian Kirk has at least 37 Division I scholarship offers. Saguaro might not be as talented as Division I brothers Phoenix Mountain Pointe and Chandler Hamilton or Division II neighbor Scottsdale Chaparral, but it is pretty darn close.

No. 2 **QUEEN CREEK**. The Bulldogs won it all in 2012 and were runners-up to Saguaro a year ago. With nearly as many returnees (35) as Saguaro, there's no reason to discount their chances of reaching the big game again. Having one of the best running backs in the state – Weston Barlow – definitely is a plus.

No. 3 **GILBERT WILLIAMS FIELD**. Steve Campbell doesn't have a 68-13 record in seven seasons as the Black Hawks' head coach by chance. He knows how to put together a solid team. He has another with a defense that swarms to the ball. The inexperienced offense will need to grow up in a hurry. The team has 35 players back from its team that was the No. 1 seed entering last year's tournament.

No. 4 **GOODYEAR DESERT EDGE**. Gone are star receiver Elijah Marks, linebacker Ismael Murphy-Richardson and quarterback Anthony Hernandez, but coach Rich Wellbrock has a good stash of firepower returning with promising sophomores Tehran Thomas at quarterback and Roshaun Johnson at running back. If a few young receivers step up, all should be OK.

No. 5 **GILBERT HIGLEY**. Coach Eddy Zubey says his team is going to throw deep and score fast. The defense faces more of a challenge – preventing opponents from doing the same. Zubey said the Knights "have the potential to be a very solid team and make some noise come playoff time."

No. 6 **ORO VALLEY CANYON DEL ORO**. The Dorados have been one of the most consistent programs in southern Arizona for quite some time, and this year's version should be able to make its mark. The team has



Saguaro celebrates their victory in the 2013 Division III state finals (photo by Mark Jones/maxpreps.com).

a combined 15 or so starters returning, but needs to develop depth quickly.

No. 7 **GLENDALE CACTUS**. With two wins, long-time Cobras coach Larry Fetkenhier will join the 300-victory club for his career, but it is playoff wins and maybe even a state-title triumph that he covets more. Cactus has good experience on offense, particularly up front, but defense is another story.

No. 8 **PEORIA**. Former Peoria quarterback Will Babb enters his third season leading the Panthers' program. The team always has been strong offensively, and this year appears to be no different. Babb needs a few leaders, and one of them should be quarterback Anthony Guevara, who had six starts last season.

No. 9 **TUCSON SABINO**. The steady Jay Campos returns for another year guiding the Sabino ship. The Sabercats have good strength and speed, but have question marks in the offensive line. If Campos can get improvement in that area, the team should be able to make a playoff run.

NO. 10 **SURPRISE SHADOW RIDGE**. The team had a strong playoff run in 2013, finishing 9-3. But coach Rico Tipton departed and Ray Karvis leads the team now. The Stallions look strong in the skill positions and have decent depth. Developing an offensive line will be among the team's most important story lines.

SULLIVAN'S PREPS REPORT POWERED BY **AIA365.COM** FOOTBALL FOOTBALL FOOTBALL

Football Division III Preview

By Don Ketchum, aia365.com

SECTION I

Barry Goldwater: "Don't sleep on Goldwater." That's the word from second-year coach Rich Metcalf. The Bulldogs return nine starters on offense, led by QB Kooper Ray, TE Danny Reyes and RB Ronnie Reed. LB Zeke Palomares is one of the defensive leaders.

Cactus: In a nutshell, coach Larry Fetkenhier will mainly run the ball, keep defenses honest with passing, have big offensive linemen and a hard-hitting defense. The top players are QB Preston Guerra, WR Uriah Williams, LB Bryan Ramirez, DB Colton Whitmire and OL Alex Williamson. Others to watch are RB Austin Marshall, RB Jaylon James, RB Chad Jennings, LB Matt Ledesma, OL Brandon Lewis, OL Zack Kennedy, OL Kelvyn Martin and WR Xavier Villarreal.

Greenway: Watch out for the Demons' offensive line. It is ready to pancake some people. Coach K.J. Anthony likes the size of these men up front – Gabriel LaGrange (6-4, 260), Jacob Brekken (6-6, 285) and Ian Fox (6-3, 265). The team expects to get improved production from LB/FB

Robby Deaver, TE/LB Josh Marquez and RB/CB Romeo Robertson.

Peoria: The Panthers might be as balanced as they have been in awhile. Coach Will Babb will count on LBs Frankie Leal (120 tackles, 16 for loss) and Donovan Yabo (81/9), RB Akeem Rutledge (800 yards, 16 TDs), QB Anthony Guevara (6 starts, 140-yard average, 10 TDs), OL Lucas Esparza and PK Kenneth Castellanos (6-7 FG, longest of 53).

Sunrise Mountain: Coach James Carter will rely heavily on an improved offensive line, but needs to shore up some of his skill positions. The Mustangs' top players are S Tristin Decker, QB/WR/LB Garrett Weisinger, LB Matt Buckhannon, O-linemen Jacob Leonard and Mike Bralish (both two-year starters), and sophomore QB Chase Cord, who started five games as a freshman and threw for 1,300 yards.

SECTION II

Cholla: It will be one step at a time for first-year coach Virgil Henderson and his team. The Chargers were winless a year ago, but give the returning players credit – they are out to make something of themselves. The top players are OL/DL Dandre Yancey, OL/DL Jerome Doss, RB/DB Armando Vasquez and RB/DB Jamie Gallegos.

Douglas: New coach Riki Valdez takes over a young team, but one that has potential. Valdez considers Blake Rose to be one of the best QBs in southern Arizona. The defense will be led by FS Aaron Maytapene.

Empire: In its second year in Division III, coach W.T. Jeffries' team has good skill players, but needs a strong offensive line to allow them to flourish. The team might be able to create problems for opponents with return men Ethan Eagerton and Isaiah Martin. Other key players are QB Lorenzo Sanchez, RB/LB Mike Shalvay, OL/DL Earl Hastings, RB/OLB K.C. Finn and WR/DB Tommy Letarte.

Sabino: Clearly the class of the section and one of the best in the division. Coach Jay Campos' Sabercats will have good speed but need to strengthen their play up front. Campos has an outstanding QB in Emilio Araiza (2,550 yards, 36 TDs, only 6 INTs). Leading tackler Tyler Fellner is back at LB, and sacks leader Marcus Edwards is back on the prowl from his DL spot.

SECTION III

Apache Junction: The slate is clean for the first-year coach Vance Miller and the Prospectors. Miller says involvement in the program has increased 25 percent over 2013. Start with Adam Abbatacola, referred to by Miller as





Higley's quarterback Tyler Bloom in certainly a player to watch in 2014 (photo by paynterpics.com).

“the best left-handed quarterback in the state.” Next is RB Riley Przybyszewski, called “Mack Truck.” At 6-9 and 330 pounds, OL Justin Crespo is as big as Superstition Mountain himself. MLB Cody Morgan led the team in tackles as a junior. Patrick Benavidez is solid as a SS/KR, and Miller says NG Frank Aiello “is unstoppable, fast and furious.”

Higley: This is a tough section, but coach Eddy Zubey’s Knights might find a way to reach the playoffs. Zubey says QB Tyler Bloom is being looked at by at least five Division I schools. WR Trent Gilbert also is on colleges’ radar. WR/DB Bayley Cook should play a major role along with LB/WR James Garcia.

Queen Creek: It’s no fluke that the Bulldogs have entered the state title picture and will remain there for a long time. Depth at most positions will allow competition in the pre-season, which will be to coach Travis Schureman’s advantage throughout the season. Weston Barlow is one of the toughest RBs in the state, and the Bulldogs have quality in

QB/DE Boyce Dobbs, WR/DB Xavier McGuire, LB Nate Neville, DE Skylar Bollman, DL Keaton Pilimai and TE/DE Hunter Redd.

Saguaro: The football assembly line is moving along nicely, and a second straight state title is well within reach for coach Jason Mohns and his Sabercats. The team features some of the top players anywhere in all-purpose players Christian Kirk and Kam’Ron Johnson (transfer from Tempe High), WR/DB Cameron Koutsalas, LB/TE John Sells, DT/OL Domonic Natoli, LB Skylar Seminara, OL Michael Weinstein and two-way lineman Kayden Lyles.

South Mountain: Coach Daryl Phillips continues with his challenge of rebuilding the school’s rich football tradition. He lists intelligence, quickness and youth as the team’s strengths and points to RB Antwaun Ware as one of the most productive players.

Williams Field: Coach Steve Campbell’s Black Hawks are expected to challenge for the section and state crowns with these noteworthy players: OL Cade Cote, WR Kenny Owens, OL/DL Jeff Maycock, LB Jaxxon Fagg, RB/DB Josh Page, LB Shane Fine, LB Garrett Rohde, CB Quinn Gardner, DL Cayden Dickie, DL Alex Bell and PK/P Blake Ruiz.

SECTION IV

Coconino: It will be a steep learning curve with first-year coach Jeremiah Smith implementing new schemes on both sides of the ball, but the Panthers are up for the task. Smith has the luxury of two QBs (Jess Kuehl and Cristo Tabares), a solid FB in Ray Crank, a good two-way player in OL/LB Cesar Andrade and CB Marcus Martinez-Baca.

Kingman: Greg Tonjes took over the Bulldogs’ program when David Ward resigned in mid-July, and the team only has seven seniors. But Tonjes says, “This team is incredibly excited to get rolling. Our goal is nothing short of the playoffs.” Tonjes will attempt to use a faster-paced offense. QB/LB Daniel Wiliford looks to be the team leader. WR/CB Tyler Tapia is a potential standout, as are OT/DT Abraham Rullas and WR/S Garret Stephens.

Mingus: Bob Young is back for another tour of duty as the Marauders’ coach, and appears to have a strong group to work with. Skill-position depth and linebackers are strengths, but the linemen need to step it up. Top players are RB Javin Hesel, LB Levi Collins, DB Herb Tiffany, OL Andre May, OL Cordell McKeever, OL Charles Novak, TE/LB Zack Simmons and TE/LB Trevor Galloway.

Mohave: Off-season improvement in strength and speed should help coach Rod Holmes’ team have a chance to



Sabino's Emilio Araiza guides the Sabercat offensive attack (photo by Mark Jones/maxpreps.com).

erase some of the clouds from a 1-9 finish in 2013. Holmes says his team has a lot of good senior leadership. Players looking to step up are QB Harry Stevenson, DE Malik Garrett, OG D.J. Dorantes, RB/LB Jason Urquiza, WR/CB Nick Smith, SS Xander Perry and TE Michael Prince.

Prescott: Coach Cody Collett has a handful of experienced players, but overall, the Badgers must grow up in a hurry. The team's top players are TE Elijah Smith and WR Skylor Clinton.

SECTION V

Canyon del Oro: Coach Dusty Peace figures to have a strong running game and will employ the Dorados' usual hard-hitting defense. The top players are OL Jared McElmell, LB Walker Padilla, WR Tommy Sawyer, OL Josh Cronk, LB Tristan Peterson and RB Max Smith.

Flowing Wells: Coach Mark Brunenkant has some young

players, but many of them are experienced. They will need it as they attempt to turn things around after finishing 1-9. The Caballeros' top players are RB/DB Dionte Flores, QB/DB/WR Julio Sandoval, WR/DB Cody Liddeke, LB/WR Fabian Felix, RB/LB Nick Mason, OL/LB Justin Hejl, OT/DT Michael Hall, WR/DB Tyler Steiner, WR/DE Richmond Zavalza and WR/DB Danny Contreras.

Marana: Coach Andy Litten gets directly to the point when assessing his team's chances in 2014. "I think we can be a top 10 team," he said, "but I don't think we deserve to be placed there until we start winning big games." Start with two-way lineman Christian Lopez, who is a three-year starter; and go with TE/DE Travis Howard and RB Bradley Gonzalez, who hopes to surpass the 1,000-yard barrier this season.

Maricopa: The departure of coach Cory Nenaber for Tempe Corona del Sol opened the door for Chris McDonald, and he wants to take advantage of it. "I like the way our team is responding so far to the new coaching staff," he said. "We have a core group of kids who have bought in this past off-season and we look to build upon last year." The team's top players are QB/DB Isiah Pedro, OL/LB Chad Cochran, DT/OL Kenny Ball, RB/DB Geovanni Walker and WR Elisha Donaldson.

SECTION VI

Alhambra: Frank Lutt has endured many ups and downs in his 20 seasons as the coach of the Lions, and he is hoping for an upward trend this fall. Lutt appears to have a solid wall forming in the trenches and will go from there. Top players are Zyair Joyce, who is moving from LB to SS; RB Emmanuel Sterling, RB Lakel Davis, OL Angel Hernandez, OL Mike Gutierrez and OL Giovanni Hernandez.

Moon Valley: Coach Sam Jacobs has a combined 17 returning starters, which should bode well for the Rockets. The JV team only lost one game in 2013 and should provide depth. "We feel like we are on the edge of turning the corner," Jacobs said. His top players are QB/DB Shannon Burton, WR Tim Adams, WR/DB Devin Knight, WR/DB Brett Voss, DB Nick Carlon, OL C.J. Lockwood and DL Davion Grey.

Tempe: Coach Brian Walker has good skill players and a solid offensive line, but not much depth and youth in other key positions. The transfer of all-purpose player Kam'Ron Johnson to Scottsdale Saguaro certainly doesn't help matters. Still, the Buffaloes have a big, strong QB in Emanuel Gant, two-way lineman Robbie Acosta, C Mario Salas-Cano, WR/DB Quntion Garrett, LB Daniel Taylor, DE Jordan Davis and LB Joey Savage.



Queen Creek's Weston Barlow (photo by Mark Jones/max-preps.com)

Thunderbird: According to coach Brent Wittenwyler, the Chiefs have "athleticism, talent and coachability, but we need a lot of young kids (including a QB) to become football players." Like Tempe, T-Bird had a key player transfer (WR Adam Turner, to Phoenix Pinnacle). Wittenwyler presses on with RB/DB/WR Kaleb Hofer, RB/WR Dominic King, TE/DE Marcus Boyd, RB/LB Zack Gomez and RB/WR/DB Frank Russo.

SECTION VII

Agua Fria: Coach Tony Cluff's Owls should have a stingy defense, but the offense needs to develop. Top players are DE Michael Peoples, LB Raider Diaz, C Eric Rojas, LB Josh Reinhart, QB Steven Medrano and RB Tristen Rainey.

Buckeye: Long-time coach Bobby Barnes moved out of state for family reasons, and another guy who has been around awhile, Kelley Moore, takes over. Moore has the knack for getting the most out of his players, often doing so against teams with more talent. But he has plenty of talent coming back – OL Jesus Ochoa, OL Yancey Vansodel, OL/LB Josh Kellman, QB Art Bojorquez and DB Keiontae Bell.

Desert Edge: Rich Wellbrock is a high-energy coach, and he wants his team to play the same way. The Scorpions



Veteran Cactus Head Coach Larry Fetkenheir (photo by paynterpics.com)

have been knocking on the door of a state title for the last few years and would like to enter this season. Wellbrock has 28 lettermen returning. Top players are OL/DL Sebastian Anderson, OL/DL Brage Cape, RB/DL Derek Edgin, LB Feliciano Murillo, RB/LB Alex Aguirre, DL Trevor Chaddock, OL/DL Hunter Jones and RB/LB Roshawn Johnson.

Shadow Ridge: After a 9-3 finish and a playoff spot, coach Rico Tipton bolted the program to join the staff at Chandler Hamilton, so former Tonopah Valley coach Ray Karvis stepped in. The team should be able to stay close to the top 10 most of the season with players such as WR/DB Kalen Buchanan, WR/CB Trey Campbell, QB/LB Trevor Mucci and LB/DE Kyle Doren.

Verrado: The Vipers had six losses in 2013 by a combined 28 points. "If we win some close games (in 2014), we might have a chance to do something special," said coach Derek Wahlstrom. He is relying on the fact that his team will show more maturity. The list of potential impact players includes QB Eric Ruiz, RB Ross Dietz, WR Nathan Roehl, WR Xavier James, OL Marco Anaya, OL Travis Smith, TE/FB Chris Slaughter, OL Blair Broady, LB/S Eric Cabello, DE Darby Neal, DB Logan Daoust, DL Cameron Stigsell and S Emilio Rodriguez.



Show Low's Quentin Clark is poised for a big 2014 gridiron campaign (photo by paynterpics.com).

By Don Ketchum, aia365.com

Picking a No. 1 team in Division IV is a difficult task for Barry Sollenberger's Preseason Magazine – quite a few teams are capable of holding down that spot.

But we are going to go with Show Low, with defending champion Lakeside Blue Ridge, Show Low's White Mountains rival, a close second. Show Low lost several players from that season's No. 1 seed, but has a lot of talented players returning.

Blue Ridge entered last year's tournament at the No. 4 seed and ended up taking the trophy home with a win over No. 6 River Valley. Blue Ridge defeated rival Show Low in the semifinals. All of those teams, along with Snowflake, Chandler Seton Catholic and perhaps Coolidge and Florence, have a chance to win it all this time around.

"They (Show Low) lost a big senior class, but don't let this fool you – they will be loaded," said Ron Tenney, coach of Snowflake, another White Mountains powerhouse.

Show Low coach Randy Ricedorff isn't going to disagree.

His program had success at the junior-varsity and freshman levels and will re-stock. He adds: "This will be one of the most physical and biggest teams that Show Low has had."

Show Low has 39 lettermen returning – but only two on offense and four on defense.

Four key players lead the way for the Cougars – center Logan Barton, wide receiver-free safety Quentin Clark, linebacker-tight end-fullback Willie Wyatt and cornerback-tight end-fullback Jarom Fawcett.

When Jake Belshe grew up nearby Eagar and later in St. Johns, his parents owned several businesses, including a Dairy Queen.

By the time Belshe graduated from St. Johns after three seasons at Round Valley and went on to play collegiately at UTEP, he was a strapping 6-foot-3 and 270 pounds. He figures he got plenty of nutritional assistance by eating some of the restaurant's famous desserts.

"The power of the Blizzard," Belshe said, laughing.

That helped Belshe survive many challenges in his career as a player and coach, but none is more formidable than what he faces in the fall of 2014.

As the new head coach at Blue Ridge, the 34-year-old Belshe will be following a coach who won 318 games and 13 state championships in 30 years – Paul Moro. Florence Poston Butte is Moro's new home and now Belshe will see if Blue Ridge's Yellowjackets can win another title.

Belshe, meanwhile, likes what he sees of his players – and indicates that the Yellowjackets are not about to back down from anyone.

"Of course, we will play anybody at any time," he said. "There are great coaches and players everywhere, but we will be ready.

"We like having high expectations. We have great kids and their work ethic is unbelievable."

Everybody is ready to go, from the players, to the administration to the boosters.

Blue Ridge allowed just 21 points in the playoffs, so the defense will be the focus point. Belshe said he was involved with multiple offenses while serving as an assistant in recent seasons at a school in El Paso, "so I will adapt my system to the kids that I have."

Belshe thinks he can relate to the players because of his younger age, but also will command respect as an authority figure.

"I can relate to kids a lot, you know, I know things about Instagram, Snapchat and Twitter," he said. "But I can also be like a father. I had some kids (previously) who had single parents or no parents. I had a very open relationship with them. We are going to be accountable."

The bonding aspect started with a few mini-camps and some 7-on-7 drills, and Belshe hopes that will carry over to fall camp.

Blue Ridge's top players will be quarterback Spencer Hall, slotback Nate Myles, tight end Adam Padilla and lineman Rosario Munoz.

SOLLINGER'S PREPS REPORT POWERED BY AIA365.COM

Division IV Preseason Rankings

By Don Ketchum, aia365.com

No. 1 **SHOW LOW**. Coach Randy Ricedorff probably doesn't have any superstars among his group, but the players work extremely well together as the Cougars have in the seven years under his watch. Ricedorff is quick to give credit to his assistants – "We have a great staff committed to play for a championship." As always, the true measuring stick will be games against rival Lakeside Blue Ridge and Snowflake.

No. 2 **LAKESIDE BLUE RIDGE**. Give Jake Belshe credit. He isn't afraid to follow in the footsteps of an Arizona coaching legend – Paul Moro. Belshe also can draw on the knowledge of his former high school coaches – Tim Slade (Round Valley) and Mike Morgan (St. Johns), as well as his college coach at UTEP, Mike Price. The Yellowjackets always seem to find a way to win.

No. 3 **CHANDLER SETON CATHOLIC**. It wouldn't be a surprise to see coach Rex Bowser's Sentinels in the title game – after all, they defeated Blue Ridge for the crown in 2012. Bowser likes his receivers, running backs and secondary, but he needs to develop a quarterback and a line to block for him.

No. 4 **SNOWFLAKE**. Could this be the year that the Lobos upstage Show Low and Blue Ridge? Veteran coach Ron Tenney just might have the people to do it. This should be one of the most unified groups that Tenney has had, and they are tough in the trenches. The team needs a reliable quarterback and a few sure-handed passing targets.

No. 5 **RIVER VALLEY**. Coach Terry Staggs stepped down in May to be closer to family out of state after leading the team to the title game. Mark Ruckle and Paul Duchaineau will share the coaching duties, and the cupboard should not be bare, with the return of many of the players who helped put the team on the map.

No. 6 **GOODYEAR ESTRELLA FOOTHILLS**. Coach Lamar Early appears to have good size up front and one of the state's top young running backs in Joe Logan, who emerged as a major force in 2013 as a sophomore. The



The Yellowjackets of Blue Ridge captured the 2013 AIA Division IV trophy, thanks to a hard-fought 17-7 win over River Valley (photo by Duane Matsen/maxpreps.com).

trick for Early will be to get a consistent effort on a weekly basis.

No. 7 **COOLIDGE**. The Bears have 27 players who were underclassmen last season from a team that finished 10-2, so that should be a good starting point for coach Cayle Ferguson. Coolidge was the No. 5 seed in the state tournament.

No. 8 **WINSLOW**. The Bulldogs don't always have a lot of size, but few teams can match them for toughness. They finished a respectable 8-4 last season under coach B.J. Little and have a core of 17 players returning, many of whom will be sophomores. Winslow was the No. 7 seed last season.

No. 9 **SAHUARITA**. Eight offensive starters and six defensive starters are back for coach David Rodriguez. The Mustangs likely will have to go through Safford in order to set themselves up for a playoff run. The chances of making that happen will get better if they can discover some depth up front.

No. 10 **FOUNTAIN HILLS**. Coach Jim Fairfield has put in a lot of hard work in his 22 years leading the program, and perhaps this will be the year when his athletes can raise their play to another level. Putting together a consistent defense will be one of the keys for Fairfield and his staff.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL PREPS REPORT POWERED BY IAIA

A2 Football Division IV Preview

By Don Ketchum, aia365.com

SECTION I

Monument Valley: Coach Bryan Begay has built a good program on the Navajo reservation in northeast Arizona, but he needs more consistency over the course of the entire season. The Mustangs lost two key players – QB Redmond Delmar to graduation and leading tackler/MLB Trevon Holiday as a transfer to Monument Valley, Utah. The Mustangs will be young and need to develop their offense. Begay’s top players are QB Joshua Young, RB Jerron Bitloy, WR Xavier Hunt, DT-OG Arick Young (three-year starter) and NT Rivers Jones.

Page: Coach Jeff Wheatley’s Sand Devils have a good nucleus of 25 returning lettermen. They run the ball well, but could use some balance. Expected to play key roles are RB Jason Moore, RB Michael Yates Bauer, QB Andrew Runyan and LB Kordell Chewing.

SECTION II

Palo Verde: The Titans have had a long, strong tradition but have fallen on hard times of late due in large part to dwindling numbers. New coach Laurence Ruhf is ready to

turn things around. “We have a great core group of kids,” he said. “We are fast but inexperienced. If we find depth, we could be an easy pick for the playoffs.” The top players are OL/LB Anthony Baker, RB/DT Tyre Tamplin, RB/DB Bradley Rudder, RB/DB Tommy Grijalva and OL/DE Anthony Cummings.

Rio Rico: New coach David Rastovski takes over a young team (14 returning lettermen). The team’s top player is QB Sean Fanning.

Safford: The Bulldogs always seem to have a competitive program and this fall should be no different – if they can develop a defense after losing eight starters. Coach Michael Alba lists his top players as QB Taylor Shurtz, WR/DB/KR David Borquez, LB Weston Wiltbank, OL Jawon Mathis and RB Robert Lopez.

Sahuarita: David Rodriguez has posted a 24-9 record in three seasons as coach of the Mustangs, and he can build on that this season with another strong team. In 6-foot-5, 340-pound Eugene Santa Cruz, the Mustangs have one of the best two-way linemen in Division IV.

Santa Rita: First-year coach Cody House has seen enough of his players already that he can say, “We have all the intangibles to be competitive in our conference (section).” Look for these players to make an impact: RB/LB Matt McAdams, OL/DL/TE Joseph Uselton, QB Peyton Kendrick and WR/DB Mikey Patrick.

Walden Grove: The team had no seniors in 2013, but figures to be older and wiser under third-year coach Chris Sargent. The top players (positions not listed by coach) are Izzy Calvillo, Kris Moody and Calvin Brown.

SECTION III

Estrella Foothills: Coach Lamar Early is optimistic about his team’s chances and says he has a cohesive group. The Wolves’ top players are junior RB Joe Logan, RB/DB Brandon Leon, QB/DB Jared Fleming, OL/DL Tyler Adams, WR/LB Mark Garcia, WR/DB Marcus Young, WR/DB Kylan Knox, WR/DB Ryan Parrish and OL/DL Kevin Williams. Glendale: Second-year coach Brian Bowman lists speed and athleticism as his team’s strong points, and depth as a potential stumbling block. The Cardinals’ top players are WR/OLB Luis Mejia, WR Byron Bolden and DB Selemani Baurani.

Parker: Coach Jeston Lotts and his Broncs might be the surprise team of the section and could challenge River Valley and Estrella Foothills for supremacy. Lotts’ leading players are WB/LB Spencer Moore, WB/LB C.J. Markel,

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Football Division IV Preview



Estrella Foothills junior running back Joe Logan (photo by paynterpics.com)

QB/DB Ryan Gray, WB/DE Sam McGuire, QB/DB/P Cody Esquerra, OL/DL Kyle Velez and OL/DL Justin Mooneyham.

River Valley: The 2013 state runner-up returns most of its players, but not its head coach. Terry Staggs moved out of state and Paul Duchaineau and Mark Ruckle will share those duties. The top players are Lance Phillips (14 sacks), OLB Jacob Lee (130 tackles, five caused fumbles), RB Brandon Long (2,204 rushing yards, 32 TDs) and RB Andreas Galvez (823 yards, 10 TDs).

Wickenburg: Wickenburg alum Carson Miller takes over as coach and proudly says that the entire coaching staff is "all Wickenburg alums. At least one coach from every decade since the 1970s. A great tradition." Now the Wranglers must get the job done on the field. The top players are FB Hunter Gaines, TE Chase Ballard, WR/S Cloud Fritts and QB Will Patton, who was injured in 2013 but likely will start.

SECTION IV

Chino Valley: Wade Krug takes over as coach, and how

fast the players can adjust to his philosophy will go a long way toward determining how far the team can go. The Cougars are young, but they are strong up front. The top players are QB Jake Clawson, RB Blaine Goodman, WR Brian Skinner, all-purpose man Bud Cain, LB Layne Ashe and DT Thomas Gianfrancesco.

Combs: Jesse Hart established a foundation last season in his first year as coach, and now the team must show improvement from a 6-5 finish. The top players are DL/OL Riley Bourgeois, PK/P Alex Moyes, LB/OL Todd Goodman, DL/OL Danny Taunima and all-purpose player Nate Duhaney.

Cortez: Coach Ross Luna's Colts will be strong at linebacker, but they need help in many other areas. The top players are MLB/FB Reshuan Whitaker, QB/DB Uriel Lopez, WR/DB Fernando Mejia, LB/RB Alfred Koch, LB/FB Xavier Martinez, OL/DL Derrick Jackson and OL/DL Reshawn Begay.

Florence: The Gophers continue to heal after the death of head coach Steve McKane last year, and McKane's father, Bill, is back after taking over. The team has 31 returning lettermen, meaning good experience, and has a strong offensive line. Bill McKane says the receivers need to pick up the pace. Top players are QB Bobby Herrera, RB/SS Beau Griego, C/NG Kameron Hall, OT/DL Michael Valdez and OG/MLB Georgie Obitz.

Seton Catholic: If Show Low or Lakeside Blue Ridge stumble in their quest to win the state title, chances are that Seton could be the reason. Coach Rex Bowser has 22 returning lettermen and a good balance on offense and defense. The Sentinels' top players are RB Antonio Campanella, WR George Wolter, WR/DB Brandon Garcia, OG Steven Fugger, OG James Terrill, LB Patrick Larsen, DB Manny Estrella, LB Brandon King and DB Dominic Johnson.

SECTION V

Blue Ridge: Jake Belshe takes over as coach after the departure of legendary Paul Moro for Florence Poston Butte. The Yellowjackets' chances of winning a second straight title and 14th overall for the school will depend on the play of QB Spencer Hall, SB/RB Nate Myles, and sure-handed TE Adam Padilla.

Fountain Hills: The Jim Fairfield-coached Falcons have always seemed to be able to move the football in his 22 seasons, but the defense must step it up. Top players are QB/FS Luke McDermott, WR/DB Sam Stoor, RB/DB Brady

COLLEGIATE PREPS REPORT POWERED BY AIAA

Football Division IV Preview



Seton Catholic wide receiver George Wolter (photo by Mark Jones/maxpreps.com)

turning lettermen. The Tigers will have quickness and experience in the skill positions, but need to build an offensive line. The top players are QB/DB Joe Burk, RB/LB Keanu Goseyun, G/LB Darnell Belvado, RB/LB Tommy Phillips, RB/DB Brodie Dallenogare, DE/TE Tanner Barrick, OL/DL Frank Renteria, RB/DB Daniel Sandoval and RB/DB Johnathan Martinez.

Payson: The Longhorns have not been too hot and not been too cold in two seasons under coach Jake Swartwood. Now they need to turn up the heat on opponents. The team has good overall speed but needs to find players to make an impact on the offensive and defensive lines. Top players are Wyatt Chapman, Ruben Estrada and Chazz Davis.

Show Low: The Randy Ricedorff-coached Cougars lost several players from last year's team, but have plenty of talent returning. The top players are C Logan Barton, WR/FS Quentin Clark, LB/TE/FB Willie Wyatt and CB/TE/FB Jarom Fawcett.

Snowflake: If coach Ron Tenney can find a reliable quarterback and a few glue-handed receivers, the Lobos should be able to make some waves. Tenney lists his top players as RB Trevor McCray, LB/OL Alec Solomon, TE/DE Travis Flake, DB Drew Schneider and QB/FS Porter Black.

Hartman, WR/DB Jacob DeGroot and C/DL Joey DeGroot.

Globe: Veteran coach Al Ocampo has a good base, 20 re-

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STATE FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS
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By Jose Garcia, aia365.com

By finishing second in a 48-team San Diego passing tournament for mostly big schools, Yuma Catholic's 2013 state championship momentum carried into the 2014 offseason, proving that the Shamrocks are the runaway favorite in Division V this season.

Not so fast. Put a screeching halt to that argument, the rest of the ranked teams say.

If you include the talent the top 12 teams are returning, all Yuma Catholic did in San Diego, including beating Division I's No. 1 Chandler, was set the early pace in a D-V state race that figures to be congested.

But you won't hear many object to Yuma Catholic being the preseason No. 1 in Sollenberger's inaugural online Arizona high school football D-V rankings. As is the case with almost every top D-V team, the marquee players in 2013 for Yuma Catholic are preparing to take the field again this year.

Yuma Catholic's head honcho is Rhett Stallworth, a coach with an appetite for titles. Since being given the reigns in 2007, Stallworth has lost three games in a season only once, helped guide the program to at least the state semifinals the previous five years and won two titles.

"We expect to get to the championship game this year and win," Stallworth said. "What happens along the way, I don't know. But our expectation is to play to the best of our ability and win another title. Is it really absolutely in the bag? No. There are seven to eight teams that can win it. We need to stay healthy and get better."

And develop some offensive and defensive linemen, where there's a cast of new faces except for defensive end Matt Pistone, the Oregon State-bound tight end and first Division I product Yuma Catholic's produced.

The scoring barrage that buried opponents during the playoffs last year figures to continue somewhat this season for Yuma Catholic despite the stiff competition. Yuma Catholic is a pick-your-poison team on offense.

Stallworth wants senior quarterback Jagan Cleary to pick up where he left off after throwing seven touchdowns and 458 yards in the 63-35 state championship win over Round Valley. Running back/defensive back Carter Rodriguez (2,321 career all-purpose yards) is a step faster after his offseason work.

Wide receiver Donovan Rooks is at full speed now after playing with an injury last year and might become Yuma Catholic's second D-I player. And there's Pistone of course.

The responsibilities for the 6-4, 230-pound Pistone will increase this year. Besides his tight end/defensive line duties, Pistone, the team's best short yard blocker, also might be used a lead blocker this year.

"We'll watch film and line him (Pistone) up whenever we can find a mismatch," Stallworth said.

As the lone returner on the defensive line, Pistone's leadership skills also will come into play.

Yuma Catholic's linebacker crew didn't lose anybody, so a more consistent performance is expected this year.

Even Yuma Catholic's special teams will likely continue to put pressure on opponents this year. The team is known to run trick plays on special teams to keep opponents on their toes.

But with the abundance of talent that D-V will showcase this year, catching a team flat-footed won't be easy.

"I've never seen this division this loaded before," veteran St. Johns coach Mike Morgan said. "In fact, some of the big 5A teams can beat a lot of the 4A teams."

SULLY'S PREPS REPORT POWERED BY AIA365.COM

Division V Preseason Rankings

By Jose Garcia, aia365.com

No. 1 Yuma Catholic. The overall team speed improved thanks in part to So. RB Jaylen Barnes, one of the next upcoming stars for Yuma Catholic. On defense, Matt Pistone had 14 of the team's 50 sacks last year. Jr. LB Moises Barcenas averaged a team-high 11.8 tackles per game in 2013.

No. 2 Arizona Lutheran. The second most talented team on offense in this division needs to stay healthy or its state title aspirations will get derailed. The team won't miss a beat with Sr. James Farley, who was injured last year, stepping in for a 1,000-yard rusher who graduated last year. Sr. Brady Cook (1,328 receiving, 21 TD's) could be best tight end in the state this side of Yuma Catholic's Pistone. The heart and soul of Arizona Lutheran is Sr. Jesse Zwick (1,141 rushing yards, led team in tackles, 18 TD's last year). Jr. QB Cameron Haag threw 42 TD's in his first varsity season running the team's double-wing.



Yuma Catholic grabbed the 2013 top prize in Division V competition (photo by Duane Matsen/maxpreps.com).

No. 3 Round Valley. The team has more depth this year to help give two-way senior stars Ethan Workman (1,259 rushing yards, 130 tackles last year) and Nate Gutierrez (1,069 rushing yards, 16 TD's passing last year) a breather despite returning only eight starters. But Round Valley can't continue to give up big pass plays and turn the ball over in critical situations if it wants to reach the title game again. It lost some linemen but returns all-state quality players in Sr. Layton Hall (6-3, 275) and Sr. Trent Padilla.

No. 4 Thatcher. All of the team's starters at the skill spots return except for one. Yes, Sr. athlete Heath Motes, also is back, and he's healthy. Motes played with an injury the entire 2013 season, but it didn't keep him from rushing for 1,329 yards and throwing 16 TD's. The strongest player on the team, Jr. Josh Palmer, volunteered to move from defensive end to the offensive line. Thatcher is hoping Palmer's selfless act will help alleviate the loss of four offensive linemen.

No. 5 Joy Christian. Coach Brian Cole has a good problem if he's wondering how he will keep his playmakers happy when they don't have the ball. Prying the ball away from RB/CB Tonka Watson (12 yards per carry in 2013), likely the best athlete in D-V, won't be easy. Cole said his team won't drop off at quarterback with first-year starter Matt Mitchell, a "student of the game."

No. 6 Tempe Prep. If the Mad Scientist, the nickname given to one of the state's brightest coaches, Tom Brittain of Tempe Prep, can cure his team's "anemic" offensive woes and find a couple of D-tackles, Tempe Prep can finally accomplish its state championship goal. MLB Zach Brittain, CB Jonah Simminger and FS Dan Hiser headline a very quick and physical defense. There's depth at RB, and the O-line returns three starters. The team will dress 18 seniors.

No. 7 Northwest Christian. With 75 players, including 15 returning starters, depth won't be an issue this year. Plus, it also returns a player who played on the 2012 state title team, Sr. WR/DB Brady Lorenz (6-3, 200), who missed the entire 2013

season with an injury. QB Drew Inness (16 TD's, 4 INT's last year) and Lorenz worked on getting their timing down as much as they could during the summer. The secondary, with SS Caleb McShanag, is as good as any coach Dave Innes has had.

No. 8 Pusch Ridge. Juniors Cody Crop and Cameron Swift possess the mobility at QB that can help the team's fly motion offense take off. There are also weapons in the backfield, with Sr. Taylor Fitzgerald (2,176 career rushing yards and 34 TD's) and Sr. Tyler Overstreet (8.2 ypc) and at wide out with Jr. Ben Walker (6-3, 35 inch vertical). Linebackers Sr. Mitch Riley (107 tackles last year) and Jr. James Raica (97 tackles in 2013) pack a wallop. If Pusch Ridge can plug some holes on the offensive and defensive lines, another playoff run awaits.

No. 9 San Tan Foothills. With 18 returning starters, including an offensive line that's stayed intact for the past two seasons, the team is poised to have its best season in the program's short history. But it needs to beat the big names before it moves up. The offensive line's frontman, Sr. Ryan Wilson, has played every position on the line during his 35-plus game career and will move to left tackle this year. Another San Tan Foothills stalwart of stability, Sr. Ricky Wilson, rushed for 1,000-plus yards and was a second team all-state LB despite missing two games with an injury last year. Look for Jr. Texas transfer Joseph Radke (OLB/WR, 6-4, 200) to make a quick impression in Arizona.

No. 10 St. Johns. So St. Johns won't be as predictable like last year on offense, veteran coach Mike Morgan will run more motion to help get the ball to his quick players in space this season. The defense also will get a facelift, adding more pressure packages to help stall the running attacks St. Johns will face this season. A more fit offensive line should help Sr. RB Sherod Bride (759 yards, 19 TD's in 2013), last year's offensive MVP, chew up more yards than last year. But the team needs to stay healthy, as St. Johns will only dress about 19 players and have about nine two-way players.

SULLIVAN'S PREPS REPORT POWERED BY AIA365.COM

Football Division V Preview



(From L to R) Bourgade Catholic's Adan Leon (photo by Mark Jones/maxpreps.com), Northwest Christian's Parker Valerious (photo by James Conrad/maxpreps.com) and Arizona Lutheran's Jesse Zwick (photo by James Conrad/maxpreps.com)

By Jose Garcia, aia365.com

SECTION I

Rock Point: New coach will take over an inexperienced team that only won two games last year. But the team has a couple of proven leaders in Sr. LB/TB Lane Becenti and WR/LB Ricky Bahe, who averaged a touchdown per game last season.

Tuba City: The Warriors finished 7-3 in 2013, but feel they can top that mark this season. The top players: Sr. DE/FB Justin Adair, Sr. LB/RB Sergio Oliver, Sr. RB/DB Brenton Goldtooth, Jr. QB/S Roland Becenti, Sr. WR/DB Jeremy Yazzie.

Pinon: The Eagles graduated a large senior class in the past two seasons and is rebuilding this year. "Our goal is to get the kids excited about playing football again and wanting to play," coach Cameron Shepherd said. "The win-loss record is irrelevant. Having fun and playing the sport is." Look for Jr. athlete Zach Cody and So. Garrick Haskan to assume leadership roles.

SECTION II

Antelope: The team only lost five seniors off of last year's team but needs to navigate a difficult schedule in order to finish with a plus-.500 record for the first time since 2009. The run game will be "tough" with Fernando Leon. ... The

2013 linebacker crew (Eduardo Gamez, Gerry Evans and Miguel Ramirez) is intact.

Arizona Lutheran: Fifth-year coach Scott Indahl's record at the school is 43-16.

Bourgade Catholic: Pat Lavin is 65-47 at the school, 184-126 overall. The team returns 13 starters from an 8-3 2013 campaign. Josh Sanders (6-3, 187, 4.6 40, three-year two-way starter), Anthony Morales (6-5, 342, two-year starter), Adan Leon (6-2, 246, three-year starter) lead the way. Six of the team's assistants played for Lavin.

Northwest Christian: Travis Polley rushed for 1,080 yards and 10 TD's last year. Juniors Ben McGriff and Parker Valerious are two-year starters on the offensive line. Sr. LB Andy Hay (93 tackles in 2013) is the team's returning leading tackler. The mom of the Brown twins, starting linebackers Nick and Nate, had a successful lung transplant.

Tonopah Valley: Only lost four starters after the 2013 season. Will need every player to be prepared since it will play in the toughest section in D-5. Needed to fill some spots up front on each side of the ball. Last year's starting QB, Jr. Jerry Aguilar, also was the team's leading rusher. Sr. Tahir Porter averaged 38.40 yards on kickoff returns and 19.50 on punt returns. Jr. Arturo Tapia led the team in tackles last year.



(From L to R) Tempe Prep's Daniel Hiser (photo by Jim Willittes/maxpreps.com), Round Valley's Ethan Workman (photo by Jim Willittes/maxpreps.com) and San Tan Foothills' Sage Waxter (photo by Chris Hook/maxpreps.com)

Yuma Catholic: Sr. Osvaldo Rodriguez didn't miss a field goal (6 for 6) last year, with a long of 45 yards.

dinator Adam Estrada have dedicated a combined 68 years to Thatcher.

SECTION III

Benson: Finished 7-4 and reached the first round of the 2013 playoffs despite starting many underclassmen. Benson returns nine starters on each side of the ball, but who will step into the leadership roles? The team's three leaders in all-purpose yards in 2013, Jr. Nick Hernandez, So. Keegan Graf (second leading tackler last year) and Sr. Travis Barney, return.

Tanque Verde: Sr. LB/WR Marcus Eibl led the team in tackles last year. It's Sr. RB Kyle Dick's turn to step in and fill the void that last year's 1,000-yard rusher, Benito Pimienta, left. Jeremiah Johnson will step in as the new coach.

Bisbee: Had a .500 season last year but returns 18 starters, including seven juniors on each side of the ball. Sr. Rey Chavez finished with 1,366 all-purpose yards and 16 TD's last season. ... At 6-6, 320, it's no surprise that head coach Christopher Vertrees is expecting Jason Linden to dominate on both sides of the ball.

Tombstone: The Yellow Jackets' top players are Sr. Dontae Otey, Sr. Mark Snider, Jr. Christian Willridge, Jr. Nicolas Angarita. "The goal for the team is to practice and play hard, stay healthy and make it to the playoffs," coach Joe Thomas said.

SECTION IV

Morenci: Returns 15 starters, including eight on offense, from a 2013 season that ended in the first round of the playoffs. One of those starters is San Diego State, NAU recruit Santiago Robledo (6-4, 290), a lineman. TE/LB Sergio Garcia and OL David Ogas will also help Morenci throw its weight around.

Chandler Prep: The Titans' coach, Duncan Aepli, didn't want to single out any player, opting to take a team-first approach. "All of our players are important to the program, as they each contribute in some meaningful way to the success of our team," Aepli said.

Thatcher: LB coach Ramon Morales and defensive coordinator

Paradise Honors: The freshmen and sophomores that dominated the lineup last year are a year older and stronger after 95 percent of the players participated in the team's weight lifting/conditioning program. The team's strength is the size of its offensive line, but it's hoping the offseason work will help improve its defensive line. Jr. QB



Football Division V Preview

Tommy Seros (1,487 total yards last year), Sr. LB Jace Ogorchock, So. RB/OLB Brandon Brown (723 rushing yards, 80 tackles in 2013), Jr. DB/WR Chris Persons (5 INTs in 2013), and So. DL/OL Colt Carroll continue to grow as leaders.

Scottsdale Christian: Sr. QB Jack Johnson has the talent to play in college, his coach says. Sr. LB Nick Zalkow is a solid student and athlete. Jr. WR Nick Winn is one of the top triple jumpers in the state and jumped 44' 1.0" in Australia this summer. Sr. OL/DL Quinton Stevenson (320 pounds) also is an excellent long snapper. Sr. WR/DB Kody Scott transferred from Chaparral. Chuck Gibbs replaced the previous coach.

Scottsdale Prep: Has won at least seven games each season since the football program started in 2010. It graduated a strong senior class last year and returns a new coach and only three starters on defense this year. But two of D-V's big offensive weapons, QB Nick Smith (45 TD's, 8 INT's, 3,048 yards) and WR Ben McKeighan (1,040 receiving yards, 17 TD's) return for their senior season.

Tempe Prep: Tempe Prep is known for its power run game, but the team will try not to be so one dimensional this year. Sr. Jesse Brittain and Jr. Gabe LeBeau were competing to become the starting QB. Tempe Prep's season starts with games against D-V preseason No. 1 Yuma Catholic, D-IV No. 1 Show Low, and D-V perennial power Northwest Christian.

Valley Christian: Graduated its top offensive and defensive stat leaders last year, but Jr. QB Sky Rodrigues, Jr. DB/WR Michael Gay, Sr. WR/DB Riley Rhodes and Sr. WR/DB John David Wee want to make a name for themselves.

Veritas Prep: Team finished 3-7 last year. It returns four starters on offense, five on defense. Depth is the team's biggest question mark. Sr. Joe Promberger, Sr. D.J. Caranhan, Jr. Ted Crane are the team's leaders.

SECTION V

Miami: Brandon Powell takes over as coach along with a new coaching staff. The team returns 16 lettermen, including seven starters. The 100th meeting between rivals Miami and Globe will be staged this season. Powell played and coached at Globe. Sr. RB Cedric Johnson, Sr. FB/LB Nick Bowser, Sr. ATH Kai Cienfuegos, So. lineman Dusty Brunson, So. Lineman Josiah Palmer are the top returning players. Miami is young but quick.

Round Valley: Sr. Coleman Heart, who played for the team as a sophomore before moving to Kansas, returned this year and will likely start at RB or LB.

St. Johns: Coach Mike Morgan is four wins away from win No. 300. He is in his 26th season at St. Johns and so is his right hand man, assistant Joe Garcia.

Santa Cruz: Rishard Davis is the team's new coach. The team will lean on three sophomores, OL/DE Eduardo Gaspar, QB/DB Emilio Cosillos, WR/DB Tony Jimenez, to help carry the Dust Devils. "Our team goal is to show everyone that you can have class and still dominate," says Davis.

SECTION VI

Baboquivari: Team's 55-game losing streak might end this season, because it returns nine more players this year compared to the start of the 2013 season. ... Team will be young, though. ... Look for So. WR/DB Warren Mattias, Sr. QB/DB Coldrin Ortiz and So. RB/LB Tarantino Baptisto to take charge of the team.

Canyon State Academy: If there is a school in the state that uses football to help turn the lives of students around, it's Canyon State. "Our program is designed to use the social learning theory, surrounding our youth with positive role models that have had similar experiences as our youths or who have the passion to influence positive change in our youth," coach Michael Bankston said. It looks like Bankston might have some size on this year's team. Senior OT/DT Kenny Braizer (6-3, 285), Sr. Jerry Sargarna (6-3, 250) and C/DT Jr. Rodolfo Perez (6-1, 250) are some of the new faces on the team. Sr. CB Omar Madison and So. RB/LB Damian Ochoa also are listed as players to watch on this year's team.

Pusch Ridge Christian: Sr. Cooper Barghols was diagnosed with leukemia before he was in 7th grade and underwent chemotherapy. The chemo damaged some nerves in one of Barghols' legs, but the determined young man returned to play last year. He will continue to contribute to his team as a lineman.

San Carlos: Team is young but willing to learn, coach Shawn Pietila said. San Carlos won a program-high five games last season but graduated 1,000-yard rusher Caileb Bush and will need QB Wilbur Benally, OT Ethan Ayze and LB Mason Newman to step up.

San Pasqual: Jason Sanchez, San Pasqual's coach about five years ago, is returning to the sidelines this season. He

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Football Division V Preview

took a break to watch his kids play high school sports. San Pasqual's team is young this season and is looking to build off some of last year's success. The team is getting off to a late start, though, as Sanchez was named the coach the second week in August. "We are going to be playing catch-up. However, with all that said, I am excited to be working with the team and feel that as the season progresses we will only get stronger," Sanchez said.

San Tan Foothills: Jr. RB Saige Waxter (6-3, 205) is ready to "lay the boom" again this year after rushing for 1,209 yards and 17 TD's last year. Sr. Garrett Baer scored a special teams TD in six consecutive games last year.

SECTION VII

Camp Verde: Sr. Jordan Reay averaged 103.9 rushing yards per game last season. Will go with a spread offense this season to showcase the speed on the team. Sr. Bodie Holowell "continues to impress at QB and LB."

Joy Christian: Coach Brian Cole is 31-3 in three seasons at Joy Christian. Chris Cheever (6-3, 245) wanted to play wide receiver and tight end, but his long arms and mobility finally found a home on the offensive line. Joy Christian's defense returns two down lineman, three linebackers and two of last year's defensive backs.

Kingman Academy: D.B. Stroup is in his first season as head coach. The team "lacks depth (five starters return) but not chemistry." Key players are LB Ethan Tibbetts, LB Chy Banda, TE Breyden Potter, OL Wyatt Schmidt, DL Jordan Seybert, TB Clayton Holloway, DB Ronnie Butler, WR Chris Pfeiffer.

Sedona Red Rock: An underdog to keep an eye on in a loaded division. Nineteen returning starters are ready to prove that they won't falter toward the end of the season like last year. The team lost 50-plus years of varsity coaching experience but first-year coach Ken Selle is ready to lead. It does return four of five players who each rushed for more than 200 yards last year, including Sr. Andre Davis and Sr. Brian Nguyen.

Williams: Coach Jeff Brownlee will start the best offensive line he's had in five seasons. OL Izaak Brandt and OL Christian Plascencia are being recruited as well as LB Damon Alvarado (113 tackles in 2013). Sr. Kristian Holmes averaged 8.40 yards per carry last year. Sr. QB/FS Aidan Grantham moved to Ohio, but QB Kyle Ernst (6-0, 185) transferred in. "(Ernst) will excel at QB for us," Brownlee said. "Teams will not be able to stack the box." Sr. WR/CB Leo Lopez was injured most of last year but should be ready to play this year.



Defending State Champ Bagdad No. 1 Pima Not Far Behind

By Jose Garcia, aia365.com

As soon as the team arrived at home after its final football game of the 2013 season, Bagdad partied like it was 1952.

In 1952, before the Arizona Interscholastic Association recognized small school titles, Bagdad won a 6-man championship. The cause for the Nov. 17 celebration with fireworks and fans was the 8-man championship Bagdad won, but there was another reason for the jubilation — Bagdad won its first official football title since the school opened in 1948.

It took Bagdad 65 years to get to the mountaintop, and it intends to stay there this year. But Bagdad better stay on alert.

There's a worthy contender, a very strong and experienced Pima unit, charging up a side of the 8-man mountain. Mogollon, the team Bagdad defeated 44-20 in last year's title tilt, is right behind.

Bagdad, the preseason No. 1 in Sollenberger's online magazine in D-VI, has embraced the 2014 favorite tag, printing shirts with a big target on the back.

"We like our chances to repeat," said Bagdad coach Dalton Mills, a Bagdad graduate who left a Valley football program three years ago to help turn his hometown school into a state champion. "But we will see how we handle having the target on our back."

Like Pima, Bagdad didn't take long thanking last year's small senior football class for its contribution.

But those Bagdad seniors did leave a leadership and stat void, especially at wide receiver and the defensive line. This year's seniors, about 13 players, are qualified to fill the openings and deliver another title, though.

The senior class is close, having forged a bond as

soon as they started playing on the same teams since they were about five years old. Two of those seniors likely form the best one-two backfield combination in D-VI, Casey Jeans and fullback Justin Pacheco.

Despite helping Pima control the clock by rushing for 1,200 yards while averaging a whopping 13 yards per carry last year, Jeans was overshadowed by Mogollon's 2,000-yard rushing workhorse, Dallyn Despain, last year. But Bagdad was a more balanced and dominant team.

Mills' squad was so good last year that the 10-0 team didn't punt in a game until the state semifinals. Jeans chewed up yards in bunches thanks in part to the lanes the strongest player on the team, Pacheco (549 rushing yards, 8 TD's last year), opened.

Bagdad wants its run attack to continue controlling the clock this season, which should help open up the passing game for a "super intelligent quarterback," Tony Juaregui. The senior threw 32 touchdowns and only one interception in 2013.

On defense, Bagdad is home to one of the state's top defensive ends, Lakin Yargus (6-3, 245). No. 2 Pima also returns a bevy of players.

Pima has reached at least the state semifinals every year since coach Jace Hancock took over three seasons ago but is still trying to become the king of the hill under Hancock.

Like Bagdad, Pima likes the ground and pound game and returns its starting running backs and quarterback.

"It's time for us," Hancock said. "We've gone deep every year. I hate to put it on us by saying this is the year, but I want it to be it."

SULLYMEMBER'S PREPS REPORT POWERED BY AIA365.COM

Division VI Preseason Rankings

By Jose Garcia, aia365.com

No. 1 **Bagdad**. Juniors Austin Alcorta and Armando Fonte are lockdown corners. Along with Lakin Yargus, LB/TE Brendan Garza will use his strength to wreak havoc on each side of the ball.

No. 2 **Pima**. Losing its leading tackler and some size off of last year's team won't slow down the team this year. Weapons abound, beginning with "ironman" Andrew Judd, a Sr. FB/DB, throughout the lineup. A heads up for opponents: TE/MLB John Boren likely will become the team's new breakout star.

No. 3 **Mogollon**: Mr. Dynamo, Dallyn Despain, is gone, but three-fourths of the starters return. Expect a more balanced attack, spearheaded by 2013 900-yard rusher Jaden Willis and drop back passer Brock Slade (6-2, 170), coach Tim Slade's son, who played tight end last year because of an injury to another player. As usual, Mogollon's road graders in the trenches are solid, beginning with DL/LB Baylend Stephens and DE/LB McKay Turley.

No. 4 **Valley Lutheran**. If the team can repel the injury bug and avoid giving up big pass plays this season, the program can continue winning this season with the athletes it returns. Sr. RB/DB Kyron Newton (1,398 yards, 11.5 ypc in 2013) and Jr. WR/QB/DB Elijah Bowie (6-3, 210) will be tough to stop. The Torrey brothers, Sr. DE/TE Trey (6-5, 225) and Jr. DE/TE Layne (6-4 200), will be tough to move.

No. 5 **Gilbert Christian**: The Knights return only two players on offense, but one of those players is arguably the best quarterback in D-VI, Sr. Bailey Anderson (2,112 yards, 32 TD's, 8 INT's in 2013). But Gilbert Christian's offense is planning to be more balanced this year, with six options at running back. The team pulled athletes from other on-campus sports to fill openings, including cross country runner Logan Pinkerton, a starting RB. But the team's main focus will be its defense, a quick bunch that's aiming to finally stop the Bagdads of D-VI in the playoffs.

No. 6 **Glendale Prep**: Coach Jamie Self is a pastor by trade. This year, he won't have to preach on the road as much as last year. Glendale Prep finally has a home field it can play on and will no longer use Self's backyard as a makeshift weight room, because the school also has a new weight room. Self is hoping the new amenities will translate into more success for a program that has won at least five games each season since 2010.

No. 7 **Ray**: The team is rebuilding somewhat after losing 11 seniors in 2013. But it still home to a one-man wrecking crew, Sr. Destry Yocum, who threw 15 TD's and only 1 INT, rushed for 620 yards, and led the team with 116 tackles last year. The team re-



Bagdad took the 2013 Division VI crown with a convincing 44-20 triumph over Mogollon (photo by Jim Willittes/maxpreps.com).

turns only one offensive lineman, but he's a good one, C/DE/K Jacob Pace. Sr. RB Robbie Newman (8.8 yards per carry), a three-year varsity player, will help take the pressure off of Destry.

No. 8 **Joseph City**: Coming off only his second losing season in 23 years as a head coach, John Bryant might have to endure another bumpy year until his young Wildcats mature. Last year, key injuries and an off the field accident affected the team. Its best player, a senior, won't play this year. Running backs Kent Gray, a "legit" wrestler, Landon Baldwin and Troy Poudrier want to assert themselves this year.

No. 9 **Valley Union**: Coach Tony Luzania believes his young team can snap its two-year non-playoff streak if the players Luzania expects to see show up. Jr. Junior Gamez will likely to start at QB, but Fr. Derek Hahn took most of the snaps in summer workouts. Valley Union will go with the wing-T this year to showcase Jr. RB Jaret Luzania and Sr. RB/LB Austin Dye. The 3-5 back-to-back seasons is the first time the program has finished with sub-.500 records since Tony took over in 2005.

No. 10 **Salome**. Last year's 7-3 state quarterfinal team returns everybody except three players. The experience will help offset the lack of depth. TE/LB Michael Best, RB/CB Tyler Luz, RB/DB Jared Wolfe and Luis Espinoza possess another asset — speed. And there's plenty of leadership on defense. The defensive leaders are G/DE Joel Freedman, C/DE Thomas Reed, OL/LB Javier Medina, OL/CB Koby Hamilton, OL/LB Ryan Perez, and Jose Ortiz. Salome has a new coach, Michael Drotzman, but longtime assistant coaches Bryan McCarty and Ron Conrad will continue to help the program.

SULLIVAN'S PREPS REPORT POWERED BY AIA365.COM

Football Division VI Preview



(From L to R) Myles Mattox, Glendale Prep (photo by Mark Jones/maxpreps.com), Bailey Anderson, Gilbert Christian (photo by Mitchell B. Reibel/maxpreps.com) and Destry Yocum, Ray (photo by Jim Willittes/maxpreps.com)

By Jose Garcia, aia365.com

SECTION I

Fredonia: New coach Edward Heaton's career started as an ironworker, helping build high rises from the West Coast to the Midwest. His next big job is constructing a Fredonia program that hasn't had a winning season in quite some time. Let's see how the hometown boy (Heaton graduated from Fredonia in 1987) does. Halfback Kelton Utter, Sr. C Rilee Steed, Jr. OL Omalla Hill and Jr. FB Levi Barlow are the team's headliners.

Joseph City: Jr. QB Hayden Hendricks was hurt last year, but is ready to roll out this year. The offensive line will be able to block bigger kids this season, something that was missing last year. The team's biggest question mark will be its defense, which gave up an average of 40 points per game last year.

Mogollon: The roles of Jr. RB Hunter Cochran and WR Joe Gaylor (8 TD catches in 2013) will increase this season. Enrollment is down to about 130 students, the lowest number the school has seen in the past 15 years.

SECTION II

Duncan: With a small senior class, Duncan needs its sophomore class to step up, if it wants to reach the playoffs. The defense is quick and will be tough against the run. Look for Sr. RB Laramie Wolfe to become to go-to guy on offense and for Sr. FB Xavier Sturdevant to pave the

way. Sturdevant tallied 127 tackles in 2013. Duncan returns nine starters. Sr. Michael Goodrum (6-6, 315) has experienced his share of ups and downs during his high school career, but he was cleared to play this year.

Fort Thomas: Returns "tons" of lettermen and a junior class with experience. This will be the second season QBs Kyle Stringfellow and Dom Walker will run Fort Thomas' no-huddle system, which should help the offense do a better job of sustaining drives this season.

St. David: The team is young, so it's important that seniors such as RB Nathan Goodman and WR Rulon Larson step up and teach the underclassmen the ropes. Sr. Jarrett Carpenter led the team in tackles and sacks (15 ½) but transferred out.

Pima: The team only lost three seniors after last season.

Valley Union: DE Isaac Lopez will give opponents fits, and getting by So. S Karson Estelle won't be easy.

SECTION III

Arizona Charter Academy: Coach Bob Henige returns seven starters, including Sr. QB Christian Rojas, from an offense that averaged close to 40 points per game last year. Sr. DE/OL Jose Luis Flores and Jr. C/DL Joseph Zickafoose are the leaders of a defense that is much improved and returns a bunch of experience as well.

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Football Division VI Preview

Bagdad: The team hasn't lost at home in its past 11 outings.

Glendale Prep: The 8-man team plans on playing a 4-man front more this year because of the players it lost last year. But Sr. Josh Wright (79 solo tackles last year) didn't go anywhere. Glendale Prep also will make some changes on offense, so it can get the ball in space to its athletes, especially Sr. Myles Mattox (9.6 yards per carry in 2013).

Phoenix Day School for the Deaf: The inexperienced group will look to Sr. Alejandro Navarro, Jr. Zack Penrod and Sr. Alberto Godinez to lead the way this season. Navarro will attend Gallaudet University.

Salome: They are young, but Manuel Gavilanes, Jose Armenta, Rene Soqui, and Brian Castillo are expected to contribute this season.

SECTION IV

Gilbert Christian: Three of the top four receivers were seniors last year, but it appears that the team will reload at that position. Sr. WR/DE TJ Malm (6-3,175) didn't play much last season due to an injury, but he's been having a

"great offseason." And slot receiver Tanner Conover will likely become the team's go-to wideout.


Ray: Jr. DE Seth Harmon recorded 77 tackles, three interceptions and two touchdowns last year.

Superior: With every player returning from 1-7 season, the team is expecting a better season — if it put in the hours in the weight room during the offseason. So. Gage Cruz and Sr. Marcus Hiracheta (107.8 all-purpose yards per game) rushed for a combined 926 yards last year. Edgar Galindo led the team in tackles last year as a freshman. Sr. Ricardo Ochoa, Sr. Matthew Zavala, So. Austin Navarrette also are expected to contribute this year.

SECTION V

Valley Lutheran: Starting FB Jared Norton might concentrate on swimming this year and not play football. Coach Bob Wolf has had only two sub-.500 seasons since 2005.

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Sat, Nov 30



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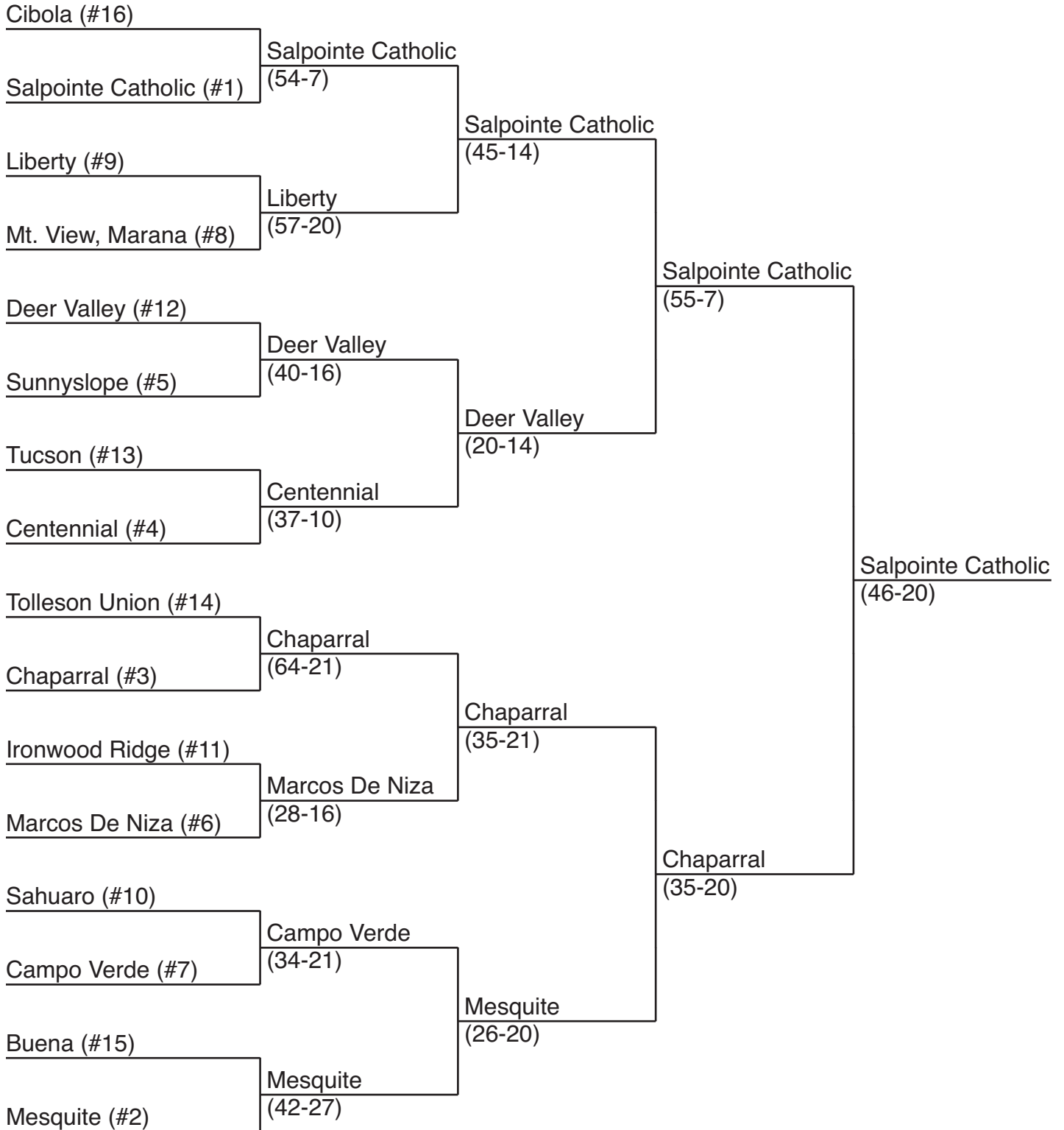
2013 Div. II State Championship Bracket

Fri, Nov 8

Fri, Nov 15

Mon, Nov 25

Fri, Nov 29



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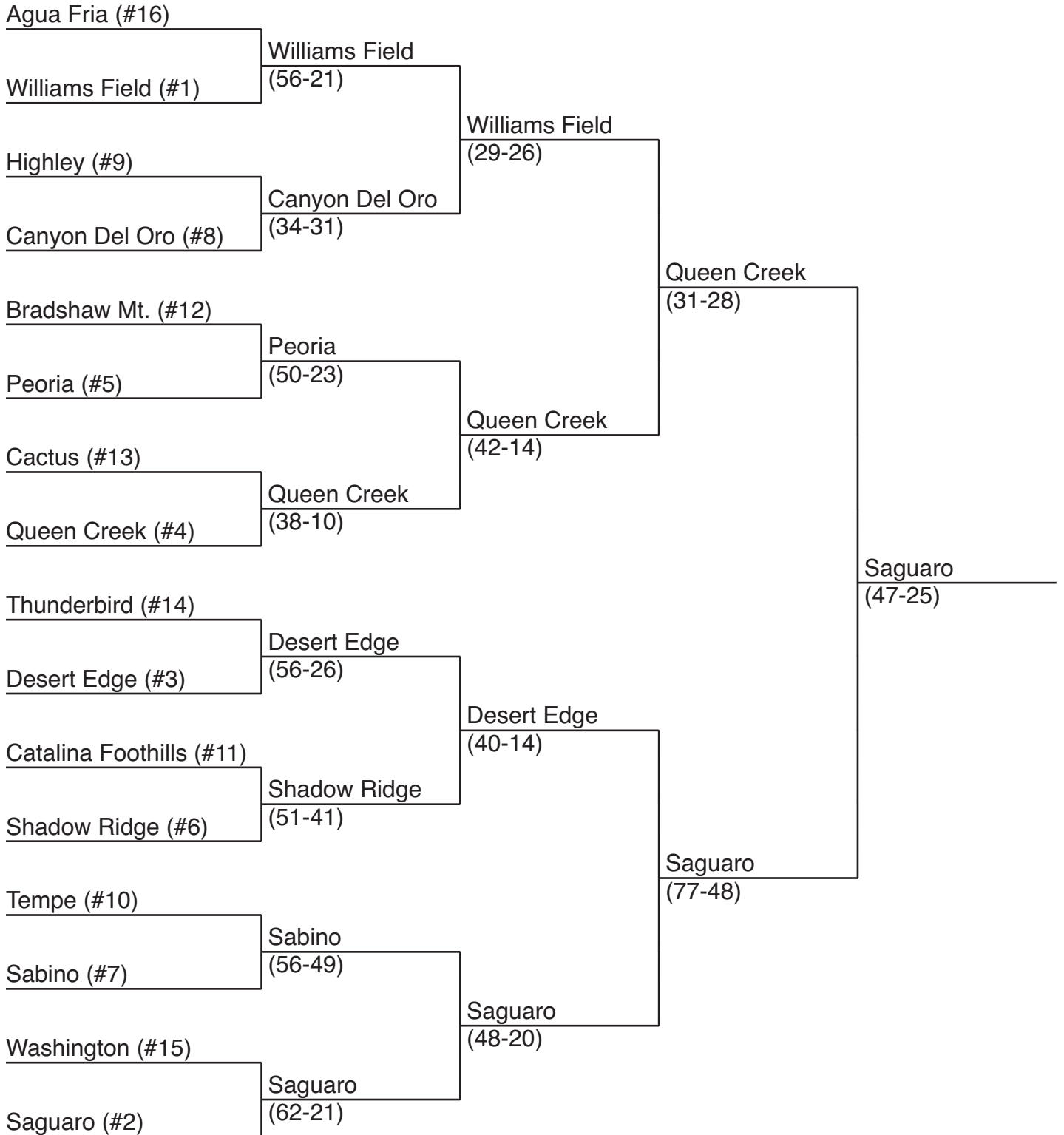
2013 Div. III State Championship Bracket

Fri, Nov 8

Fri, Nov 15

Mon, Nov 25

Fri, Nov 29



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2013 Div. IV State Championship Bracket

Sat, Nov 9

Sat, Nov 16

Mon, Nov 25

Sat, Nov 30



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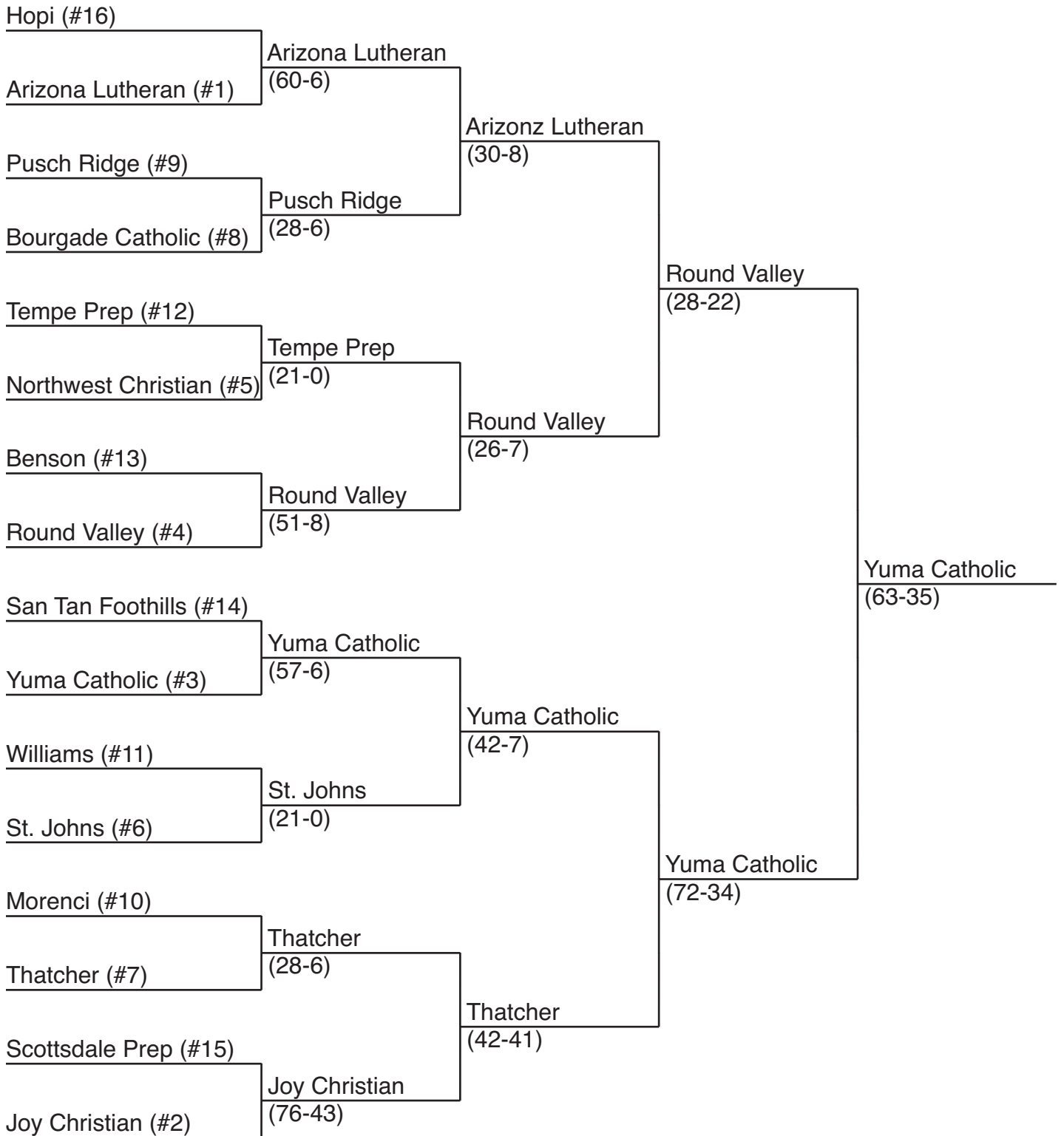
2013 Div. V State Championship Bracket

Sat, Nov 9

Sat, Nov 16

Mon, Nov 25

Sat, Nov 30



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2013 Div. VI State Championship Bracket

Sat, Oct 26

Sat, Nov 2

Sat, Nov 9

Sat, Nov 16

Salome (#9)

Valley Lutheran (#8)

Salome
(30-28)

Pima (#1)

Pima
(56-8)

Joseph City (#12)

Mogollon (#5)

Mogollon
(62-6)

St. David (#4)

Mogollon
(60-8)

Mogollon
(58-48)

Mesa Prep (#11)

Glendale Prep (#6)

Glendale Prep
(43-6)

Bagdad (#3)

Bagdad
(61-18)

Duncan (#10)

Ray (#7)

Ray
(28-0)

Gilbert Chr. (#2)

Gilbert Christian
(57-6)

Bagdad
(66-34)

Bagdad
(44-20)

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