

Choctaw County

BASEBALL

Last Year
Did not make the playoffs

Graduated
Deandre Holley and Danny Anderson

Outlook
These pitching rich Tigers appear to be the favorite in a wide-open area with Sumter, Greensboro, Wilcox and Francis Marion

PREVIEW
Choctaw County might be closer than you think to making a deep playoff run. A proud program that has turned out Major Leaguers, the Tigers enter this season with a mix that might be ready to take it to another level.

First, Choctaw County has a talented pitching rotation filled with good, strong arms like those of flame-throwing Arsenio Dubose and curve ball specialist Ricky Bush.

Next, the Tigers are solid up and down the batting order, especially when power-hitting catcher Trevor Cameron strolls to the plate.

Throw in some hard-hitting, slick fielding senior leaders like third baseman Brian Winston and first baseman

Anthony Johnson, and you have the making for a winner, according to head coach Bill McFarland.

"I feel really good about our chance in our area," McFarland stated, noting that only Francis Marion should give his Tigers a run for their money. "We have really good pitching depth. Anytime you have five, six starters you can really make things happen, especially in the playoffs."

If pitching does lead the Tigers into the post-season it will be thanks to starters Arsenio Dubose, Ricky Bush, Jamarcus Blakley and Jaron Drummond.

Right-hander **Arsenio Dubose** is the ace of the staff. Still lacking great location, Dubose possess a deadly fastball to go along with a hard curve and slider-like pitch. In a loss against Millry early in the year, the junior shackled the Wildcats batters for four innings before finally tiring. If he can go at least five quality innings every outing, then the Tigers bullpen should be able to hold the win.

Ricky Bush is the Tigers most polished pitcher. Bush, a right-hander, has been counted on over the last three years as a starter and now that he's a senior he should be ready for a huge season. Bush has great location on his fastball, but really shines when he's throwing his big breaking curve for strikes.

Junior **Jamarcus Blakley** and freshman **Jaron Drummond** will round out the Tigers formidable starting staff. Both are righties, with Drummond being more of a power pitcher who likes to get batters out with his hard fastball, while Blakley relies on good location and an assortment of different curve balls and junk pitches.

Freshman **Patrick**



Blakley, seniors **Trevor Cameron** and **Bryan Winston**, along with left-handed eighth grader **Marcus Davidson** will comprise the Tigers bullpen.

At first base will be senior Anthony Johnson. Second base is freshman Marco Williams, with Ricky Bush and Bryan Winston playing short and third, respectively. Super senior Trevor Cameron will be behind the plate.

Anthony Johnson is a big first baseman that's in the lineup for his strong bat. A left-handed batter, Johnson has been a nice compliment in the middle of the lineup for RBI-machine Trevor Cameron.

Youngster **Marco Williams** has been a pleasant surprise at second base. Still lacking great range, the freshman has shown that he can make the routine play and has good awareness of the game. For instance, Williams has already turned a flawless double-play this season, taking a throw from the shortstop and exhibiting perfect technique on the relay throw to nip the runner at first.

Shortstop **Ricky Bush** has the best range of any infielder and is probably the Tigers' most polished all-around player. Bush can make the spectacular play or the routine. He is also wonderful at the plate, where he is a great contact hitter. When pitching, Bush will be replaced at

short by **Arsenio Dubose**.

Bryan Winston has taken over at third base. The senior basketball star decided to take baseball more seriously this year and the new approach has paid off. Winston has been sparkling in the field, already wowing the crowd in Millry with a diving stop in which he popped up and gunned down the runner by a step at first. He has yet to catch fire at the plate, but coaches aren't worried.

Behind the plate might be where the Tigers are best thanks to stud **Trevor Cameron**. Cameron is excellent defensively, but excels at the plate where he is an intimidating presence with his 5-foot-8, 230-pound frame and powerful swing. Most opponents

have already started pitching around this bomber, which will eventually put pressure on the rest of the lineup. If the Tigers can protect Cameron, who already has two homers in five games, watch out for lots of run scoring extra base hits.

Scrappy freshman **Ronnie Reed**, who plays any and every where, will back-up Cameron at catcher.

In the outfield might be where the Tigers are the most suspect with two freshmen and a first-year junior.

Freshman **Trent Rodgers** is the most exciting of the unproven trio. Rodgers, who has been playing right field, but can play almost anywhere, is a great all-around player that really

knows the game. Short of stature at 5-foot-1, 130 pounds, Rodgers makes up for his size at the plate by putting the ball in play and flying around the bases. Freshman **Di'Jon McCorkle** and junior **Kierre Anderson** are in a battle for center field, while sweet-swinging sophomore **Lakeith Brown** appears to have claimed the left field spot.

A 5-1 start has these Tigers on track for a winning season and an area title. If they do make the playoffs, watch out, because according to Coach McFarland that's where this team could be dangerous.

"We got the pitching to get there, once you're there, anything can happen."

Colin's Three to Watch

Trevor Cameron
I can not say enough good things about this guy. He is an absolute monster at the plate, but his defense behind the plate is what will have colleges raving.

Arsenio Dubose
Raw talent that is just starting to blossom. Dubose, the team's best pitcher, can play any position and bats in the top of the line-up.

Ricky Bush
This guy is the backbone of the infield. When Ricky is out there, the Tigers can do anything. He might be at his best, however, when his nasty curve is working on the mound.

(The Tigers have so many young, exciting players I don't know who to keep an eye on. Watch out for Trent Rodgers, a multi-talented player that really knows the game, Ronnie Reed, a fiery competitor that coaches love, and Jaron Drummond, maybe the next great Tiger baseball player.)

Choctaw County Baseball

2007 Schedule

Feb. 26	Southern Choctaw	home	4
Mar. 3	Millry	away	4
Mar. 10	Wilcox (2)	home	1
Mar. 12	Southern Choctaw (2) (JV)	home	4
Mar. 13	Greensboro *	home	4
Mar. 15	Southern Choctaw (JV)	home	4
Mar. 16	Livingston (2)	home	4
Mar. 24	Leflore (2)	away	4
Mar. 27	Francis Marion *	home	4
Mar. 30	Meridian (JV)	home	6
Mar. 31	Wilcox	away	1
Apr. 3	Francis Marion *	away	4
Apr. 5	Greensboro *	away	4
Apr. 7	Southern Choctaw	away	4
Apr. 10	Sumter County *	home	4
Apr. 13	Sumter County *	away	4
Apr. 14	Livingston (2)	away	1

* - area games

Choctaw County

SOFTBALL

Last Season
Did not make the playoffs

Graduated
Alica Ruffin, Celeste Williams, Monique Smith

Outlook
The playoffs are a lock because of a two-team area. And with star pitcher Jaleesa McNeely on the mound, these Tigers have some bite.

PREVIEW
The Tigers have good pitching. The Tigers have good batting. So why are they 1-5 to start the season? "Errors, errors, errors," answered coach

Nerissa Cowan-DeRamus. "We are so inconsistent on defense. One game we are all right, then the next we make error after error. We can win some games, but the defense has to get better."

Coach Cowan-DeRamus is right, the Tigers can win some games, especially with a starting pitcher like **Jaleesa McNeely**.

McNeely, a right-handed senior, is the type of pitcher that can win any game or keep the Tigers close against any pitcher. She possess a fastball, change-up and a curve-like rise-ball. McNeely has a wonderful understanding of the strike zone and can control games from the mound. McNeely is so good that she was close beating Millry's mighty Kristen Skinner. Up 1-0 late, the Tigers would eventually lose 2-1 in extra inning because of, you guessed it, errors.

After McNeely, the Tigers bring sophomore **Tiara Tuck**. Tuck is a straight fastball, change-up pitcher that should continue to improve as she gains more varsity experience. Left-handed seventh grader **Telana Brown** could also see some varsity innings in between starts on the junior varsity side.



The Tigers' most complete infielder is sophomore first baseman **Brittany Anderson**. If you get it to first, Brittany will catch it. She also bats clean-up, where she can really pop the ball.

Two more sophomores, **Cassidy Gaines** and **Tiara Tuck**, will be at second base and short, respectively, while seventh grader **Kia Bryant** gets first crack at third. All three are new to their positions, so growing pains are expected. However, with the sure-handed Anderson on first, these youngsters should feel confident about firing the ball across the diamond.

A perennial youth league all-star, **Kia Bryant** is one to watch. Just a seventh grader, Bryant is already impressed coaches with her work at third base and at the plate, where she has been batting consistently in the middle of the

lineup.

The outfield is anchored by speedy senior **Jessica Rodgers**. The Tigers also take advantage of Rodgers' running ability by batting her in the lead-off spot.

Junior **Brianna Adams** will be in right

with eighth grader **Nakia Ezell** in left. So far this year, Adams has been on the better Tigers at the plate.

Behind the plate is ninth grader **Courtney Walker**. In her third year as a starter, Walker is expected to blossom this

year with a breakout season.

Choctaw County is in an area with only Greensboro. Since there are only two teams, both will make the first-round of the playoffs.

Colin's Three to Watch

Jaleesa McNeely
Tigers' ace can match any opponent's top pitcher. The senior exhibits wonderful control with good speed on her pitches. She is a fiery competitor that keeps her team in every game.

Brittany Anderson
Anderson is just a sophomore but is already an accomplished first baseman and excellent batter. By the end of the year, Anderson could be carrying the offense.

Kia Bryant
A seventh grader at third base, Bryant has already shown signs of being a special player. If she continues to improve at the rate she has been, by her sophomore year she should be something special. (Keep an eye open for eighth grader Shakira Palmer. So far just a pinch-runner with her blazing speed, Shaky could wind up as a starting outfielder soon.)

Choctaw County Softball

2007 Schedule

Feb. 20	Sweetwater	home	4
Feb. 22	Millry	away	4
Mar. 2-3	Millry Tourney	away	TBA
Mar. 9	Clarke County	home	4
Mar. 13	Marengo	home	4
Mar. 15	Sweetwater	away	3:30
Mar. 16	Washington County	away	4
Mar. 20	Southern Choctaw	away	4
Mar. 23/24	Tombigbee Classic	Leroy	4
Mar. 26	Washington County	home	4
Mar.30	Marengo	away	4
Mar. 31	Greensboro	home	noon
Apr. 2	Clarke County	away	4
Apr. 16	Thomasville	home	5
Apr. 23	Aliceville	home	5
Apr. 24	Southern Choctaw	home	4
Apr. 26	Aliceville	away	5
Apr. 27	Greensboro	away	4
Apr. 30	Thomasville	away	5
May 1	Millry	home	4