



**NEXT ISSUE!!**

Local kids win at Ridge Runner Enduro in Meridian

## Cats and Dogs fall, Bears win state

■ Millry swept by Hackleburg, Washington County loses rubber-match with Hokes Bluff, but Leroy brings home another title with romp over Hatton

By Colin Merritt  
The Choctaw Sun

The Millry Wildcats baseball team enjoyed a wild ride this season that unexpectedly weaved it's way into the state finals.

After limping into the postseason as an area runner-up with a losing record, the underdog Cats clawed their way to the Class A state title series at Paterson Field in Montgomery with impressive playoff wins over ranked squads like Brantley and Providence Christian. However, the story book season would end with a runner-up trophy instead of a championship after the Cats ran into a powerful Hackleburg team intent on a Class A title after years of near misses.

Despite falling just short of the title though, Millry Head Coach Shane Hendry was thrilled with his team's unlikely run.

"This was a great season for us," said Hendry, noting that Millry baseball also finished second in 1978. "It started out a little rocky, but these guys grew up as the season went along. We only had one senior, so the future might be bright." The multi-purpose Taylor Owen, who pitches and plays third and catcher, is the lone Wildcat senior.

Hackleburg, who finished runner-up in 2003, 2004 and 2006, entered the championship series hungry for a title and sporting a flashy 38-4 mark, while the Cats entered with a more workman-like 19-22 mark.

Hackleburg's successful season was due mainly to a super duo of senior pitchers - Jon McKinney and Justin Raper - and the championship series was no different. The two hurlers shutdown Millry, holding the Wildcats, a team that had been scoring runs in bunches during their seven playoff wins, to just six total hits, while striking out 20 batters in the two-game sweep.

McKinney (15-0), who got the start in the opening 4-2 victory, pitched a two-hit complete game with nine strikeouts, while Raper (9-2) got the game-two win, 11-1, after seven innings of work with 11 strikeouts. Hackleburg set a state record with their game-two 11-run outburst when they passed the 1999 G.W. Long team for most runs scored in a season with 454.

One bright spot for Millry in the series was Dylan Whittset. The freshman shortstop picked up three of the Wildcats' six hits. Junior Heath McIlwain, sophomore Hunter Martin and classmate Dustin Sullivan had the other hits for the Cats, who finished their season with a 19-24 record. Hackleburg ended up with a 40-4 mark.

Washington County took home another runner-up trophy in Class 3A when the Washington County Bulldogs fell in the final game of their best-of-three series with Hokes Bluff. After falling in the first game 5-1, the Bulldogs would rally to win a wild affair in game-two, 11-8, thanks to an offensive explosion from right fielder Tyler Dykes, who went 3-for-4 with five RBI. The Bulldogs couldn't carry the momentum into the rubber-match, however, losing 9-1 after a Hokes Bluff five-run third inning. The Bulldogs finished with a 23-14 mark, while Hokes Bluff wrapped-up their fifth straight AHSAA state championship with a 31-7 record.

The lone state title winner of the three Washington County teams that made it to the finals was the Leroy Bears. Leroy, which captured the crown in football this season as well, swept Hatton High School, 8-0 and 3-1, to claim the Class 2A crown. In game-one, Taylor White (8-0) got the win for the Bears after throwing six innings of three hit ball and collecting two hits and two RBI's at the plate. The Bears also got two-hit games from Brandon Jones and Philip Ervin. Jones picked up three RBI on his hits, while Chris Weaver picked up a pair of RBI on a home run.

In game-two, Leroy got another great pitching performance, this time from Brandon Jones. Jones (9-1) held Hatton to just five hits with five strikeouts to pick up the 3-1 victory. Clint Moseley and Mathew Watkins were the hitting stars for the Bears in the decisive win. Moseley collected two hits and scored a run, while Mathews picked up two RBI on one hit. Leroy, which also won the state title in baseball in 2001, finished with a 37-7 record. Hatton ended their season with a 32-21 mark.

### AHSAA Baseball and Softball State Champions

2006-07

**Baseball**

**Softball**

Class A

**Hackleburg**  
*Millry*

**Kinston**  
*Pleasant Home*

Class 2A

**Leroy**  
*Hatton*

**Oakman**  
*J.B. Pennington*

Class 3A

**Hokes Bluff**  
*Wash. County*

**Leeds**  
*Mobile Chr.*

Class 4A

**Childersburg**  
*Oneonta*

**Alabama Christian**  
*St. James*

Class 5A

**Cullman**  
*Bibb County*

**Gulf Shores**  
*Springville*

Class 6A

**Hillcrest-Tuscaloosa**  
*Russell County*

**Baker**  
*Sparkman*

Champion - **BOLD**  
Runner-up - *Italics*



Millry's Taylor Owen (photo) was the Wildcats lone senior on this year's surprising state runner-up squad. Despite losing Owen and his ability to pitch or play any position, including catcher, Millry coach Shane Hendry still thinks the future is bright for his Wildcats.

## Board approves three Buck limit

■ Commissioner Barnett Lawley will have final say after Conservation Advisory Board voted 7-2 to limit buck harvest in Alabama

By Colin Merritt  
The Choctaw Sun

BIRMINGHAM — Over the weekend, a Conservation Advisory Board voted 7-2 to limit Alabama deer hunters to just three bucks per season. The motion still has to be approved by Conservation Commissioner Barnett Lawley, however, before it is official.

If approved, Alabama hunters could take three male deer per season, one of which would have to meet a standard of having at least four points on one side of his antlers. The plan is intended to help grow the male deer herd and produce bigger and better bucks in Alabama.

"This law, if approved,

will really make hunters use the 'honor system,'" said Choctaw Conservation Officer Vance Wood. "There has been talk of a tag system, but even that has limitations when it comes to enforcing this potential new law."

Wood went on to explain that the exact way the law would be enforced was still yet to be determined. According to Wood, Commissioner Lawley's final decision will almost certainly be made before the start of archery season on October 15th and gun season on November 17th.

Even pay-per-hunt lodges, which have become a major industry in Alabama, including here in Choctaw County, will have to follow the new law if passed. However, according to one lodge owner here in the county, most lodges have already been policing themselves with limitations on antler size. Most only allow hunters to take 6- or 8-point bucks. This management practice helps ensure that younger bucks thrive and have the time to mature and reach their full antler potential.



Choctaw Sun photo by Marcus Gates

## Thomasville tramples Indians in Spring Jamboree

THOMASVILLE -- The Southern Choctaw Indians football team completed their Spring practices with a 13-0 defeat against Thomasville on Friday night. The Indians, who graduated most of their skill-positions from last season, entered the game with freshman Earvin Turner at quarterback and sophomore Cornelius Lewis (#1) at tailback. Despite the youth in the backfield, the Indians have plenty of experienced upperclassmen in the trenches, like juniors Asonte Baxter (#70) and LaVander Powe (#71). "Even though we didn't score, I really like the attitude of these young guys," said SCHS Head Coach Larry Boykin of his team's effort against last year's Class 4A runner-up, Thomasville. "They got up on us early, but after that I really liked what I saw, especially from the young guys." The first regular season game for the Class 2A Southern Choctaw Indians will be August 31st at home against Class 3A Choctaw County.

## Choctaw County Tigers walloped at Greene County

EUTAW -- The Choctaw County Tigers took a 38-0 beating at the hands of Greene County, before hanging with Greensboro in a 13-0 defeat during their Spring Jamboree on Friday. Despite the lopsided

scores, Tiger assistant coach Bill McFarland said that the defense played well thanks to some new players that were really 'flying around and hitting people'. However, McFarland did say that the

Tigers' offense turned the ball over on numerous occasions and needed 'lot's more practice' before their August 31st regular season opener in Gilbertown against rival Southern Choctaw.

### Washington County Football Jamboree

Friday, May 25th  
5:00 p.m.

- Game 1 - Fruitdale vs. McIntosh
- Game 2 - Millry vs. Fruitdale
- Game 3 - Leroy vs. McIntosh
- Game 4 - Leroy vs. WCHS
- Game 5 - Millry vs. WCHS

Varsity games will consist of two 12 minute quarters.  
Cost per person is \$5.

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