

5A teams set for final non-district tune-ups

Written by Russell Hedges
Thursday, 27 September 2012 16:09 -

Airline visits defending 4A champion Neville

Bossier Parish's three Class 5A football teams have one final chance to work out the kinks tonight before starting district play next week.

Two of the teams, the undefeated Airline Vikings and Parkway Panthers, will face their toughest tests of the season to date.

Haughton hosts a struggling Fair Park team coached by former Airline coach Mike Greene.

Meanwhile, the Bossier Bearkats will look to rebound from last week's loss and become the first team to defeat Northwood this season.

Like Airline, Haughton and Parkway, Louisiana New Tech at Plain Dealing will be looking to finish the first half of the season unbeaten.

Here is a look at tonight's games.

Airline (4-0) at Neville (4-0)

Neville is the defending Class 4A state champion. The Tigers were a unanimous No. 1 in this week's LSWA state rankings.

Something's got to give in this one.

Airline's offense, led by three-year starter at quarterback Hayden Hildebrand, is averaging 38.25 points per game.

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Neville has allowed 13 points in four games. The Tigers' first-team defense, which has several new faces this season, hasn't allowed a touchdown.

Airline's defense hasn't been too shabby either. The Vikings are allowing 8.5 points per game.

The teams have one common opponent in Woodlawn. The Tigers defeated the Knights 30-8 in Week 2. The Vikings beat the Knights 42-8 last week.

Neville returns quarterback John Diarse, an LSU commitment who led the Tigers to a 41-14 victory over the Vikings last year.

The 6-foot, 205-pound Diarse is projected to be a safety at LSU.

Last year, Diarse threw a 60-yard touchdown pass late in the first half to give Neville a 27-14 lead at the half and the Tigers pulled away in the second.

Loyola (3-1) at Parkway (4-0)

Loyola suffered its first loss of the season last week, 55-0, to University of Baton Rouge, the fifth-ranked team in Class 2A.

Before that, the Class 3A Flyers had reeled off three straight victories against Class 2A and 1A opponents.

Loyola has a balanced offense led by quarterback Matt Norton. The Flyers are averaging 182.5 yards passing and 187.3 yards per game.

They will be going against a Parkway defense that has grudgingly given up yards this season. The Panthers' first-team defense hasn't given up a touchdown in its last three games.

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Last year, Parkway dominated Loyola, 54-14

Fair Park (0-4) at Haughton (4-0)

Haughton coach Rodney Guin can become the winningest coach in school history tonight.

Last week, he got his 102nd win in 12-plus seasons when the Bucs defeated West Ouachita 28-3, tying him with Bobby Ray McHalfey.

The Bucs are coming off a lackluster performance against West Ouachita so Guin will be looking for a more focused effort tonight. Haughton opens 1-5A play against defending champion Byrd next week.

Fair Park, which shared the District 1-4A title last season, has struggled this season under former Airline coach Mike Greene. Injuries have been a big reason for that.

Haughton won 42-12 last year.

Northwood (4-0) at Bossier (1-3)

Northwood comes into the game on a roll under second-year coach Jim Gatlin, the former Parkway head coach.

The Falcons have shown the ability to win close games. Last week, they knocked off Southwood 28-24. Martavious Washington had eight catches for 25 yards.

The Falcons and the Bearkats have one common opponent.

Northwood defeated North Webster 35-33 in Week 2, while Bossier lost to the Knights 23-13 last week.

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The Bearkats held North Webster to less than 200 yards total offense but turned the ball over five times in the loss last week.

Bossier won 42-0 last year.

Red River (1-2) at La. New Tech/PD (4-0)

Last year, New Tech broke an eight-year losing streak to Red River, winning 28-22.

Lions senior quarterback Deaumante Johnson is coming off an incredible performance in a 60-20 win over Delhi last week. He passed for eight touchdowns and accounted for 460 yards total offense (343 passing, 117 rushing).

The eight touchdown passes is believed to tie a state record also held by Evangel quarterbacks Dez Duron (2008) and Josh Booty (1993).

Red River opened the season with a 20-14 win over Arcadia but ha lost two straight