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**GORDON:** Calhoun, Gordon Central, Sonoraville

# THE HIGH SCHOOL PLAYERS OF THE WEEK



**SHONZIKIO WILLIAMS**  
TUCKER HIGH

The senior wing for the Tigers was the team's leading scorer in the big 67-61 overtime win over Walton in the Tribute to a King Holiday Hardwood Classic on Monday. Williams has had some high point totals this season, going for 24 points (21 in the first half) in a 79-72 win over Lakeside-DeKalb in the DeKalb County Holiday Tournament. He is top-15 in scoring in DeKalb County.



**ERIN HALL**  
WESLEYAN SCHOOL

The senior shooting guard went for a career-high 28 points in the Lady Wolves' 72-59 win over Osborne in the Tribute to a King Holiday Hardwood Classic. Hall was 12-of-20 from the field in the game, including four 3-pointers, and added four rebounds and two assists. Hall, who is committed to play college ball at Wake Forest, is trying to lead Wesleyan to its third straight state title.



**THURSDAY JANUARY 21**  
CAROLINA, 7PM



**TUESDAY JANUARY 26**  
ANAHEIM, 7PM



**TUESDAY FEBRUARY 2**  
TAMPA BAY, 7PM



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# TEAMS TO WATCH

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## Top squads coming into their own in January as season surpasses halfway point

A few weeks into the New Year, we are starting to get a better idea of the identities of some of the state's boys hoops teams. Some of the contenders have been surprises, some were expected to be at the top. But all the following squads are definitely noteworthy in one way or the other. Here are a few squads to keep an eye on, and a look at how they got to where they are now.

**Newton** – The Class 5A Rams are enjoying a strong season with a 14-1 record at press time, the only loss being to '09 4A semifinalist Richmond Academy by five points. The team went undefeated in a Tennessee tournament in November and is fresh off a drubbing of Luella last Tuesday, 73-55. At 6-0 in the region, a playoff spot is highly likely, but what will the Rams have in store when they face some of the top teams in the state? Newton has lost to the only ranked team it has played, and isn't scheduled to play any ranked teams until the playoffs would start. Is the gaudy record a byproduct of less-than-stellar competition?

**Westlake** – The South Fulton school loses the best player in Georgia off last year's team (Jelan Kendrick – transferred to Wheeler) but simply proceeds to knock off most of the competition in its way until Tuesday when it lost to a good but not great Morrow team for its second loss of the season. The Lions are 15-2 at press time thanks in large part to the play of Clemson commit Marcus Thornton, a 6-8 player who can score and defend. With a win over Rice (N.Y.), the No. 17 team in the nation at the time according to USA Today, in the Chick-fil-A Classic over the holidays, we've seen what Westlake can do against top talent. The '09 5A semifinalist should again be a factor deep into the playoffs.

**Norcross, Mill Creek** – The Region 7-AAAAA monster, Norcross, may just get a challenge from upstart Mill Creek this winter. Norcross isn't the juggernaut it was when it won three state titles, the last coming in '08, but the Blue Devils aren't bereft of talent. Norcross is led by swingman Jeremy Lamb, headed to UConn, and sophomore shooter Chris Bolden, a Brookwood transfer, has stepped up nicely lately. The X-factor for Norcross will be how it copes without big, bruising forward Adrian Hubbard, who left the team a few weeks ago to nurse an injury and start preparing for his football career at Alabama as a tight end; he also could have been looked at as a basketball prospect had he stuck with the hardwood. Norcross gets a

tough out-of-state test against Thomas Jefferson (N.Y.) this Saturday, a game that should tell us if they can truly hang with the big boys this season. Mill Creek, on the other hand, has the same 9-1 record as Norcross in the region, but dropped a nine-point decision to the Devils last month; they'll get another crack at Norcross on Jan. 29 on the road. Mill Creek has surprised by surging into the rankings this season, but will want to prove its legit with some big second-half region wins.

**Chamblee, Lakeside-DeKalb, Miller Grove, Tucker** – What else can you say about Region 6-AAAA? These four teams are the frontrunners for playoff bids, although talented Stone Mountain and Southwest DeKalb teams will have a say come region tourney time; as we know, the four best teams don't always make it in. But in looking at these squads, each one ranked in at least one poll, the league has four elite teams. Chamblee is led by the scoring of senior David Mason and has risen to top-five status already. Lakeside-DeKalb is a quick, guard-oriented team that averages well over 80 points a game and recently dropped 111 on a good East Hall squad in the Tribute to a King Holiday Hardwood Classic at Centennial on MLK Day. Miller Grove loses Mfon Udofia and Stephen Hill to Georgia Tech (basketball and football, respectively), but has perhaps the state's best post tandem in sophomore Tony Parker (pictured) and senior Donte Williams, both 6-foot-9. And Tucker lost Virginia Tech freshman Manny Atkins from last year's runner-up squad (the Tigers were blown out by Miller Grove in the finals), but center Brandon Dawson (Kennesaw State commit), wing Shonzikio Williams and sharpshooter Chris Kingsberry have Tucker clicking again. It will be a slugfest from here on out in this league, but at least two or three talented teams will miss out on the postseason again from Region 6-AAAA.

**Rockdale County** – One of the surprises of the state so far, Rockdale has quietly compiled an 18-1 record, with the only loss a one-point defeat to out-of-state Gadsden City (Ala.). The Bulldogs are led by junior swingman Kevin Ware, a 6-4 prospect who can really fill it up. Fellow junior Bernard Thompson can also stuff the stat sheet as well. Rockdale has great wins, including a tournament championship at the Florida Shootout over the holidays, where Ware was named MVP. The 'Dogs have dropped top in-state competition, too, downing region rival

Clarke Central, a ranked squad, on Jan. 9, and Class 5A Stephenson on Dec. 28. Can they translate early success into a strong region finish and a postseason run?

**Dunwoody** – The Wildcats are back after a tough transition year in '09 which saw the team dealing with the loss of a number of top college prospects. Javon McKay is one of the top seniors in the state, and he's got Dunwoody back into the rankings and back onto the competition's minds. The 6-4 McKay gets help from big point guard Shane Porchea, also 6-4, on a senior-laden roster. Dunwoody lost 79-57 to Region 5-AAA powerhouse Columbia, a league opponent with its own hopes of playoff glory. The Wildcats have a relatively easy schedule between now and the final game, a home matchup with Columbia on Feb. 12 to close the regular season. The outcome in that contest could tell us whether the 'Cats are a contender or a pretender in 2010.

**Greater Atlanta Christian** – Class 2A's top-ranked boys team has streaked out to a 15-1 record, staying undefeated in the state with the only loss to a powerful Melrose (Tenn.) team in the finals of the Arby's Shootout over the holidays. The Spartans made a statement when they knocked off national power United Faith Christian (N.C.) at Centennial in the MLK Day showcase last Monday, showcasing a combination of great physical talent and maturity. This is a well-coached team that, right now, should be the favorite to take the title. Senior center Trent Wiedeman is a smart post player that can display bursts of athleticism as well as a great outside shot; he's headed to the College of Charleston next year. Junior wing player Malcolm Brogdon is the next big thing for GAC, as he scored 27 points against the tough United Faith team, which sports a

handful of D-I prospects.

Cover photos of Norcross' Jeremy Lamb and Westlake's Jeff Newberry are courtesy of Nat Carter/SydCamVisions. Next week, Score Prep will take a look at some of the more intriguing girls squads from around the state. Ewalt can be reached at [aevalt@scoreatl.com](mailto:aevalt@scoreatl.com).



**SLAM IT DOWN:** Miller Grove's powerful 6-foot-9 sophomore Tony Parker goes up for a jam. Parker is already one of the leaders on a relatively young Wolverines team that has lost six games to top competition, but that should be ready to defend its Class 4A title come the postseason. Photo courtesy of Nat Carter/SydCamVisions.



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# ON THE PREP BEAT




BRIAN JONES

## Centreplex hosts wrestling state duals; GAC impresses in MLK Day showcase

Macon was the center of attention last weekend as the GHSA wrestling state duals took place at the Macon Centreplex. In Class 5A, Collins Hill defeated Pope 38-9 in the finals to win its third consecutive state title. Eleven Collins Hill wrestlers claimed victories in the finals, including T.J. Mitchell and Joel Smith. Mitchell has committed to Virginia Tech and Smith will spend his college career at Arizona State. The Eagles made their way to the finals by defeating Johnson-Savannah, Centennial and Valdosta. In the third-place match, Camden County defeated Valdosta 38-26.

In Class 4A, Loganville defeated Alexander 33-28 in the finals to claim the state title. Will Hale, Aaron Quade, Zach Wolaver, Matt Cragin, Jeremiah Vaught, Jon Williams, Justin Fancher and John Smith all came away with wins to help Loganville top Alexander. In the third-place match, Cass defeated Marist 37-21.

Gilmer was the top team in Class 3A as it defeated West Forsyth 47-18. Gilmer was able to dominate the lower weight classes with wins by Justin Karr (112), Zach Horton (125), Danyhul Becker (130) and Tyler Davenport (135). The Bobcats got past Riverwood, Columbus and Eastside to make their way into the finals against West Forsyth.

In Class 2A, Jefferson claimed the top spot with its 41-22 win over Sonoraville in the final match. Sonoraville got off to a strong start as Jay Teague defeated Isaac Kelly in the 112-pound class. They also got a win from the earlier stages of the finals when Richard Davis got a 12-5 decision over Daniel Barber in the 130-pound weight class. But Jefferson got on a hot streak in the middleweights to earn the school's ninth title in a row.

And finally in Class A competition, Bremen was able to top Gordon Lee 44-27 in the championship match. It was a contest that went back and forth, as Bremen would

win a couple of matches but Gordon Lee would follow with a couple of wins. One of the key wins for Bremen was in the 160-pound weight class when Slade Madden defeated Austin Goodlet via pin with less than 30 seconds left in the third period. That started a Bremen rally where they would win the last three of four matches to secure the victory. Collins Hill, Loganville, Gilmer, Jefferson and Gordon Lee will look to do the same thing when the traditional state finals take place in a month.

### AROUND THE COURT ...

Basketball was in full gear on Martin Luther King Day as the third annual Tribute to a King Holiday Harwood Classic took place at Centennial. There were five games that started from noon to 9:30 p.m., but the marquee game had to be the boys contest between Greater Atlanta Christian and United Faith, a school from Charlotte, N.C. United Faith is considered one of the best programs in the country, but it was the Spartans' night to shine as they took down the Falcons 78-55. Trent Wiedeman, a College of Charleston signee scored 11 points and pulled down 13 rebounds while Elliott Long added 22 points, which was a career best. Malcolm Brogdon added 27 points in the win. GAC has proved that it can play with some of the best teams in the country, losing a close game to Melrose (Tenn.) 55-51, a team that was ranked No. 21 in the nation at the time. With the win, the Spartans improved their record to 15-1. They will have another showcase game on Jan. 30 when they take on Greene County (Ala.) in the Norcross Showcase at Norcross High School.

In football news, Da'Rick Rogers is getting more attention by the national media, as MaxPreps named the Calhoun receiver the Small Schools National Player of the year. Rogers ended the 2009 season with 85 catches for 1,647 yards and two touchdowns and led

the Yellow Jackets to two consecutive state title appearances. Other players to make the Small Schools All-American team were Kolton Huston and Jessel Curry, both from Buford, and they also made the first team. Lineman Catlin Alford out of Adairsville and quarterback Nick Marshall from Wilcox County made the second team. To be considered for the MaxPreps award, a player had to be at a school with less than 1,000 current students.

Two more of the top players in Georgia were honored last week, as Alec Ogletree and Garrison Smith got National High School Player of the Year awards from the Touchdown Club of Atlanta. Ogletree was named Bobby Dodd National High School Back of the Year

while Smith was named Bobby Dodd National High School Lineman of the Year. They will receive their award at Georgia Tech on Feb. 13, when the Touchdown Club of Atlanta will name its all-metro team.

Northside-Warner Robins has found a new coach. The man that will be succeeding Conrad Nix will be Kevin Kinsler, who has been Northside's defensive coordinator for the last 15 years. Since 1998, his defense has allowed less than 10 points per game nine times and 15 points per game just once. Nix decided to retire after leading Northside to two state titles in 2006 and 2007.

Jones can be reached at [bjones@scoreatl.com](mailto:bjones@scoreatl.com).

## WRESTLING STATE DUALS TOP FINISHERS

<b>AAAAA</b>	<b>AAAA</b>
1st Place.....Collins Hill	1st Place.....Loganville
2nd Place.....Pope	2nd Place.....Alexander
3rd Place.....Camden County	3rd Place.....Cass
4th Place.....Valdosta	4th Place.....Marist
<b>AAA</b>	<b>AA</b>
1st Place.....Gilmer	1st Place.....Jefferson
2nd Place.....West Forsyth	2nd Place.....Sonoraville
3rd Place.....LaFayette	3rd Place.....Henry County
4th Place.....Eastside	4th Place.....Lovett
<b>A</b>	
1st Place.....Bremen	
2nd Place.....Gordon Lee	
3rd Place.....Wesleyan	
4th Place.....Bowdon	

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# NEWS FROM AROUND THE COUNTY




BRIAN JONES

## Pope finishes runner-up at state duals; Walton struggles without Harrow, Rice

Last weekend at the state duals, the Pope wrestling team looked to finally get over the hump and stake its claim as the top team in the state. The problem was that Collins Hill happens to be one of the best in the country and they proved it last weekend at the Macon Centreplex, defeating the Greyhounds 38-9 in the finals of the GHSA state duals. The Eagles started off strong, pulling away with a 20-0 lead. Pope was able to get on the board with a win by Patrick Anthony, but still trailed 20-3. Hudson Power and Charlie Farr were the only other Pope wrestlers to pick up wins in the finals. Despite the fact that they came up short of their goal, the Greyhounds did have a strong showing overall as Farr and Anthony finished with a 4-0 record while Brandon Savransky, Thomas O'Reilly, Tommy Nickles, Brooks Climmons and Power went 3-1. This was the second time the Greyhounds lost to Collins Hill this season as they faced each other in the Walton Duals, where Collins Hill won 38-14 earlier in the season.

Kennesaw Mountain was another team from the area that had a strong showing at the state duals, defeating Union Grove and Centennial to reach the consolation semifinals before losing to Camden County. Jonathan Rivera and Ryan Maus went 5-0 to help the Mustangs earn a 3-2 record at the duals. It was their best showing since the program started wrestling. Jonathan Herrera, Alex Bremner and Julius Peacock went 4-1 for Kennesaw Mountain.

### ON THE HARDWOOD ...

It was a rough weekend for the Walton boys basketball team as it suffered tough losses

against two of the top teams in the state. On Friday, the Raiders took on Centennial and they had to play without leading scorer Ryan Harrow (stemming from a December collapse during a game due to dehydration) and guard G'Mitri Rice (disciplinary reasons). The Raiders lost 86-80 to the No. 3 team in the state. The leading scores for Walton were forwards Kamren Belin and Jack Kramer who scored 22 and 21 points, respectively. The Raiders were winning 25-22 at the end of the first quarter, but that would be the only time that they would lead in the contest as the Knights took advantage of the Raiders' missing talent to earn the win.

On Monday, Walton took part in the Tribute to a King Holiday Hardwood Classic at Centennial High School where they took on the Tucker Tigers in the last game of the evening. It was a game that went back and forth, but it was the Tigers that prevailed in the end, winning 67-61 in overtime. It was a game in which the Raiders were again missing Rice and Harrow, so the Raiders were shorthanded against a team that is considered one of the best in Class 4A.

Looking ahead, Walton has a big game on Saturday as it takes on Wheeler, the defending state champion and a team that is coming off a disappointing loss to Campbell. Harrow and Rice will be back for this game so expect the Raiders get a boost offensively. However, the Wildcats probably have the best player in the state in Jelani Kendrick and will be looking to finish the season strong. This will be the first of two

meetings for these two teams. They will face each other again on Feb. 12.

In girls basketball news, Walton had a dominating performance on Friday against Centennial, winning 72-38. The Lady Raiders jumped on Centennial quickly as they got off to a 24-8 lead in the first quarter. Bria Bourgeois lead Walton with 21 points and 10 rebounds while Sarah Durdaller added 17 points and 19 rebounds. The Lady Raiders tried to do the game thing against Kennesaw Mountain, but came up short, losing 58-48 in Saturday. At press time the Lady Raiders are 9-5 with a 3-1 record in region play.

A quick look at the basketball rankings shows that McEachern and Campbell are the only county teams that are ranked for the girls. Campbell is No. 6 while the Lady Indians stand at No. 7 in Class 5A.

For the boys, Walton stands at No. 5 while Wheeler is not far behind at No. 7. That will change due to the fact that both teams will play each other on Saturday. In 4A, Hillgrove stands at No. 8 and Whitefield Academy is the top team in Class A.

*Jones can be reached at [bjones@scoreatl.com](mailto:bjones@scoreatl.com).*

## COBB COUNTY SCHEDULE

### TUESDAY, JANUARY 26

#### BOYS BASKETBALL

**Campbell vs. Pope**  
**East Paulding vs. Kennesaw Mtn.**  
**Osborne vs. Wheeler**  
**North Cobb vs. McEachern**  
**Pebblebrook vs. East Coweta**

**South Cobb vs. Marietta**  
**Walton vs. Lassiter**  
**Allatoona vs. North Paulding**  
**Hillgrove vs. Sprayberry**  
**Landmark Chr. vs. Whitefield Acad.**

#### GIRLS BASKETBALL

**Campbell vs. Pope**  
**Cherokee vs. Harrison**  
**Kell vs. Centennial**  
**North Cobb vs. McEachern**  
**Osborne vs. Wheeler**

**South Cobb vs. Marietta**  
**Walton vs. Lassiter**  
**Hillgrove vs. Sprayberry**  
**Galloway vs. North Cobb Christian**  
**Walker vs. Providence Christian**

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# AJC GIRLS BASKETBALL RANKINGS

## Class AAAAA

1. Redan
2. Parkview
3. Norcross
4. Mill Creek
5. Stephenson
6. Campbell
7. McEachern
8. Westlake
9. Bradwell Institute
10. Douglass

## Class AAAA

1. Fayette County
2. Rome
3. Southwest DeKalb
4. Northwest Whitfield
5. Douglas County
6. Madison County
7. Bainbridge
8. Statesboro
9. Forest Park
10. Osborne

## Class AAA

1. Kendrick
2. Washington County
3. Carver-Atlanta
4. Lakeview-Fort Oglethorpe
5. Columbia
6. Pickens
7. Rutland
8. Chestatee
9. Stephens County
10. Franklin County

## Class AA

1. Buford
2. Laney
3. Rabun County
4. Vidalia
5. Northeast-Macon
6. Greater Atlanta Christian
7. Fannin County
8. Lovett
9. Henry County
10. Dodge County

## Class A

1. Wesleyan
2. Taylor County
3. Randolph-Clay
4. Calvary Day
5. Paideia
6. Gordon Lee
7. Southwest Atlanta Christian
8. Holy Innocents'
9. Savannah Christian
10. Bryan County

# AJC BOYS BASKETBALL RANKINGS

## Class AAAAA

1. Milton
2. Westlake
3. Centennial
4. Norcross
5. Walton
6. Central Gwinnett
7. Wheeler
8. McEachern
9. Mill Creek
10. Newton

## Class AAAA

1. Rockdale County
2. Chamblee
3. Miller Grove
4. Tucker
5. Richmond Academy
6. Cass
7. Fayette County
8. Hillgrove
9. Bainbridge
10. North Clayton

## Class AAA

1. South Atlanta
2. Columbia
3. Liberty County
4. Monroe
5. LaGrange
6. Elbert County
7. Dunwoody
8. Westover
9. Franklin County
10. North Hall

## Class AA

1. Greater Atlanta Christian
2. Northeast-Macon
3. Decatur
4. Dublin
5. Laney
6. Southwest-Macon
7. Dade County
8. Thomasville
9. Putnam County
10. Jefferson

## Class A

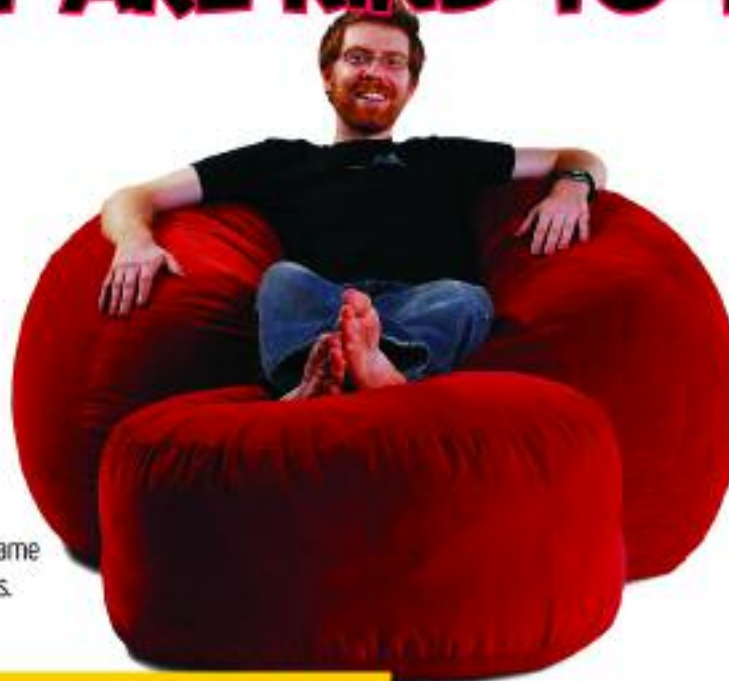
1. Whitefield Academy
2. Wilkinson County
3. Wesleyan
4. Lanier County
5. Claxton
6. Wilcox County
7. Terrell County
8. Bowdon
9. Pace Academy
10. Greenville

*Rankings based on results through Sunday, January 17 and were compiled by Todd Holcomb and Chip Saye.*

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