

COBB FOOTBALL FRIDAY

Marietta, MPC, Walker, Whitefield secure playoff berths

- Adam Carrington
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Rashad Torrence, Azeez Ojulari and their Marietta teammates received a second chance at the postseason when they earned the Class AAAAAAA at-large bid. The Blue Devils along with Class A squads Mount Paran Christian, Walker and Whitefield Academy all found out they made the postseason on Monday.
Mike Beaverson

Marietta is officially in the playoffs for the first time in four seasons after securing the at-large bid for the Class AAAAAAA state playoffs.

The Blue Devils did not finish the regular season the way they wanted with three straight losses to North Cobb, McEachern and North Paulding, but now they can hit the reset button and look at this as a brand new season.

Marietta (6-4) started the season by winning six of its first seven games that culminated with Region 3AAAAAAA wins over Kennesaw Mountain and eventual champion Hillgrove before hitting its skid.

“Obviously we did enough to qualify and get in. Nobody on (this) team (playing) at Marietta has been to the playoffs before,” Marietta coach Richard Morgan said. “We know of the mistakes we have made in the last three games. We have to learn from them and move on. Hopefully, it will prepare us for the playoffs.”

The Blue Devils became the second team from Cobb County to earn the at-large bid in as many seasons. Lassiter earned the inaugural at-large bid last season.

Highly-touted quarterback Harrison Bailey has been out with a shoulder injury and not taken the field since Marietta’s win over Pebblebrook in a non-region game September 8. Morgan said he took snaps last week at practice and is expected to practice more this week, but it is still undecided if he will play.

Sophomore Ra’Shan Bass stepped in as the backup quarterback starting in Week 4 and had led the Blue Devils to a 3-4 record as a starter.

It is also confirmed that Mount Paran Christian, Walker and Whitefield Academy made the Class A private-school playoffs.

Whitefield is back in the playoffs for the first time since 2009. After losing the first two games to start the season, the Wolfpack bounced back to win seven of their last eight.

“It’s been such a long time since they made the playoffs,” Whitefield coach John Hunter said. “Any time you do it at any level, it’s a big deal. It’s one of those ‘Thank you Jesus’ moments and I’m glad we have a chance.”

The Wolfpack (7-3), who finished 12th overall in the last power ratings, will have a rematch with Walker in the first round. They will host the Wolverines on Friday after beating them 24-7 just two weeks ago.

Walker (5-5) was rated 21st, good enough to seal a playoffs spot for the second straight year with a 28-21 win over North Cobb Christian in the Region 6A crossover game last Friday.

The winner of the Whitefield Academy, Walker matchup will travel to Prince Avenue Christian for Round 2.

Mount Paran Christian (9-1) finished third in the power ratings and earned a bye into the second round. The Eagles will host the winner of Our Lady of Mercy and Mt. Vernon next week.