

# SCHOOL RETURN IS JUST A MONTH AWAY



**Above:** Crockett's Volleyball Camp begins July 8, the first under the direction of new head coach Andrew Laman. (Photo by Ron Barry)

## By Ron Barry

When you wake up tomorrow morning – or stay up past midnight tonight – it will be July, and a sobering thought may kick in: School starts again in exactly one month!

It may be doubly hard to let that information sink in when you consider the heat wave of recent days. It was so hot yesterday that I saw a dog chasing a cat, and they were both walking. I waited until the sun went down to begin a five-mile walk, and the air was still so thick and sticky it was like marching through cotton candy.

Anyway, life must go on, and it certainly is scheduled to in Crockett County as the district schools gear up for Day 1 of the 2024-25 academic year on August 1.

While July begins with the second week of the TSSAA's mandated "Dead Period" – in which no organized athletics are allowed at or by schools – many Crockett students will return with a vengeance on July 8, when the CCHS Summer Volleyball Camp kicks off in the daytime and the girls' soccer team holds an official tryout session from 6-8 p.m. The softball squad will have a tryout event the following evening at 5 p.m.

Football players will have early morning workouts and weightlifting periods, as well as occasional 7-on-7 events against other schools, which don't count as official practices by TSSAA rules. Dedicated cross-country runners will be logging miles on their own, the cheer squad gets together three days each week to sharpen their routines, and Cavalier golfers – who play the first sport to actually begin competitive events this "fall" – are preparing for the initial team practice date of July 15.

Volleyball, cross-country, and girls' soccer can legally begin team practices on July 29 by TSSAA rules, while the football team may begin "heat acclimatization" sessions on July 22. That's defined as two days in helmets only and three days in helmets and shoulder pads, prior to official practice beginning on July 29.

The fall sports season will bring the head coaching debut of Andrew Laman in volleyball and the return of Carli Branson at the helm of girls' soccer after a year away from actively coaching, although she remained involved administratively. One July highlight will be a Lady Cav Alumni Game on the 27th at 7 p.m., with players requested to RSVP regarding participation by July 13.

Laman has been an assistant to long-time Lady Cav coach Bobby Rawson, who will remain in the program as one of Laman's assistants. Branson will reclaim leadership of girls' soccer and will also assist new boys' head coach Joseph Soriano in the spring. Soriano will be an assistant with the girls' team along with Jennie Agee, and Jonathan Grajeda will continue as a boys' assistant in the spring.

Volleyball camp is for students entering the fourth through eighth grades and will be held on July 8, 10, 15, and 17 from 11 a.m. until noon each of those days. Registration must be made by July 5 and can be done at the CCHS Volleyball Facebook page online.

There's also a Cheer Camp scheduled July 9-11 from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. for girls from Pre-K through sixth grade in the CCHS auxiliary gym.

The softball tryout July 9 will be the second one for new head coach Baron Jimmerson, who comes to Crockett from a successful run at South Gibson County. Jimmerson must try to make up for the departure of 10 graduate seniors, including seven who were key cogs in the normal everyday lineup.

Coach Kayla Irvin's Lady Cav Basketball Camp is scheduled for July 15-17 from 9-11 each morning in the CCHS auxiliary gym. Coach Chris Eubanks will begin his second year as head man for the Crockett golf program, which began a massive rebuilding project last season after the graduation of the entire starting lineup the year before. His team will be extremely young again in 2024, but he expects to continue developing a solid core that will be very competitive as they gain experience. Golf is the first "fall" sport to get underway in the new school year, with teams allowed to play matches as early as July 29.

All "fall" sports are subject to the TSSAA's heat index rule, which states that any scheduled outdoor game, match, or practice must be postponed or moved indoors if that day's reading exceeds 104 degrees.



**Above:** A second round of girls' soccer tryouts will be held July 9. One of the top returnees to welcome back Coach Carli Branson is Dani Rios. (Photo by Ron Barry)



While sports have always been a mainstay of Crockett County, there are other school activities abounding in July. Another group that will be attempting to beat the heat are the Crockett County Marching Cavaliers, who will be involved in two weeks of Band Camp between July 8 and July 19 in preparation for their upcoming football halftime shows and several band competitions in which they'll participate this fall.

The Summer Feeding Program, featured at six different locations, continues on July 1 and 2 before taking a three-day Fourth-of-July holiday break. It will resume for its final week July 8-12. Both breakfast and lunch are served from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. each day at the same time, and meals do not have to be consumed on-site. Whitney Thornton coordinates that program for the School District.

All three Crockett County School District elementary schools – Friendship, Maury City, and Gadsden – have released their school supply lists for the fall. Each can be found online on the Facebook pages of the individual schools or in the CCSD feed.

The supply lists always trigger a reminder that the state of Tennessee offers a tax-free weekend in order to assist in the purchase of clothing, school supplies, and computers. This year it's July 26-28 (Friday through Sunday). Items sold online are eligible.

There is also a Language Camp sponsored by the West Tennessee Hearing and Speech Center for ages 7-9, scheduled for July 8-11 at 65 Ridgecrest Road in Jackson.

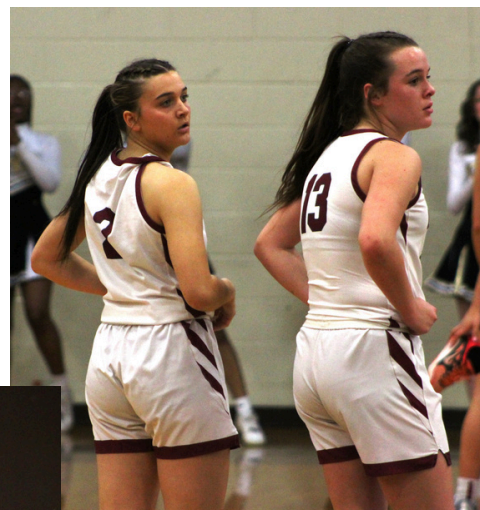
Additionally, health science teachers Gayla Mayfield and Candy Stallings just returned from Houston with a contingent of eight high school students who represented Crockett County at the national HOSA convention for future health occupation providers. Crockett's HOSA program is one of the highlight features of the CCHS varied offerings.

The first day of school may still be a month away, but there's plenty to do between now and then for many area students.



**Left:** Makayla Murphy and her teammates will be assisting coaches Brandi Wilson and Ellary Brewster with a Cheer Camp in the CCHS auxiliary gym July 9-11. (Photo by Ron Barry)

**Below:** The Lady Cav Basketball Camp will run from July 15-17, where kids will have the opportunity to learn from returning sharpshooters Karlee Castellaw (left) and Jordyn Maddox (right). (Photo by Ron Barry)



**Above:** Crockett County will have its second softball team tryout July 9; the Lady Cavs need to identify a third outfielder to join returnees Hannah Carter (left) and Sadie Hoover (right). (Photo by Ron Barry)



**Left:** This happy contingent represented CCHS at the national HOSA convention in Houston, along with ..

**Above:** ... rising senior Zoey Burleson, who will be a Tennessee state officer this year.

