DRE WALKER SIGNS FOOTBALL GRANT WITH UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL ARKANSAS



Above: Crockett tight end / linebacker Dre Walker -- flanked by his family -- signs to continue his football career and education at the University of Central Arkansas. (Photo by Ron Barry)

When the word you hear most often mentioned by a coaching staff about a player is "respectful," you know you're dealing with a pretty solid young man.

Judging from the accolades tossed around Monday afternoon from Crockett County's football mentors – which also included plenty of phrases such as "team-first guy," "did anything we ever asked of him," and "helped everybody get better" – it's no wonder Cavalier tight end / linebacker Dre Walker will have an opportunity to continue his career at the college level.

For much of the 2025 season, it was thought that Walker was to be headed for the University of Delaware. As the time drew nearer to make a final choice, however, the lure of being seven hours closer to home made an offer from the University of Central Arkansas more appealing. And on Monday afternoon in the CCHS Little Theater, surrounded by teammates, coaches, family, and friends, Walker made it official: he'll be a UCA Bear next fall.

Central Arkansas is coached by Nathan Brown, a former standout quarterback at the school. The Bears compete at the NCAA Division I Football Championship Subdivision level as a member of the United Athletic Conference, which includes Abilene Christian, Tarleton State, Southern Utah, West Georgia, Austin Peay, Eastern Kentucky, Utah Tech, and North Alabama. The Bears finished with a 3-9 overall record in 2025, with a 2-6 mark in conference play.

Walker was a key cog in the Crockett machine that compiled a 9-3 record in his senior season, eventually losing in Round 2 of the TSSAA Playoffs to Nashville's Pearl-Cohn. For the season, Walker caught 15 passes for 227 yards and two touchdowns and also rushed 12 times for 146 yards. As a junior, Walker caught an 84-yard scoring pass against powerhouse Huntingdon and tallied a pair of touchdowns – one on a fake field goal – against Fayette-Ware.

Cavalier Head Coach Kevin Ward opened Monday's signing ceremony by praising Walker's work ethic and his desire to constantly encourage his teammates and help those around him become better. "I don't think we ever started a defensive series against anybody where I didn't see Dre giving a teammate a high five or a fist bump, just to get them ready," Ward said. "When we have camps, he's always working with young kids. He always put the team first in everything he did."

Several of Ward's assistants – Josh Holt, Jack Burgess, Clark Scott, and Tyler Gadlen – offered glowing praises of Walker's play and demeanor. "He may be the most humble player I've ever coached," Holt said, "and he played wherever we asked him to. He's been at corner, linebacker, and defensive end. About the only place he didn't play was noseguard, and he would have done that if we asked him." Holt closed his portion by quoting Psalm 37:23-24, reminding Walker there will be a lot of ups and downs in college, but "The Lord delights in the way of the man whose steps he has made firm; though he stumble, he will not fall, for the Lord upholds him with his hand."

Burgess spoke of coaching Walker in a young boys' league when "Dre basically knew nothing about football. But he was the biggest kid on the field, and once he figured things out, he was great. He has remained coachable all these years, and I can't wait to see him play at Central Arkansas."

Scott and Gadlen have both coached Walker since middle school basketball, and offered significant compliments on his development along the way. As did the others, they mentioned how respectful Walker has been to everyone around him, from coaches to teachers to other players.

Walker will be playing in a high school all-star game this weekend at Austin Peay.

MIDDLE SCHOOL BASKETBALL: Addison Ward scored five of her seven points in the fourth quarter as CCMS rallied from a halftime deficit to edge past Martin 25-19 Monday night in Alamo. Khylee Cobb led Coach Jamar Turner's Lady Cavaliers with 11 points as the team improved its record to 8-7.

In the nightcap, Martin placed four players in double figures as they routed the Cavs 58-26. Jaylen Frye's nine points led Crockett's offense, but no other player managed more than four. The CCMS boys are now 5-10 on the season.

Both CCMS teams play at Union City Thursday night.

Crockett Girls 25, Martin 19 (Dec 8)
Crockett – Khylee Cobb 11, Addison Ward 7, Addie Whitby 6, Madison Cathey 1. 2-Pt FG: 8. 3-Pt FG: 2 (Cobb, Ward). FT: 3-6. Record: 8-7.

Martin – Symone Culbreath 6, Emma Rhodes 4, Zoey Hickey 3, SJ Forsythe 2, Avery Roberts 2, Blakely Snider 2. 2-Pt FG: 5. 3-Pt FG: 1 (Hickey). FT: 6-7.

Martin 58, Crockett Boys 26 (Dec 8)
Crockett – Jaylen Frye 9, Jordan Young 4, Theo Lawrence 4, Messiah McCurry 2, Kamden Lewis 2, Dre Thompson 2, Hudson Enfinger 2, Jayce Cobb 1. 2-Pt FG: 8. 3-Pt FG: 1 (Young). FT: 7-10. Record: 5-10.

Martin – Elijah Huff 14, Lane Trevathan 11, Camden Papich 10, Armani Clay 10, Ethan Campbell 4, Cash McDaniel 3, Nazir Martin 2, Emmett Zimmerman 2, Wade Vernon 2. 2-Pt FG: 18. 3-Pt FG: 5 (Trevathan 2, Papich, Clay, McDaniel). FT: 7-11.



Above: Surrounded by his high school football coaches, Dre Walker was featured at the signing ceremony Monday afternoon. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: The definitive picture of Dre Walker -- captured beautifully by Beth Williams -- saw him backlit through the fog at Memphis Kirby during this fall's playoffs. (Photo by Beth Williams)



Above: Dre Walker had a 6-yard touchdown run against Middle College in Crockett's 2025 season opener. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Dre Walker bursts past a Dyersburg tackler. (Photo by Ron Barry)





Above: Dre Walker picked off this pass interception against South Side. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Left: Dre Walker checks his play band during the infamous "Rain Game" at South Side during his junior year. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: As a junior, Dre Walker broke this 84-yard touchdown reception against powerful Huntingdon. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Below: As a sophomore, Dre Walker had this touchdown reception against Lexington. (Photo by Ron Barry)





Above: Dre Walker could play defense as well, getting this sack against Ripley this season. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Crockett's football team surrounds Dre Walker at his signing ceremony. (Photo by Beth Williams)