



## A-Days were exciting

Alabama and Auburn completed their respective spring workouts with A-Day games in Tuscaloosa and Auburn Saturday. Somewhere between 80,000 and 100,000 fans were in Auburn to show support for new head coach Gus Malzhan and his staff and the players and to toss one more roll of toilet paper in the

historic oaks at Toomer's Corner.

At the game, the Tigers' faithful saw Malzhan's offensive genius at work as the first-team offense hung 35 points on the first team defense and the second team defense shut out the second team

offense. While a lot more water must still pass under the bridge between now and the start of the 2013 season, it appears, at least from the A-Day game, that the Tigers should be able to improve on last season's offensive output.

But, with some key defensive starters bolting to the NFL, Auburn's defense is in a rebuilding mold, which accounts for some of the offensive's success Saturday.

However, Malzhan has proven to be a good coach and will do the things necessary to right Auburn's ship and bring the Tigers back to prominence in the SEC soon.

Across the state in "Title Town," Nick Saban spent much of the afternoon scratching his head over the Tide's uncharacteristic six turnovers during the A-Day game.

Even senior quarterback A.J. McCarron, who's name is already being mentioned as a possible Heisman Trophy

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## BRIEFS

### Y-Fit

The Monroe Area YMCA is sponsoring Y-Fit, a fitness program for ages 16 and up each Monday through Thursday at 6 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. Classes begin Monday, and the class is free. The instructor is a Level 1 cross fit coach. For more information, contact rebecca\_ymca@frontier-net.net.

### Turkey shoot

Range Volunteer Fire Department will sponsor a turkey shoot Saturday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the fire station on Highway 41 at Range.

## THIS WEEK

### BASEBALL

Thursday, April 25

AISA, 3A State Playoffs: Macon-East Academy at Monroe Academy, 4 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.

Friday, April 26

AISA, 3A State Playoffs: (If game) Macon-East Academy at Monroe Academy, 4 p.m. AHSAA, 1A State Playoffs: St. Luke's at J.U. Blacksher, 2 and 4 p.m. ASCC at L.B. Wallace, 1 p.m.

Saturday, April 27

AHSAA, 1A State Playoffs: (If game) St. Luke's at J.U. Blacksher, noon ASCC at L.B. Wallace, noon

### SOFTBALL

Friday, April 26

ASCC at Wallace-Hanceville, 4 p.m.

Sunday, April 28

L.B. Wallace at ASCC, 1 p.m.

# BHS advances in playoffs

*Bulldogs to take on No. 2 Saint Luke's Friday*

BY MIKE QUALLS  
MANAGING EDITOR

J.U. Blacksher reasserted itself as a playoff team Saturday when the Bulldogs defeated Fruitdale 6-2 and 10-0 in the first round of the AHSAA, Class 1A state baseball playoffs at Uria.

Blacksher, 10-10, saw its first playoff action in three seasons – but its 17th consecutive playoff appearance in Class 1A. Blacksher made 16 straight appearances, including two quarterfinals and a semifinal showing, before jumping to Class 2A in the 2010-11 season.

It was also head coach Justin Mixon's first appearance in the state playoffs as the Bulldogs' head coach. He replaced Skip Bell, who led the school to 16 straight playoff appearances before resigning at the end of the 2009-10 season.

Mixon, and assistant coach John Bohannon, may have the youngest team in the state playoffs with two eighth-graders and three freshmen in the starting lineup along with two juniors and two seniors.

Blacksher now advances to the second round against No. 2-ranked Saint Luke's Episcopal School of Mobile. Two games of the best-of-three-games series



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Blacksher's Ty McMullen puts the tag on a Fruitdale runner Saturday. (Photo by Mike Qualls)

## Three MCHS standouts sign

BY MIKE QUALLS  
MANAGING EDITOR

Alabama Southern's men's basketball coach Trent Eager didn't have to look far to find his first three recruits for the 2013-14 season.

Eager has signed, from left, seated, Monroe County High School standouts Niles Davis, Anton Montgomery and Deveon Kimbrough, who is also The Journal's Player of the Year.

Kimbrough averaged 10.3 points, 2.3 rebounds and 1.9 steals this season. Davis averaged eight points and four assists per game. Montgomery averaged 9.6 points, nine rebounds and

1.7 blocks per game.

"These young men were a huge parts of their team during their careers at MCHS and are proven winners," said Eager. "It's a great day for ASCC when we can get players of their abilities. I believe each one of these young men could have a huge impact on our success and what we are trying to do as a basketball program.

"With the addition of these young men, I'm very excited about the direction of our program. We will be able to keep some exciting basketball and players right here at home!"

Eager served as interim  
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MCHS standouts, from left, seated, Niles Davis, Anton Montgomery and Deveon Kimbrough sign with ASCC as, from left, standing, MCHS coach Karl Johnson, MCHS Principal Maurice Woody and ASCC coach Trent Eager look on. (Photo by Mike Qualls)

## Lady Vols end season

BY MIKE QUALLS  
MANAGING EDITOR

Monroe Academy's Lady Volunteers completed one of the best seasons the program has had in several years Monday with two losses in the first round of the AISA, Class 3A softball tournament at MA.

Bessemer Academy of Bessemer edged the Lady Vols 2-1 in the first game of the double-header and took the second game 11-1 to advance to the second round.

In the 2-1 loss, MA tied the score 1-1 in the bottom of the second inning when Victoria Powell scored from third base on an error. Bessemer took a 2-1 lead in the top of the fifth on two singles and an error.

MA stranded a runner at third in the fifth inning and again in the sixth inning before

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MA's Salter grabs a line drive Monday during state playoff game. (Photo by Mike Qualls)

## AISA's state playoff at MA

BY MIKE QUALLS  
MANAGING EDITOR

Monroe Academy tangles with Macon East Academy of Cecil in the first round of the Alabama Independent Athletic Association (AISA), Class 3A state baseball playoffs today (Thursday) at 4 and 6:30 at MA.

If a third and deciding game is needed in the best-of-three-games series, MA's Volunteers and Macon's Knights will square off again Friday at 4 p.m. at MA.

MA won its last four games of the season last week to end the year with a 24-8 overall record. They also finished a perfect 8-0 in area play to win the area title.

MA opened last week's schedule on Tuesday by taking two from Jackson Academy at MA,  
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