

High school playoff team previews

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Bi-district matchups involving 11-man teams on the South Plains Compiled by Phil Terrigno

Class 6A Division II

EL PASO AMERICAS (5-5)

VS. [MONTEREY](#) (4-6)

7:30 p.m., Plainscapital Park-Lowrey Field

Baylor Mitchell and Vincent Johnson matter to each other because: if Mitchell, the quarterback, is successful in scampering around early, Johnson will have a field day. [Monterey](#) hasn't been on a winning tear, but has been consistent in getting production from Mitchell and Johnson, the Plainsmen's starting tail back. They operate within a zone read running system and although coach Wayne Hutchinson said Thursday his team might try and throw more, it will be in a great position to win if it succeeds in running well because its receivers have not caught passes consistently enough yet.

Americas' unconventional, scattered offense might struggle because: it is based on a supremely athletic quarterback and [Monterey](#) is working in an even defensive front (comprised of Xavier Freeman, Alazea Douglas, Sam Bartholomae and defensive newcomer Adam Benitez) with two linebackers. Starting middle linebacker Nathan Neal is out with a neck injury for the Plainsmen and will not play.

Class 5A Division II

[COOPER](#) (5-3) VS. HEREFORD (3-7)

7:30 p.m., Canyon's Kimbrough Stadium

Kolton Elhers matters in this game because: the senior quarterback is the link between a strong rushing attack and a passing game that uses many targets, including tight end Evan McHugh. The Pirates have had a marvelous regular season, although it ended with a loss to Abilene [Cooper](#).

Hereford can keep the chance if: it runs the ball well. The only area of [Cooper](#)'s defense that has been suspect this entire season is its run defense. Hereford does not have the star power to expose this weakness as much as Frenship or Abilene [Cooper](#) did, but in order to have any chance, it must drive and chew up the clock.

Class 4A Division I

[PLAINVIEW](#) (6-4)

VS. AMARILLO PALO DURO (6-4)

7:30 p.m., [Plainview](#)

Plainview can overcome the loss of Paxstyn Oldfield if: Warren Flye ends up in the endzone often. The Bulldogs starting quarterback is out with a meniscus injury and will not return unless Plainview makes an extended playoff run. Its running game with Flye and Trendan Jackson has been outstanding and can mask the loss of Oldfield, at least early on in the postseason.

Palo Duro will win by a large margin if: its offense operates as usual and its defense is able to stop the Plainview rushing attack. Forcing Marc Ramos or Wrangler Haresnape to win the game will be a tall task for the backup quarterbacks.

Class 4A Division I

ESTACADO (8-2)

VS. CLINT MOUNTAIN VIEW (6-4)

6:30 p.m., Pecos

David Smith matters to Estacado because: the lithe sophomore tailback brings a different style to the table for the Matadors. He's quicker and more elusive than Keshondrick Essix and Ave'On Williams, players that have been getting the bulk of the carries.

Mountain View would be wise to: stack the box and force Jaleen Tennison to throw the ball. Estacado has shown the ability to run roughshod over its opponents and take them out of the game early if its running game is getting off. Forcing the pass leaves Estacado open for errors.

CLINT (6-4) VS. LEVELLAND (4-6)

7 p.m., Fort Stockton

Nick Gerber can carry Levelland to a win if: he continues to be all over the field like he was against Pampa. The Lobos won that game 70-64 and slipped into the playoffs. The sophomore has accounted for more than 3,000 yards and 42 touchdowns combined this year.

Clint will have success if it: gets its offense going. Levelland has had a tendency to allow big numbers on defense that have often overshadowed the potency of its own offense.

SEMINOLE (4-6) VS. FABENS (6-4)

7 p.m., Monahans

Seminole can steal this game if: it regains the form it showed in a win over Levelland in district play. There are hidden gems in the Indians roster, like Sabraun Adams. It's a matter of getting them enough touches.

Fabens will win this game if: it scores consistently. Seminole has allowed 30 or more points in five of its losses this season.

Class 3A Division II

[IDALOU](#) (7-3) VS. HENRIETTA (8-2)

7:30 p.m., Abilene Wylie

The Spearman loss was important for [Idalou](#) because: it isn't often that Jeff Lofton's team gets pushed around in its own class. A loss to the Lynx didn't end the season on a positive note, but it exposed the Wildcats to a playoff-caliber opponent.

Brandt Schilling can help win this game because: he has been the most impactful rusher for [Idalou](#) this season. Its defense generally holds its own, but scoring consistently will be important for [Idalou](#).

Class 3A Division I

MULESHOE (7-3) VS. KERMIT (7-3)

7 p.m., Wolfforth

Muleshoe will in if: it tries to do nothing spectacular. Muleshoe is favored in this game for a reason. 6-foot-4, 190-pound Keagan Gonzales is extremely difficult to defend and he has been crisp since taking over for injured Danny Campos at quarterback. The Mules running attack hasn't missed a beat and neither has its passing attack since Gonzales took over.

Kermit can keep the game close if: it has an enormous defense performance, particularly with its secondary. Gonzales will get his yards running the ball, but forcing him to throw on extended possessions will give Kermit the best chance to capitalize on a mistake. Gonzales was forced on the run often against [Littlefield](#) and avoided turnovers, but generally speaking, more uncomfortable passing positions can lead to a greater risk of turnover.

Class 2A Division II

[SUNDOWN](#) (5-5) VS. QUANAHA (7-3)

4:30 p.m., Amarillo River Road

Ending the season on a three-game win streak matters for [Sundown](#) because: the Indians are a tough first round draw for the Roughnecks. Wins against Smyer, Plains and Morton definitely give Steve Smith's team confidence moving towards Friday.

Quanaha had the advantage because: it cut its teeth during district play and stole wins when it needed to.

MEMPHIS (4-6) VS. SMYER (4-6)

7:30 p.m., Bushland

Smyer should feel validated by its regular season performance because: it scored and played competent games against [Crosbyton](#), [Seagraves](#) and [Springlake-Earth](#). Not many area teams can claim the same feat.

Memphis has the edge here because: of the experience that comes from playing [Crosbyton](#), Wellington and Canadian in the regular season.

Class 2A Division I

NEW DEAL (7-3) VS. STRATFORD (7-2)

7:30 p.m., Amarillo's Dick Bivins Stadium

New Deal will win if: quarterback Baylor Bean and running back Demetrius Jackson start rolling early and pick up where they left off against [Floydada](#) in a win that sealed the second spot in district.

Stratford has the advantage because: it had encouraging showings in losses to Canadian and Wellington, both strong Class 2A teams.

WELLINGTON (6-4) VS. [FLOYDADA](#) (5-5)

4 p.m., Amarillo's Dick Bivins Stadium

This year was a success for [Floydada](#) because: it was without standout running back and quarterback Aaron Chavarria for the beginning part of this season, yet the Whirlwinds still managed to eclipse their win total for the past two years combined (4).

Wellington has the pedigree to win this game because: it is the reigning Class 2A state champion. The Skyrockets have not been entirely dominant, however. They had a poor start to the season but improved late and were one of the few teams to play even a marginally close game.