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HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS

Glenville vs. Massillon and the top 15 football games to watch in Northeast Ohio for Week 1

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[Glenville embracing new roles for Kaylon Bailey and Co.](#)



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Glenville vs. Massillon and the top 15 football games to watch in North

About 14 Minutes



By Matt Goul, cleveland.com

CLEVELAND, Ohio — Glenville and Massillon played an overtime thriller when they opened the high school football season last year at Paul Brown Tiger Stadium.

They go at it again Friday in Massillon to open this season, which includes a handful of big games across the state 24 hours earlier.

Expect a packed house in Stark County for another showdown between the host Tigers, who open as the No. 1 team in the cleveland.com Top 25, and the No. 3 Tarblooders.

Glenville’s postseason divisional alignment remains uncertain, pending updated enrollment figures in September taken by the Ohio Department of Education and used by the Ohio High School Athletic Association. The Tarblooders won their third Division IV state title in four years last season, but two-time cleveland.com Defensive Player of the Year Cincere Johnson is now at Ohio State. In his place is Colorado commit Kaylon Bailey, who is moving from defensive end to the middle linebacker spot occupied the last three years by Johnson.

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Senior quarterback LaMarques Greenwood II is back behind center for Glenville after a year at Cleveland Heights. He competed with junior Elvis Koutsakis for reps, while James Madison commit Da’Von McDougle remains the top running back behind them with a handful of talented

receivers including 6-foot-4 junior Dontre Lemons and speedy senior DeAnthony "Duke" Crittenden. Junior Garry Pritchett, back from a knee injury, could be the X-factor.

Massillon, though, is a state-title favorite in Division II.

The Tigers have a star-studded cast, led by Ohio State commit Deontay Malone at receiver and in the secondary. Michigan State commit Savior Owens is back as their leading rusher, but is now joined by another option in Archbishop Hoban transfer Brayton Feister.

Feister, who committed last week to Oregon, led Hoban last year in a defensive battle against Glenville. His play at linebacker could be the difference for Massillon, which looks to avenge last year's 33-27 loss in Week 1.

There is one area Glenville must clean up to win again: penalties. The Tarblooders were flagged 18 times last year for 154 yards at Massillon.

Here are 14 more games to watch around Northeast Ohio in Week 1. All times are 7 p.m. Friday, unless noted:



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No. 4 Avon vs. No. 21 St. Ignatius at Huntington Bank Field, Thursday

The two-time defending Division II state champions meet St. Ignatius for a third straight year. They start the season Thursday night at Huntington Bank Field, a place where they initially met two years ago.

Avon won that game, 42-21. The Eagles rolled again last year, 40-14.

Now St. Ignatius has a new coach in Tom Kaufman and renewed focus. Quarterbacks Jacob Mikin and Dane Donovan dueled in the preseason for the starting job with a talented group of receivers at their disposal, led by Texas A&M commit Trey Haddad. The Wildcats' defense is led by Buffalo commit James Conrad, who plans to come off the edge more this season after playing inside linebacker for much of his career.



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Avon has only four returning starters on offense and two on defense from its latest state-title run, but that could be deceiving when not counting rotational players who helped the Eagles last season. Their interior offensive and defensive lines remain a strong point, and senior Michael Colburn (424 yards, seven touchdowns) started for a chunk of last season at running back. Jairel Fenton, who had six interceptions at cornerback, is moving over to safety and playing some running back. Junior Trevor Sykora is expected to start at quarterback.

Olentangy Liberty at No. 2 St. Edward at Lakewood

First Federal Lakewood Stadium will be the site of a rematch from the 2024 Division I state semifinals, which catapulted Liberty to the state title after a [21-7 victory](#) in Mansfield.

The Patriots look much different from two years ago. They had a senior-laden squad that season, led by Mr. Football finalist Andrew Leonard at quarterback. Much of their squad is back from last season's 8-5 finish and they have another big senior class. Quarterback Alex Leonard is the younger brother of Andrew Leonard, while running back Grayson Davis also returns for third-

year coach John Sansbury.

St. Edward coach Tom Lombardo a few players who remember that state semifinal game from two years ago. Namely Missouri commit John Marquard at tackle and safety Landon Lehmer, who is adding receiver duties as a target for quarterbacks Langston Lucas and Joe D'Ambrosia III.

No. 5 Walsh Jesuit at No. 10 Highland

A family connection led to this game coming together.

Walsh Jesuit senior linebacker Emmett Tobin is a cousin of Highland coach Mike Gibbons. When Pennsylvania moved the start of its season back a week, the Hornets needed a new opponent. Tobin's father, Ryan, called Gibbons to connect him with Walsh Jesuit coach Nick Alexander. They agreed to play, setting up this top 10 showdown in Northeast Ohio.

The Hornets, who will be at home at North Gateway Tire Stadium on their campus, are coming off three straight regional final appearances in Division II. Third-year starting linebacker Evan Foust leads Highland again, while senior Johnny Prucha is set to start his first game at quarterback.

Tobin and Walsh's defense look to slow him down, while senior quarterback David Ternosky is back from Tommy John surgery to lead the Warriors' offense. They got to the Division II state

semifinals last year.



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While Walsh didn't have to meet Highland last year in the playoffs, that could change this season. The Hornets are moving over from Region 6 to Region 5. This also is one of only two road games for the Warriors, who have their next seven games scheduled to be at Conway Stadium in Cuyahoga Falls.

Warren Harding at No. 8 Canton McKinley

An annual Week 1 matchup for these two storied programs, Canton McKinley could challenge St. Edward's rule in Division I, Region 1.

It's a long way to get there and the playoffs, though. The Bulldogs, led by All-Ohio junior running back Kyelin West, open with a Warren Harding squad that just finished outside of the Northeast Ohio Top 25 in part because of a 3-6 finish last season. The Raiders bolster one of the state's top junior edge rushers in Asa Burch with Central Michigan recruit Matt Richardson at receiver and in the secondary.

McKinley won this game last year on the road, 43-25.

No. 22 Hudson at No. 9 Austintown Fitch

Both Hudson and Fitch opted up to Division I. Otherwise, both would have competed in Region

~~BOTH HUDSON AND FITCH~~ opted up to ~~DIVISION I~~. Otherwise, ~~both~~ would have competed in ~~REGION~~

~~5-6~~ Division II.

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Two of Northeast Ohio's better running backs will be on display with Hudson senior Reno Ferri (874 yards, six TDs) and Fitch's Deon'Dray Richard (1,204 yards, 13 TDs).

Hudson won last year, 28-14, but Fitch rebounded to win nine straight games.

No. 14 Olmsted Falls at No. 12 Mentor

It took a school-record 364 yards rushing and five touchdowns from Jackson Farley to lead Mentor past Olmsted Falls last year on the road. Now, the Bulldogs look to avenge that 35-28 loss as they head to Mentor's Jerome T. Osborne Stadium.

Both teams bring back their quarterbacks in Mentor senior Brogan Jones and Olmsted Falls senior Cam Pesch. Jones won't have Farley (now at Kent State) or star receiver Justen Hodge (now at Miami of Ohio) to lean on, but Pesch is adjusting to a new-look spread offense with the Bulldogs.

Both teams graduated most of their offensive lines from last season. That could lead to a big night for All-Ohio linebacker Mason Cerovac, a West Virginia commit for Olmsted Falls.



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No. 13 Strongsville at Avon Lake

The Mustangs and Shoremen kept the scoreboard operator busy last year at Strongsville, which emerged with a 43-42 victory in their classic encounter.

Bad news for the press box at Avon Lake Memorial Stadium: Both teams still have plenty of firepower for an encore.

Senior Kendrick Boddie and sophomore Austin Tatulinski are back after both rushed for 1,000 yards at Strongsville. They helped the Mustangs rally from a 14-point deficit last year. Avon Lake went for two to win it and could not convert.

The Shoremen return junior quarterback Dawson TenBrink, who has seasoned receivers that didn't make as much of an impact early last year. Now, sophomore Christian Gaulding and junior Mason Ambrose (both with Miami of Ohio offers) are key pieces to the Avon Lake offense. Ambrose leads a talented group of linebackers, including junior Christian Alicea.



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No. 17 Riverside at Steubenville

The Beavers open on the road with a Division III state-title contender in Steubenville, which is led by All-Ohio quarterback Santino Haney. Riverside has its own big-play quarterback in dual threat senior Bo Brandehoff, who has a big line in front of him, led by Penn State commit David Tarawallie.

No. 19 Garfield Heights at Canfield

Speaking of Division III state-title contenders, both the Bulldogs and Canfield look to be that. Canfield is established in that area, coming off a 10-2 season in which it was the top seed in

Region 9.

Set weather  All-Ohio linebacker Luke Hash led Garfield's defense, while junior D.J. Porter is set to take over for graduated quarterback Enzo Cocca.

Garfield Heights looks to establish itself in Division III after moving down from D-II. The Bulldogs, who won nine games last year, have a dominant defensive front led by senior tackle Kameron Zebbs (19 tackles for loss, four sacks last year) and edge Carro Holley (11 TFL, seven sacks). Junior running back Elijah Harris (678 yards in half a season), a transfer from Cleveland Heights, can be the game changer.

No. 24 Benedictine at Gilmour Academy

Several running backs could have breakout games in this one. Benedictine has three, led by senior Corde Blair (464 yards, three TDs) with juniors Kayden Forte (894 yards, six TDs) and Earl Jackson Jr. (464 yards, three TDs).

Nathan Lennon (671 yards, 10 TDs) will take the ball for Gilmour after an impressive preseason. Dominic Dunleavy had 517 yards and six TDs a year ago.

Benedictine edged the Lancers last year at John Carroll, 21-19.



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Euclid at Brush

Two of Greater Cleveland's top senior football prospects will be on the field with Euclid's Kei'Shjuan Telfair and Brush's Munir Lewis.

Telfair, who is committed to Penn State at cornerback, can take over a game on either side of the football. He had 650 yards and nine TDs on 30 receptions last year and still has senior quarterback Dion Russell throwing his way.

Lewis is a Louisville commit at defensive end. He had nine sacks and 13.5 TFL last season for the Arcs, who were 6-4 but missed the Division II playoffs. Euclid, which also would have been in Region 5, opted to move up earlier this year to Division I.

Valley Forge at North Royalton

Former North Royalton coach Nick Ciulli pays a visit to Serpentine Stadium and the Bears, who are now being led by former Tiffin Columbian coach Judd Lutz. North Royalton's strength up front could be the difference, as the Bears have Kent State commit Ethan Garnes at tackle and junior guard Brian Bostick to give their offense room to work.



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Kenston at Solon

Solon has a new coach in Antonio Hall and a second-year Week 1 opponent in Kenston, which took down the Comets last year in Bainbridge Township.

Kenston will be favored this time, thanks to that 30-13 win and some of its key playmakers. Sophomore Ethan Lawrence steps into the starting quarterback spot for coach Jeff Grubich, but juniors Ethan Burge and Kahlil Hinton are established skill players around him with senior Will Hamm.

Miami of Ohio recruit Brady Bush will look to disrupt their timing with fellow all-district defensive lineman Ibrahim Diaby and safety Brock Stone for Solon.



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Kent Roosevelt at Twinsburg

These teams just missed each other in the Suburban League American Conference.

Twinsburg will be making its debut there in Week 4 after playing in the Suburban's National Conference, while Roosevelt exited for the Metro Athletic Conference.

The Tigers will debut a new turf field with returning 2,000-yard quarterback Dylan Fantone. He has a new set of receivers, some with experience but in a new spot, including senior Kyle Anello.

Roosevelt counters with some big-play threats, including Tyler Ellington (516 yards, five TDs on 26 receptions) and linebacker Cyler Foreman (64 tackles, eight TFL).

FULL WEEK 1 SCHEDULE

(Times are 7 p.m., unless noted)

Thursday, Aug. 20

Nonconference

Massillon Jackson at Chardon

Warren JFK at Garrettsville Garfield

Akron Garfield at Norton

Avon vs. St. Ignatius at Huntington Bank Field

Archbishop Hoban at Winter Garden West Orange (Fla.)

Friday, Aug. 21

Nonconference

Brookside at University School, 5 p.m.

Bedford at Akron East

Mineral Ridge at Andover Pymatuning Valley

Ashtabula Edgewood at Ashtabula



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Stow-Munroe Falls at Aurora

Hudson at Austintown Fitch

Strongsville at Avon Lake

Firestone at Barberton

Ashland at Bay

Richmond Heights at Beachwood

Columbiana Crestview vs. Beaver Local at TBD

Brunswick at Berea-Midpark

Youngstown at Boardman

Wickliffe at Bradford

Cuyahoga Valley Christian Academy at Brecksville-Broadview Heights

Hubbard at Brookfield

Euclid at Brush

Cloverleaf at Buckeye

Alliance at Canal Fulton Northwest

Garfield Heights at Canfield

Warren Harding at Canton McKinley

Shaw at Clearview

Wadsworth at Cleveland Heights

Wellington at Collins Western Reserve

Independence at Columbia

Youngstown Ursuline at Columbus St. Francis DeSales

Streetsboro at Copley
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New Middletown Springfield at Cortland Lakeview

Willoughby South at Cuyahoga Falls

Conneaut at Cuyahoga Heights

Canton GlenOak at Dover

Carrollton at East Liverpool

Lutheran West at Elyria Catholic

Ravenna at Field

Rhodes at Firelands

Medina at Findlay

Benedictine at Gilmour Academy

Coventry at Girard

Green at Gnadenhutten Indian Valley

Brooklyn at Grand Valley

Berkshire at Harvey

Cleveland Central Catholic at Hawken

Walsh Jesuit at Highland

Chagrin Falls at Jefferson Area

Black River at Jeromesville Hillsdale

Lakewood at John Marshall

Creston Norwayne at Keystone

Cardinal at Leavittsburg LaBrae

Leetonia at Lisbon David Anderson

Perry at Madison

Fairless at Magnolia Sandy Valley

Trinity at Malvern

Rocky River at Manchester

Lorain at Maple Heights

Canton Central Catholic at Massillon Perry

Smithville at Massillon Tuslaw

Glenville at Massillon Washington

Elyria at Mayfield

Olmsted Falls at Mentor

Westlake at Midview

Hanoverton United Local at Minerva

Crestwood at Mogadore

Buchtel at North Canton Hoover

Eastlake North at North Olmsted

Valley Forge at North Royalton

Holy Name at Normandy

John Hay at Orange

Canfield South Range at Padua

Salem at Poland Seminary

Woodridge at Revere

Cleveland JFK at Rittman

Ravenna Southeast at Rootstown



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Beloit West Branch at St. Clairsville

Olentangy Liberty vs. St. Edward at Lakewood

Nordonia at St. Vincent-St. Mary

Amherst at Sandusky

Villa Angela-St. Joseph at Sandusky Perkins

Geneva at Shaker Heights

Kenston at Solon

Riverside at Steubenville

East Tech at Steubenville Catholic Central

Louisville St. Thomas Aquinas at Strasburg-Franklin

Notre Dame-Cathedral Latin at Struthers

Canton South at Sugarcreek Garaway

Ellet at Tallmadge

John Adams at Toledo Woodward

Kent Roosevelt at Twinsburg

North Ridgeville at Uniontown Lake

North Jackson Jackson-Milton at Vienna Mathews

Akron North at Warren Champion

Niles McKinley at Warren Howland

Marlington at Warrensville Heights

Akron Springfield at Waterloo

Newton Falls at Wellsville

Fairview at West Geauga
Orrville at Wooster



Millersburg West Holmes at Wooster Triway
Lake Catholic at Youngstown Cardinal Mooney
Campbell Memorial at Youngstown Liberty

Saturday, Aug. 22

Nonconference

Kirtland vs. Cincinnati Taft at West Lafayette Ridgewood
Ashtabula Lakeside vs. Lutheran East at Brush



Matt Goul

Matt Goul has covered high school sports with some college and pros sprinkled in since 2005 with a bachelor's degree from Kent State University. He has covered high school basketball and football in Northeast...more

mgoul@cleveland.com

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