

East Lake Football – Spring Season Wrap-up

EAST LAKE: On February 7th, National College Singing Day, the East Lake Community was represented by All-Pinellas County players Will Sloat #67 (6'4" 270 lbs) tackle and Brent Hill #10 (6'1" 210 lbs) MLB. Will Sloat signed his letter of intent with Lafayette College of Easton, Pennsylvania, a D-IAA school playing in the Patriot League. Brent Hill signed his commitment letter with the University of Richmond, a DI-AA high academic school playing in the Colonial Athletic League.

Ongoing February through April, Coach Hudson continued his senior college recruiting efforts by attending AFCA conferences, Florida college recruiting fairs and mailing out hundreds of game films. Hudson's recruiting efforts paid off with Jeff La Pratt (WR) going to high end academic D-III Millsaps College in Mississippi; Jeff Aldrich (OLB) is heading off to a rising NAIA power Weber International University in Lakeland, Florida; and Josh Petkovich (DE) is off to DI-AA perennial powerhouse Georgia Southern University. Michael Smooke (QB) and 2005 grad Jessel Nieves (OLB) head off to the Big Apple to play for D-III New York Maritime College. Hill, Sloat LaPratt, Petkovich, Smooke and Aldridge make the 56th through 61st players for East Lake High to go on a play college football.

As the pads and helmets banged signaling May 1st & spring practice, D-I college coaches returned to East Lake in force to begin recruiting the class of 2008

as over thirty colleges visited Coach Hudson and Eagle players.

Ivy League schools Brown, Dartmouth and University of Pennsylvania are prospecting defensive linemen Justin Fredricks and Erin Murray along with a host of DI-AA schools. East Lake running backs Richie Bailey and Micah Powell are receiving tons of attention from DIA & DIAA schools. Powell received a full ride scholarship offer in June from Big East's University of Cincinnati.



2007 College Signees: Top: Brent Hill, Coach Hudson Will Sloat. Bottom: Jeff LaPratt, Josh Petkovich, Michael Smooke, Jeff Aldridge

East Lake finished up this spring season game with a 43-3 victory over Port Charlotte. The two JV squads played the first quarter as East Lake built a 12-3 lead with the Eagle varsity scoring another 31 unanswered points in the remaining three quarters.

Blake Robles, rising junior QB, threw twelve pass completing eight with two drops which proved to be the bright spot to the traditionally powerful and single dimensional running game. To compliment Robles's accurate arm in 2007, key receivers returning from missing their junior season include JJ

Emanuel, Alex Klier, and Brian Lesniak who will team up with letterman wide outs Jacob Rachel, Justin Kresz, Nick Flowers, Brian Groc and Kevin Sadeghpour to provide quality targets for Robles.

The entire offensive backfield returns at two deep with tandem speed burner half backs Micah Powell and Richie Bailey along the a quarter ton of ground pounding fullbacks Erin Murray and Billy Byrne.

For the third consecutive season, Coach Holtzclaw's Eagle defense will simply reload replacing two line backers, one lineman and two defensive backs with quality returning letterman and Donnie Abrahams coaching the secondary.

A big test for the Eagles next season is for returning O-line letterman Kresz, Weitz, Varrany, Trump and Gilmore to duplicate their successful sophomore year as they are still the youngest unit on the team.

The challenge for Coach Hudson and his staff is to spread the ball around to more offensive weapons than the Eagles have had in years; keeping his opponents out of the box and opening this offense to new dimensions not seen at East Lake before.

TJ McPhee, 16, DB class of 2008 passed away in an auto accident in March. Kyle Mills, 22, OT/DT, class of 2004 died in June in an alcohol related accident. East Lake Community will miss both boys.

By: Rick Murray

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