

***Dirksen
looking
for third
straight
sectional
title for
Jay tennis***



Pictured is the 2024 Jay County High School volleyball team. Pictured, front row from left, are Kayla Jetmore, Brenna Bailey, Carley Trinidad and Lani Muhlenkamp. Middle row are Ella Rigby, Heavyn Willoughby, Hallie Schwieterman, Elizabeth Barnett and Paisley Fugiett. Back row are Brenna Schmiesing, Maria Hemmelgarn, Mya Kunkler and Kendel Rowles.



2023 season

The Patriots spent their season hovering around .500, as they never had a winning streak or losing streak longer than three matches. They went 16-15 overall and 3-3 in the Allen County Athletic Conference. In total, they won 47 sets and lost 47 sets. They swept Centerville in the opening round of the sectional tournament before falling 25-12, 23-25, 25-22, 25-19 to Frankton in the semifinal.

Projected lineup

Maria Hemmelgarn – Middle
 Mya Kunkler – Middle
 Brenna Schmiesing– Middle
 Hallie Schwieterman – Outside
 Kendel Rowles – Outside
 Elizabeth Barnett – Opposite
 Paisley Fugiett – Setter
 Brenna Bailey – Libero
 Lani Muhlenkamp – Defense
 Kayla Jetmore – Defense
 Carley Trinidad – Defense

Top returners

Mya Kunkler
 171 kills, 49 blocks

Paisley Fugiett
 65 assists

Brenna Bailey
 243 digs, 29 aces

Lainey Muhlenkamp
 243 digs, 29 aces

Key departures

Bella Denton
 272 kills, 40 blocks

Sophie Saxman
 587 assists

Brenna Haines
 428 digs, 52 aces

Maggie Dillon
 243 digs, 29 aces

Coach Amy Dillon says

"I'm very pleased with what has returned. We have a few kids taking the varsity court that are inexperienced ... but at camp this summer you can't really tell that. We are very competitive in the front and back row this year. We have 12 kids that round out the roster ... I could do so much with those 12 kids."

Matches to watch

Thursday, Aug. 22, at Delta

The Eagles are part of the volleyball hotbed that is Delaware County. Matches against the Wapahani Raiders (Sept. 5) and Delta are always good measuring sticks to see how much progress the Patriots have made.

Tuesday, Sept. 3, at Fort Recovery

The Indians went 17-7 last season and were one of the top teams in the always-tough Midwest Athletic Conference.

Tuesday, Sept. 17, at Adams Central

The Jets and Patriots faced off three times in 2023, with ACHS taking all three matches. Beating Adams Central would demonstrate growth from last year.

Volleyball

Date	Opponent	Time
Tuesday, Aug. 20	Madison-Grant	6 p.m.
Thursday, Aug. 22	Delta	6 p.m.
Tuesday, Aug. 27	Winchester	6 p.m.
Thursday, Aug. 29	Muncie Central	6 p.m.
Tuesday, Sept. 3	Fort Recovery	6 p.m.
Thursday, Sept. 5	Wapahani	6 p.m.
Tuesday, Sept. 10	Bluffton	6 p.m.
Thursday, Sept. 12	Woodlan	6 p.m.
Saturday, Sept. 14	Noblesville Invitational	9 a.m.
Tuesday, Sept. 17	Adams Central	6 p.m.
Monday, Sept. 23	Blackford	6 p.m.
Tuesday, Sept. 24	South Adams	6 p.m.
Saturday, Sept. 28	ACAC at Heritage	9 a.m.
Tuesday, Oct. 1	Southern Wells	6 p.m.
Thursday, Oct. 3	Heritage	6 p.m.
Saturday, Oct. 5	Patriot Invite	9:30 a.m.
Monday, Oct. 7	Daleville	6 p.m.
Thursday, Oct. 10	New Castle	6 p.m.
Saturday, Oct. 12	Union County tourney	9 a.m.
Home matches in bold		

Fast facts

- It has been more than 20 years since the Patriots last won a sectional title. They went back-to-back in Class 3A in 2002 and 2003. (Their two other titles came in 1976 in the single-class system and in 1997 in Class 4A.)

- This will be Dillon's fifth year at the helm of the Patriots. She is 50-71 (8-16 ACAC) overall and her teams placed fourth in the ACAC in 2021 and 2023.

- Dillon plans to have a deeper lineup in 2024, with the possibility of nearly a dozen athletes seeing the floor during any given set.

- Seven players from the Patriots' projected lineup played fewer than 20 sets on varsity during the 2023 season, including three that totalled five sets played.



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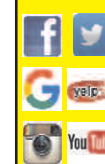
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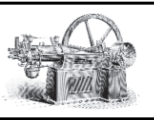
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2023 season

The Patriots struggled to consistently have enough competitors to score as a team, and when they did have five athletes, they stayed near the bottom of the standings. Despite the team struggling, Alexis Sibray managed to earn herself a trip to New Haven for the regional meet, finishing 112th.

Coach Bruce Wood says

“Alexis (Sibray) has been our best runner and now she’s going to get challenged daily in practice. I think that’s going to help Alexis get to the next level. ... She’s got four or five runners that’s going to be right there with her on a daily basis and that’s going to push the whole entire girls team. Even outside the top five you’ve got girls who can run fast. So, it’s going to be a strong team, probably the strongest team we’ve had in quite some time. You know, we’ve had teams win sectional and others make it through, but from what I can remember, this could potentially be the best girls team in quite some time.”



Pictured is the 2024 Jay County High School girls cross country team. Pictured, front row from left, are Lyla Kunkler, Paityn Wendel, Ava May and Brooklynn Byrum. Back row are Abby Fifer, Alyvia Muhlenkamp, Lizzie Brunswick, Alexis Sibray and Jessie Homan. Not pictured is Natalie Carreno.

Fast facts

•Five of the six JCHS freshmen joining the high school team ran for the junior high team. All five scored for the junior high in the ACAC Championships, with Abby Fifer finishing as runner-up, Jessie Homan coming in third and Ava May placing fifth.

•Alexis Sibray is one of only two girls from the 2023 season to compete in every meet. The other was Courtney Harris, who didn’t come out for the team this season.

•JCHS last made it out of the sectional tournament in 2020 when Lydia Keihn led it to a fourth-place finish. The Patriots’ last sectional championship came in 2013.

Projected lineup

- Alexis Sibray
- Paityn Wendel
- Abby Fifer
- Jessie Homan
- Ava May
- Brooklynn Byrum
- Lyla Kunkler

Top returners

- Alexis Sibray**
21 minutes, 20.50 seconds
- Paityn Wendel**
24 minutes, 29.8 seconds

Key newcomers

- Abby Fifer**
18 minutes, 36.76 seconds
- Jessie Homan**
20 minutes, 32.1 seconds
- Ava May**
21 minutes, 57.08 seconds

Meets to watch

Tuesday, Aug. 29, vs. Fort Recovery

The Indians bring back four athletes from last year’s team that finished 10th at the OHSAA Division III state tournament. This will be an early test for Jay County’s youth side-by-side with a proven team. Both boys teams have young talent, providing an interesting matchup to see which can offer enough support for the returning runners.

Saturday, Sept. 28, at New Haven Classic

With the new postseason format implemented in the 2023 season, New Haven hosts the regional meet. Picking up the New Haven Classic this year allows them the opportunity to see the course prior to a potential regional appearance.

Saturday, Oct. 12, at ACAC championships

The ACAC Championships acts as a playoff before the IHSAA postseason. Last season, Alexis Sibray, Joseph Boggs and Caleb Garringer all managed top-10 finishes.

Cross country

Date	Opponent	Time
Saturday, Aug. 17	Warsaw	9 a.m.
Saturday, Aug. 24	Celina Rotary	9 a.m.
Thursday, Aug. 29	Fort Recovery	5:30 p.m.
Tuesday, Sept. 10	Union City/Winchester	6:30 p.m.
Saturday, Sept. 14	Randolph Southern Invite	9 a.m.
Saturday, Sept. 21	Yorktown Jim Leffler Invite	10 a.m.
Saturday, Sept. 28	New Haven Classic	10:30 a.m.
Saturday, Oct. 5	Winchester Invitational	9 a.m.
Saturday, Oct. 12	ACAC Championships at South Adams	11 a.m.

Home meets are in bold

Fast facts

•This is coach Bruce Wood's fourth season leading the Patriots.

•Joseph Boggs and Max Klopfenstein were the only Patriots to compete in every meet of 2023. Caleb Garringer and Darren Fisher ended up right behind, only missing one competition each.

•It's been seven years since Jay County hosted a cross country meet. This year, it will host Fort Recovery in August and a three-team meet in September.

•Jay County has had a post-season dry spell. Despite getting individual runners through to the regional, it hasn't made it as a team since the 20th century.

Coach Bruce Wood says

"With the kids that we have coming back and their experience ... that they can help lead this team to qualify for regional. I think it's something where I think we can get our whole boys team there. With our transfer in, it really strengthens for a nice top seven and we'll have a nice scoring top five."



Pictured is the 2024 Jay County High School boys cross country team. Pictured, front row from left, are Alex Rivers, Ethan Powers and Douglas Cox. Middle row are Dash Thacker, Beckett Brandenburg, Cooper Glentzer and Lukes Powers. Back row are William Hawbaker, Isaac Hawkbaker, Max Klopfenstein, Joseph Boggs and Caleb Garringer.

2023 season

Jay County sat in the bottom half of the standings during most meets last season. The one time that all eight Patriots competed, they finished third of eight teams at the Winchester Invitational. Despite an 11th-place finish in the sectional, Joseph Boggs and Caleb Garringer both earned bids to the regional meet.

Projected lineup

Lukes Powers
Joseph Boggs
Max Klopfenstein
Caleb Garringer
Beckett Brandenburg
Dash Thacker
Ethan Powers
Cooper Glentzer

Top returners Joseph Boggs

17 minutes, 20.50 seconds

Caleb Garringer

17 minutes, 48.7 seconds

Max Klopfenstein

18 minutes, 52.3 seconds

Pictured at right is the 2024 Jay County High School girls golf team. Pictured front row from left are Bailey Towell, Jaycee Rowles and Brooklyn Bright. Back row are coach Carissa Allred, Maddy Snow, Erin Aker and Jenna Bricker.

The full girls golf season preview appeared in the Aug. 3 edition of The Commercial Review.

View it online at the-cr.com or stop by our office, 309 W. Main St., Portland, to pick up a copy.

All team previews, team photos and design in the 2024 Jay County High School fall sports preview are by Andrew Balko.





Pictured is the 2024 Jay County High School football team. Front row from left are James Brunswick, Isaac Dues, Benson Ward, Carter Barton, Austyn LeMaster, A.J. Myers and Lucas Strait. Second row are Ben Crouch, Sean Bailey, Dre Phenis, Austin Schoenlein, Vasin Ridgway and Corey Emery. Third row are Quentin Mackey, Alejandro Ruiz, Brasen Glassford, Aiden Phillips, Matthew Fisher, Brady Jetmore, Joaquin Johnson and Rhysin Blowers. Fourth row are Kaiden Reynolds, Hayden Ison, Carson Busick, Garret Dillon, Wyatt Foster, Leighton Brown, Ben Barnett and Nick Laux. Fifth row are Garrett Bennett, Blake Bonifas, Charlie Burress, Adam Stephen Jr., Tyler Wasson, Freddie Lingo, Brayden Romine and Dawson Goldsworthy. Back row are Grant Wendel, Carter Fugiett, Skyler Esparza, Nick Snow, Bo Brunswick, Oak Gaerke Jr., Caleb Sibray and Parker Moore. Not pictured are Brayden Fox, Ivan Brunswick, Cooper Shimp, Cohen Shimp, Sytree Jordan, Liam Richman and Eli Petro.

Football

Date	Opponent	Time
Friday, Aug. 23	Blackford	7 p.m.
Friday, Aug. 30	New Castle	7 p.m.
Friday, Sept. 6	Southern Wells	7 p.m.
Friday, Sept. 13	Adams Central	7 p.m.
Friday, Sept. 20	Bluffton	7 p.m.
Friday, Sept. 27	Woodlan	7 p.m.
Friday, Oct. 4	South Adams	7 p.m.
Friday, Oct. 11	Lapel	7 p.m.
Friday, Oct. 18	Heritage	7 p.m.
Home games are in bold		

2023 season

The Patriots had their best start since 1985, as they won their first three games against Blackford, Huntington North and Southern Wells. Adams Central halted the run, and Jay County only managed one more win (at Woodlan) to finish off the season 4-6. During the final seven games of the year, JCHS almost picked up a fifth win at South Adams, but got stopped after a fourth-and-goal from the 1-yard line to end the game 23-20. In the sectional game, the Patriots got out to an 8-0 lead against Kokomo, but then got stopped until the final three minutes for a 22-14 loss.

Games to watch

Friday, Aug. 30, vs. New Castle

The Trojans are the one new opponent on Jay County's schedule. Along with being the home opener on the new turf, New Castle will be one of the first tests for JCHS, sandwiched between Blackford and Southern Wells.

Friday, Sept. 27, vs. Woodlan

The Patriots get Woodlan for the 2024 homecoming game. Last year's game came down to the wire as Jay County needed two fourth-quarter touchdowns for a 34-29 win.

Friday, Oct. 18, at Heritage

The game against Heritage can end up playing a key factor in if Jay County finishes the season above .500. The Patriots have not had a winning season since going 6-4 in 2016.

Fast facts

- The Patriots racked up 90 points in its wins over Blackford (47-7) and Southern Wells (43-12) last season. It had 109 in its other eight games combined, an average of 13.6 per game.

- This is Grant Zgunda's fourth year as the head coach of the Patriots. During his tenure with Jay County, he has gone 9-21 and 5-13 in the Allen County Athletic Conference.

- The Patriots move down a class for the 2024 and 25 seasons. They will now compete in the Class 3A Sectional 28 which includes a team from their former sectional – Mississinewa – and Delta – Zgunda's former team.

Key returners

A.J. Myers
104.3 rushing y/g, 11 TD

Sean Bailey
88.7 passing y/g, 10 TD

Benson Ward
21.2 receiving y/g, 4 TD

Carter Barton
81 tackles, 1 sack

Key departures

Bryce Wenk
45.5 rushing y/g, 3 TD

Justin DeHoff
41.3 receiving y/g, 4 TD

Joseph Hemmelgarn
2 fumble recoveries

Coach Grant Zgunda says

"This is three years in the making. We've had three years to put this type of team on the field, and I feel like we've got pieces of the puzzle to do some special things. Last year we were 4-6 and should have won a couple more. We got beat on the last play by South Adams and took Kokomo to the wire. They're a very good team. ... I think this is the year we get over the hump. It's got to be. We've got a lot of three-year starters and I think this is the year we need to turn around. We've got an opportunity to be really good."



Pictured, counter clockwise from above are:
 Defensive linemen (front row) Austin Schoenline, Corey Emery and Dre Phenis and (back row) Rhysin Blowers.

Defensive backs (front row) James Brunswick, Grant Wendel, Brady Jetmore and Benson Barnett and (back row) Carter Fugiett, Lucas Strait, Ben Crouch, Benson Ward and Vasin Ridgway.

Offensive skill players (front row) A.J. Myers, Sean Bailey, Grant Wendel, Brady Jetmore, Garrett Bennett, Wyatt Foster, Ben Barnett and Leighton Brown and (back row) Carter Fugiett, Rhysin Blowers, Benson Ward, Ben Crouch, Aiden Phillips, Isaac Dues Vasin Ridgway.

Linebackers (front row) Joaquin Johnson, Garrett Bennett and Wyatt Foster and (back row) Leighton Brown, Carter Barton and A.J. Myers.

Offensive linemen (front row) James Brunswick, Brasen Glassford, Corey Emery and Dre Phenis and (back row) Freddie Lingo, Alejandro Ruiz, Austyn LeMaster and Garret Dillon.



Offensive skill

Sean Bailey – quarterback
 A.J. Myers – running back
 Leighton Brown – running back
 Benson Ward – wide receiver
 Ben Crouch – wide receiver
 Brady Jetmore – wide receiver
 Grant Wendel – wide receiver
 Carter Fugiett – wide receiver
 Aiden Phillips – WR/TE
 Rhysin Blowers – tight end
 Isaac Dues – tight end

Offensive line

Brasen Glassford – center
 Freddie Lingo – guard
 Joaquin Johnson – guard
 Garret Dillon – tackle
 Alejandro Ruiz – tackle
 Austyn LeMaster – tackle
 Corey Emery – tackle

Projected lineup

Defensive line

Austin Schoenlein – tackle
 Dre Phenis – tackle
 Isaac Dues – end
 Aiden Phillips – end
 Rhysin Blowers – end

Linebackers

Garrett Bennett – middle
 A.J. Myers – middle
 Lucas Strait – outside
 Vasin Ridgway – outside

Defensive backs

Brady Jetmore – cornerback
 Ben Barnett – cornerback
 Carter Fugiett – cornerback
 Grant Wendel – safety



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Pictured is the 2024 Jay County High School boys tennis team. Front row from left are Carson Westgerdes, Gabe Pinkerton and Kason Sims. Middle row are Blake Kahlig, Clark Wellman, Alex Miller and Kady Carpenter. Back row are Tucker Griffin, Carter Wellman, Eli Dirksen, Troy Lee and Jacob Monroe. Not pictured is Joseph Nichols.



2023 season

The Patriots struggled with their front-loaded schedule in 2023, needing five matches before they finally pulled off a 3-2 win against Union City. Jay County went on to earn a winning record at 12-9, but failed to claim the Allen County Athletic Conference title as it fell to Bluffton 3-2. JCHS had success against sectional teams, sweeping the three schools from Randolph County in the regular season before earning its second straight sectional title. Delta quickly halted the Patriots' playoff run in the regional opener, but Abraham Dirksen won his No. 1 singles match to continue as an individual. His run eventually ended in the sectional championship.

Projected lineup

- Eli Dirksen - Singles
- Tucker Griffin – Singles
- Gabe Pinkerton – Singles
- Alex Miller – Doubles
- Kady Carpenter – Doubles
- Blake Kahlig – Doubles
- Clark Wellman – Doubles

Top returners

Eli Dirksen
12-10 at No. 2 singles

Key departures

Abraham Dirksen
20-5 at No. 1 singles

Gage Sims & Sam Myers
13-9 at No. 1 doubles

Luke Muhlenkamp & Isaac Miller
14-3 at No. 2 doubles

Coach Donald Gillespie says

“Jay County tennis is not rebuilding. We’re reloading. What I mean by that is, a lot of these kids have come out all summer ... and I can’t ask for any more than summer participation. Don’t look at the front results from the beginning of the season and think that’s what you’re going to see at the end, because what we’re looking for is that end result. The young men are going to work their tails off to get to that point and they know what I expect. Eli (Dirksen) said to me the other night, ‘Coach, I want to win a sectional again. I want my third.’ When he’s going to have that type of senior leadership, I’m in good shape.”

Matches to watch

Monday, Aug. 26, vs. Union City

The Indians challenged Jay County the most out of all the sectional teams last season. While their battle in the sectional championship ended as a 4-1 victory for JCHS, the Patriots only beat them 3-2 during the regular season.

Thursday, Sept. 12, vs. Bluffton

The Tigers won the Allen County Athletic Conference last season and return most of their players. If Jay County wants an ACAC title, it will have to pick off Bluffton.

Saturday, Sept. 14, in Patriot Invitational

The Patriot Invitational marks a potential turning point in the year, when the Patriots schedule goes from brutal to manageable. If Jay County can beat Wabash and Blackford, it can create some positive momentum going into the final half of the year.

Boys tennis

Date	Opponent	Time
Saturday, Aug. 17	Trojan Kickoff Duals	9 a.m.
Monday, Aug. 19	Madison-Grant	5 p.m.
Tuesday, Aug. 20	Alexandria-Monroe	5 p.m.
Thursday, Aug. 22	Norwell	5 p.m.
Monday, Aug. 26	Union City	5 p.m.
Thursday, Sept. 5	Marion	5:30 p.m.
Monday, Sept. 9	Muncie Central	5 p.m.
Tuesday, Sept. 10	Randolph Southern	5 p.m.
Thursday, Sept. 12	Bluffton	5 p.m.
Saturday, Sept. 14	Patriot Invitational	10 a.m.
Monday, Sept. 16	Blackford	5 p.m.
Tuesday, Sept. 17	Adams Central	5 p.m.
Thursday, Sept. 19	Winchester	5 p.m.
Monday, Sept. 23	Bellmont	5 p.m.
Tuesday, Sept. 24	Muncie Central	5 p.m.
Thursday, Sept. 26	South Adams	5 p.m.
Saturday, Sept. 28	Eastern Hancock	9 a.m.
Wednesday, Oct. 2	Sectional	5 p.m.
Home matches in bold		

Fast facts

•Jay County’s sectional title in 2023 gave it back-to-back sectional championships for the first time since 2006 and 2007. Despite having nine sectional championships, the Patriots have not made it out of a regional.

•The Patriots only return one player with varsity experience (Eli Dirksen) and three who have played on junior varsity (Gabe Pinkerton, Blake Kahlig and Jacob Monroe).

•Jay County’s Abraham Dirksen continued two rounds into the playoffs as an individual after the team’s fall to Delta. He beat Frankton’s Sam Barr 7-6, 4-6, 6-4 in the sectional opener before falling to Alex Sagarra 6-0, 6-0 in the sectional championship. Sagarra was an exchange student from Switzerland attending Westfield High School.

Pictured is the 2024 Jay County High School girls soccer team. Front row from left are Finley Hatzell, Renna Hurt, Jayla Huelkamp, London Lloyd, Aixa Lopez, Brilyn Wilmore and Emma Hatzell. Middle row are Maleah Parsons, Sophia Sprunger, Raylah Newton, Morgan DeHoff, Tessa Frazee, Kadence Allred, Ariel Beiswanger and Mylee Castillo. Back row are assistant coach Amber Houck, manager Haley Gardener, Raylin Hummer, Meredith Dirksen, Jenna Dues, Presleigh Moore and coach Kendra Muhlenkamp.



Projected lineup

Forwards
Morgan DeHoff
Jenna Dues
London Lloyd
Raylin Hummer

Midfielders
Aixa Lopez
Sophia Sprunger
Finley Hatzell
Brilyn Wilmore

Defensive mids
Jayla Huelkamp
Raylah Newton
Meredith Dirksen

Defense
Ariel Beiswanger
Tessa Frazee
Emma Hatzel

Goal keeper
Maleah Parsons

2023 season

The Patriots got off to a slow start to the 2023 season, dropping the first three games to Heritage (twice) and Woodlan. Jay County picked up wins against South Adams and the Delaware County teams, ultimately finishing with a 6-9-1 record. Despite finishing under .500, the Patriots were competitive in nearly every game, losing six by one goal, one by two and two by three.

Top returners
Morgan DeHoff
18 goals, 4 assists

Aixa Lopez
10 goals, 5 assists

Jayla Huelkamp
2 goals, 2 assists

Key departures
Molly Muhlenkamp
8 goals, 4 assists

Angel Clairday
111 saves

Naroa Zugasti Goicoechea
1 goal

Coach Kendra Muhlenkamp says

“Last year we went 6-9-1 last year and six out of the nine losses were by one goal. Some goals of this season are to win the ACAC because we haven’t in a couple of years. We want to win sectionals. Our sectional draw has changed, Hamilton Heights is not there, Mississinewa got added. Even if Hamilton Heights was there, we’d want to expect to win sectionals. Again, going off of how we lost our games last year, we want to be the team that starts the game well and ends the game well.”

Matches to watch

Thursday, Aug. 22, vs. Heritage

The Patriots struggled in the Allen County Athletic Conference season last year, starting with Heritage beating JCHS twice to begin the season. This game will be the first for Jay County on the new turf field and can get it back on track in the ACAC.

Thursday, Sept. 19, at Belmont

The Braves beat Jay County 2-1 in 2023, but also made the regional championship by beating Yorktown 7-0. This will be a good midseason test for how the Patriots would fare against higher-level teams.

Thursday, Sept. 26, at Yorktown

Yorktown is one of the two teams to win the sectional since 2015. With Hamilton Heights leaving the sectional, if JCHS can beat the Tigers, they can win the sectional.

Girls soccer

Date	Opponent	Time
Monday, Aug. 19	Richmond	6 p.m.
Thursday, Aug. 22	Heritage	6 p.m.
Thursday, Aug. 29	Coldwater	6 p.m.
Saturday, Aug. 31	Woodlan	12 p.m.
Tuesday, Sept. 3	South Adams	5 p.m.
Thursday, Sept. 5	Norwell	5 p.m.
Tuesday, Sept. 10	Wapahani	6 p.m.
Thursday, Sept. 12	Oak Hill	6 p.m.
Saturday, Sept. 14	South Adams	10 a.m.
Thursday, Sept. 19	Bellmont	6 p.m.
Saturday, Sept. 21	Woodlan	12 p.m.
Tuesday, Sept. 24	Delta	6 p.m.
Thursday, Sept. 26	Yorktown	6 p.m.
Saturday, Sept. 28	Heritage	3 p.m.
Tuesday, Oct. 1	Blackford	6 p.m.
Thursday, Oct. 3	Muncie Central	6 p.m.
Home games in bold		

Fast facts

- The Patriots last won the sectional 10 years ago in the 2014 season. Since then, Yorktown has won it six times and Hamilton Heights – which eliminated JCHS the last five seasons – won it three times.

- Coach Kendra Muhlenkamp plans on primarily running a 2-3-2-3 formation with two forwards, three midfielders, two defensive midfielders and three defenders.

- Six of the Patriots’ nine losses in 2023 came by one goal. The only teams to beat Jay County by more than one goal were Coldwater, Yorktown and Hamilton Heights.

- This is the first year that Jay County will play its home games on the new turf football field.



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Pictured is the 2024 Jay County High School boys soccer team. Front row from left are Iker Nelson Cano Quishpe, Angel Gutierrez, Rockland Beiswanger, Garrett Hidy, Raif Beiswanger, Kevin Dues, Jaxson DeHoff, Cooper Cooke and Gavin Bell. Middle row are Osmar Gonzalez, Alan Ortiz, Ashton Castillo, Brenden Runyon, David Keen, Rhoen Brown, Emmitt Reynolds, Levi Muhlenkamp, Blake Collins and Cameron Coats. Back row are coach Rodney Reynolds, Cayden Buckland, Ramses Anaya, Aryan Montes, Payton Yowell, Zavier Hudson, Dylan Marentes, assistant coach Ian Ruiz and assistant coach Angel Perez.

2023 season

The Patriots stumbled at the beginning of 2023, taking losses to Muncie Central and Heritage while tying with New Castle and Norwell in their first five games. A 3-2 win at Yorktown sparked an 8-1 run en route to the sectional championship game. Jay County fell to Mississinewa 2-1 in overtime to finish its season 11-4-2. Offense played a large role in Jay County's success, as it was only held to one goal twice and scoreless in the tie with Norwell.

Projected lineup

Forwards

Emmitt Reynolds
Levi Muhlenkamp
Blake Collins

Defense

Osmar Gonzalez
Ashton Castillo
Iker Nelson Cano Quishpe

Midfielders

Dylan Marentes
Cayden Buckland
Alan Ortiz
Aryan Montes

Goal keeper

Peyton Yowell

Top returners

Levi Muhlenkamp
26 goals, 4 assists

Dylan Marentes
12 goals, 24 assists

Cayden Buckland
2 goals

Key departures

Blake Collins
2 goals, 1 assist

Kaleb Coppock
over 110 saves

Oskar Alart Mateo
4 goal, 2 assists

Cocher Rodney Reynolds says

"Putting in a whole new defense with a new goal keeper is a lot. Luckily our offense is all returning, so they click already. They're just working out what little bugs they have, but overall, we look good. Obviously Dylan (Marentes) and so is Levi (Muhlenkamp), but your other core seniors are picking up. They're doing their job. It really comes down to how well they play together. Every game is different, but if they find their groove early, I think we can beat every team we have in front of us."

Matches to watch

Thursday, Aug. 29, vs. Delta

The Eagles were the only sectional opponent Jay County lost to before Mississinewa took them down in the sectional championship. With the Indians leaving the sectional, a win over Delta helps make the Patriots favorites to make a regional.

Tuesday, Sept. 17, at Richmond

Jay County's game against the Red Devils kicks off the second half of their season, which includes six road games and one home game. A win would be big for their momentum during the stretch of road games.

Thursdays, Sept. 9, and Monday, Sept. 23, against Heritage

Heritage picked off the Patriots early in 2023, for their only ACAC loss. If JCHS can take care of Heritage in both games, it will be in prime position for a conference title.

Boys soccer

Date	Opponent	Time
Tuesday, Aug. 20	Muncie Central	6 p.m.
Tuesday, Aug. 27	New Castle	6 p.m.
Thursday, Aug. 29	Delta	6 p.m.
Saturday, Aug. 31	Woodlan	10 a.m.
Thursday, Sept. 5	Norwell	6 p.m.
Monday, Sept. 9	Heritage	6 p.m.
Thursday, Sept. 12	Yorktown	6 p.m.
Tuesday, Sept. 17	Richmond	5:30 p.m.
Thursday, Sept. 19	Bellmont	7 p.m.
Saturday, Sept. 21	Woodlan	10 a.m.
Monday, Sept. 23	Heritage	7 p.m.
Saturday, Sept. 28	Connversville	10 a.m.
Tuesday, Oct. 1	Blackford	5 p.m.
Thursday, Oct. 3	Liberty Christian	5:30 p.m.
Home games in bold		

Fast facts

- The Patriots are one of three teams to win the sectional multiple times over the past 10 seasons. They claimed the title in 2022 and 2014. Yorktown and Eastbrook also have multiple titles since 2014.

- This is coach Rodney Reynolds' first time leading the Patriots. Prior to being the head coach, he served as an assistant under Bobby Ruiz in 2023 and coached for six years for the travel team and Boomer league, giving him experience with the younger Patriots.

- Reynolds plans to continue utilizing the 3-3-1-3 formation that Jay County had last year, while throwing in other strategies as necessary.

- This is the first year that Jay County will play its home games on the new turf field in Harold E. Schutz Memorial Stadium.