

Final Stretch Run

By Matthew Aguilar
(New Mexico Sports Journalist)

The final stretch of the high school football season is upon us, and everyone is ready to go. With the final games of the regular season, district season is fully upon us and automatic bids to the playoffs will be on the line. The top team at the end of the regular season will be the district champs and get in the playoffs. The runner ups and everyone else left in districts need there resumes to show they deserve a chance to get into the field. One thing that I have seen in the past is that anyone can win no matter the ranking you enter the playoff field with, and the hottest team will be the champions at the end. Rivalries will be in play and the best games are about to come up now.

6A-1- Cleveland is the defending champion in this district and already up 1-0 after beating Volcano Vista 56-21. Cibola is right behind them after knocking of Atrisco Heritage 36-20. Rio Rancho was idle last week and will get their district play started this Saturday. This district is now going to come down to Cleveland, Cibola, and Rio Rancho. Right now, I will go with Cleveland winning district with Cibola being the runner up and Rio Rancho finishing third.

6A-2- La Cueva right now is the team to beat and the team that will win this district. The Bears are on top after beating longtime rival Eldorado 63-21. Second place is up for grabs with West Mesa in the lead right now after beating Sandia 21-14. Farmington has come along throughout the season even with a 2-4 record. I have Farmington being the runner up with West Mesa right behind them.

6A-3- This District is going to come down to two teams. Centennial and Hobbs will battle for first place this Friday night in Hobbs. Both teams have high power scoring offenses and defenses that come up with the big plays at the right time. This will be a high scoring game and I have the Hawks edging out the Eagles by a touchdown to settle first and second place.

6A-4- Everyone in this district has a chance to win. I believe everyone can come out with a win in this district. The winner though will be Los Lunas who has faced a very solid first half schedule and the runner up will be Clovis. Winner in this district will claim the last home playoff game for seeding.

5A-1- Piedra Vista has been climbing to the top of the mountain all year long and they will be top team to come out of this district at the end of the year. I have Highland being the runner up and getting into the playoffs. Both will be in the running to make some noise in the state playoffs.

5A-2- Raise your hand if you had Valley and Los Alamos being the two favorites to win this district? If you have your hand up round of applause for you. The two teams will be battling for this title. I have Valley winning it all and continuing an impressive season with Los Alamos putting up a fierce fight.

5A-3- Deming and Santa Teresa both enter district with 3-4 records exactly. Both are equally talented, and both are the co-favorites to be the title winners. The slight edge will go Deming with Santa Teresa being one play behind to be the runner up.

5A-4- The historic four are about to go to battle with one another. The winner of this district will have a lost by own a tie breaker. Every game is going to come down to the very end and one big play will be the difference. Artesia, Goddard, Mayfield, and Roswell will all be doing some major damage in the playoffs. I will take Artesia winning the district and Roswell being the runner up.

4A-1- Bloomfield is the top team right now and I do not see anyone topping them in district play. They are right in the hunt for the top seed, and they are going to come in focused and motivated. Kirtland Central will give Bloomfield a battle but not enough of a battle to climb to the top spot.

4A- 2- This will be a three-team race for the title. Taos, Moriarty, and Espanola Valley have set themselves up for the final 4 games of the regular season and will be very entertaining. I believe Taos will be the winner at the end with Moriarty and Espanola Valley right behind them.

4A- 3- Silver City is primed and ready to win this district. They can score on every possession and have the experience needed to make a run. St Pius, Valencia, and Grants will not go down without a fight and will be ready for their chance to stop Silver City from winning the district.

4A- 4- Academy, Portales and Lovington will all be the contenders for the title. Portales has improved from last season and Academy has been preparing for their chance to be the champions since the end of last season. Lovington has taken on one of the most difficult schedules of the year and yet are still going to be in play to defend all their titles. The final standings will have Lovington Portales, Academy and Bernalillo as the final team rankings.

3A-1- Newcomb will be the last team standing and win the district championship. They have been playing well all year long and are in great position to continue their run. Tohatchi will be their challenger and are prepared to battle them to the end.

3A-2- St. Mikes and Raton are off to good starts with wins to open their district runs. St Mikes best West Las Vegas 51-20, while Raton had a 56-6 win over Santa Fe Indian. Robertson is going to be a major player with St Mikes and Raton coming up in the next few weeks. I am going to go with Robertson, Raton, and St Mikes as the top three teams at the end.

3A-3- Socorro is looking to cap off their regular season with an undefeated season heading into the playoffs. One obstacle for them is going to be Hatch Valley ready to end their undefeated run. When these two meet, this will be one of the games of the year. Socorro will win by a field goal with Hatch Valley finishing right behind them.

3A-4- Ruidoso and Hope Christian are the top two teams right now with both securing wins last week with Ruidoso winning 45-0 over Tucumcari and Hope Christian winning a nail bitter 29-28 over NMMI in overtime. Ruidoso takes on NMMI next and with a win will setup what will be a winner take all matchup with Hope Christian the second to last week of the season. Ruidoso will come out on top and with the district title in their hands.

3A-5- Thoreau and Crownpoint have had solid seasons so far and are the two front runners. Cuba and Wingate are not far behind and will have a final say on who is going to make the playoffs. For now, I do see Thoreau and Crownpoint as the final top two teams.

2A-1- Santa Rosa will be the top team at the end of the regular season in this district. The runner up between Escalante, Laguna Acoma, and McCurdy will get a chance at a rematch possibly with Santa Rosa in the playoffs. Also, if you have not seen a game at Escalante with that bright red turf, you must make it a go to game.

2A-2- Even with a 3-4 record, I like where Estancia is at, and they are trending in the right direction. They are getting their running game going and have played a good schedule that will prepare them for the playoffs. I like them to win the district with Tularosa as the runner up.

2A-3- The funniest district in the class will come down to three teams. Last years title participants Jal and Eunice are back in the top spots once again. Texico will be right there with them and are not going to bow down to any of them at any point in time during the season. I have felt that all season long it was Jal going to top Eunice no matter what it was going to take, and I see them being the top team till the very end with Eunice and Texico right behind.

8 man 1- Menaul is up 2-0 on their district opponents and I do not see them letting go of the top spot. They are trending upward for the playoff season approaching. Legacy Academy has shown some promise for the future with their first win in program history over Pine Hill 48-6. Under the guidance of former Lobo Bryan Clampitt this program will win many more games in the future.

8 man 2- Lordsburg and Magdalena have been waiting for district season to come. They have been the best two teams in the district, and both will be the top two when the season settles. Flipped a coin three times and I see Lordsburg winning the title by a touchdown over Magdalena.

8 man 3- Fort Sumner has been out to prove they are the team in 8-man, and no one has come close. A matchup I have been waiting for is them facing off with Melrose and Tatum. I expect nothing but points and lots of points for both games. If there is not a high scoring game, the fans will have been let down. The final standings will have Fort Sumner, Melrose, and Tatum as the top three and I believe one of these three teams will win the state title as well.

6 man 1- Ramah will win this district and if not, everyone should be stunned. Roy/Mosquero will be the runner up.

6 man 2- Gateway Christian has been the best team in the class and are right where they want to be to be the champs again. Elida and Dora are going to be right in the hunt, but do not have enough to knock off the champs. Both will get another chance in the playoffs.

6 man 3- There is one team that can and will be a threat to Gateway Christian and that is Mountaineer. With a juggernaut of an offense and a stout defense that has only given up 98 points this deep in the season. They are prepared and ready for their claim to be the new king in 6-man. Animas will be the runner up and will be looking to make a run in the playoffs.

