

VARSITY

SPORTS WEEKLY

ATHLETES OF THE WEEK

JORDAN RICHESON

**JEFF. FOREST • BASKETBALL • G/F • SR.**

» Richeson has been lighting it up for the Cavs. He picked up his 1,000th point this week, hitting his final bucket of the night to accomplish the feat. He finished with 19 points that evening. The reigning Seminole District player of the year is averaging about 17 points per game.

MAKEYLA MEASE

**GRETNA • BASKETBALL • G • SO.**

» Gretna has won four straight, and in that span, the talented sophomore has scored 66 total points, for a 16.5 per-game average. Mease poured in 24 points against Nelson County, 17 against Chatham and 14 more at Altavista as the Hawks got revenge this week.

TARA ENNEKING

**JEFF. FOREST • SWIMMING • SR.**

» The Cavaliers standout heads into tonight's Seminole District championships as one of several female athletes to keep an eye on. Enneking set a 2018-19 season best in the 100 breaststroke at a quad meet last week, swimming a 1:08.58. She also won the 50 free at that meet with a 24.93 and helped JF win the 400 free relay with a strong anchor leg.

HUDSON STEWART

**BROOKVILLE • WRESTLING • 160 lbs. • JR.**

» The defending 152 Class 3 state champ has moved up to the 160 weight class this season and is currently 30-0. He was one of six Bees to go 5-0 last weekend as the Timberlake Road squad won the Brookville Duals against some impressive competition.

THEO WOODS

**E.C. GLASS • TRACK & FIELD • SR.**

» Woods clocked the nation's third-fastest time in the 1,000-meter run at LU last weekend, sprinting to the finish with a swift 2:25.95, good for second place overall in the race. The run also gave Woods the fastest time for a Virginia high school student this season in that event.



THE NEWS & ADVANCE FILE

CHASING A TITLE


LCA standout John Michael Gordon set for breakout postseason


By Ben Cates • bcates@newsadvance.com

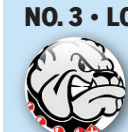
John Michael Gordon was happy with his finishing times at last year's Class 4 state swimming championships. Where he placed, though, was another matter. "I was so close to becoming a state champion," the standout Liberty Christian swimmer said. So close to victory, in fact, he could almost reach out and touch it. Gordon finished third in the 200 free that day, but was just 0.32 seconds behind champion Brennan Doss, of Monacan. Gordon also placed second behind Doss in the 500 free, finishing less than one second behind the champ. "My nerves really got the best of me," the senior said this week as he thought back to that meet. "I was taking it really, really seriously. I think this year I'm gonna try to take a more laid-back approach. Still focus, but not be so tense." The new approach should help. There is little standing in Gordon's way this winter. He's one of the most dominant swimmers in the state, a speedy all-around weapon for the Bulldogs, who long ago dedicated himself to the sport. He has a swimming future at the University of Kentucky. And at the high school level, he has few remaining challengers. This winter, Gordon has been in the pool as much as ever. He's also added a new sport to his resume: he took up competitive running in the fall. Gordon finished 19th at the Class 4 cross country championships and currently is ranked third among area track-and-field athletes in the 1,600-meter run with a 4:33.78 despite running that event only twice. He also plans to try the 1,000-meter run and competes in the 4x800 relay. His classmate, runner Josh Quigg, got Gordon interested in running. "It's just kind of something to mix it up a little bit," Gordon said. "Get a little different variety in there, because all I've done for so long is swim, swim, swim." But make no mistake: swimming is his passion, has been for years, and nothing will replace it in the foreseeable future. Tonight, Gordon will compete at the Seminole District Championships at the Jamerson Family YMCA. He's sure to continue turning heads there. Fans should especially watch for his race in the 100 back, where Gordon will go head-to-head with friend Matthew Davidson, of Jefferson Forest. The two are training partners and have competed against one another for years. "We go back and forth in practice," Gordon said, "so it's almost like routine when we get to a meet. One person could win one day; the other person could win on another." The 100 back, along with the 200 and 500 free, are Gordon's best events. But he does it all for LCA, competing in the 200 IM, medley relay and 200 free relay, too. He'll be a favorite at the Region 4D championships in Charlottesville on Feb. 2 before heading to the state championships Feb. 15 at SwimRVA in Richmond. It's the same location he set a personal record at in the 200 free last year, reaching the wall in 1:39.58. Since then, the USA Swimming Scholastic All-American had a notable performance in the USA Swimming junior nationals in Greensboro, North Carolina, where he clocked a 49.67, another PR, in the 100 back. The laid-back approach he hopes to employ at the state meet comes with maturity. "Swimming is so mental," he said. "Once you get over that mental hump, that's a big deal. Because once you control your nerves, you can swim fast." He has other swimming goals beyond the state championships. Once at Kentucky, Gordon wants to qualify for the NCAA Championships, and eventually, for the U.S. Olympic trials. "See if I have what it takes in 2024," he said with a smile. Swimming is like any other sport. Things don't always work out in your favor. Gordon learned that long before last year's state meet. He first qualified for the YMCA Nationals as a 14-year-old and wasn't one of the most highly touted swimmers there. "I was pretty low in the rankings," he recalled. "And I thought to myself, 'even though I'm really low, it doesn't matter, because I'm here and I swam my best.' And at the end of the day, that's all you can ask." Ben Cates covers high school sports for The News & Advance. Reach him at (434) 385-5527.

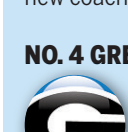
BOYS BASKETBALL • TOP 5


- NO. 1 • JEFF. FOREST (16-3)

Winners of 10 straight, the Cavaliers have emerged as one of the strongest teams in Class 4.
- NO. 2 • VES (14-6)

The Bishops have won three straight games, including Tuesday's nine-point win over rival Blue Ridge.
- NO. 3 • LCA (12-4)

Watch out in the playoffs for the Seminole District-leading Bulldogs, who have been on fire under new coach Paul Redgate.
- NO. 4 GRETNA (9-4)

The Hawks are now 7-1 in the Dogwood and are getting production from all across the board.
- NO. 5 • E.C. GLASS (11-7)

After last week's loss to JF, the Hill-toppers returned to action Thursday following a seven-day layoff.

BOYS BASKETBALL LEADERS


POINTS <i>Ranked by average</i>				REBOUNDS <i>Ranked by average</i>			
Player, School	Gms.	Pts.	Avg.	Player, School	Gms.	Rebs.	Avg.
1. Jacobi Lambert, Heritage	17	347	20.4	1. Jacobi Lambert, Heritage	17	162	9.5
2. Bryce Waterman, VES	19	325	17.1	2. Michael Caprise, VES	19	162	8.5
3. Jordan Richeson, JF	19	318	16.7	T3. Will Clary, Staunton River	17	138	8.1
4. Piercen Young, Brookville	15	247	16.5	T3. Piercen Young, Brookville	15	121	8.1
5. Isaiah Griffin, Gretna	13	213	16.4	5. Treyvon Jones, Altavista	12	94	7.8
T6. Mykah English, St. River	16	227	14.2	6. Xavier Beard, Heritage	17	130	7.6
T6. Lance Bain, Altavista	12	170	14.2	7. Tony King, Gretna	13	96	7.4
8. Donnie Cook, Brookville	15	203	13.5	T8. Mykah English, St. River	16	109	6.8
9. Houston Carter, Nelson	15	201	13.4	T8. Derek Chambers, Amherst	16	108	6.8
10. Treyvon Jones, Altavista	12	157	13.1	T10. Devon Toms, Nelson	15	101	6.7


GIRLS BASKETBALL LEADERS


POINTS <i>Ranked by average</i>				REBOUNDS <i>Ranked by average</i>			
Player, School	Gms.	Pts.	Avg.	Player, School	Gms.	Rebs.	Avg.
1. Kylie Stark, Brookville	19	274	14.4	1. Tatiyana Graham, Heritage	16	167	10.4
2. Makeyla Mease, Gretna	18	242	13.4	T2. Madaline Hankins, Gretna	17	145	8.5
3. Amari Osei, Heritage	10	130	13.0	T2. Nadia West, Amherst	15	128	8.5
4. Tiffany Carey, Jeff. Forest	17	195	11.5	T4. Madison Walker, Gretna	18	128	7.1
5. Paris Calloway, Gretna	16	177	11.1	T4. Molly Warren, Jeff. Forest	16	113	7.1
6. Jeni Levine, St. River	17	187	11.0	T4. Jazyme Smith, Amherst	15	106	7.1
7. Kenna Dickerson, Rustburg	14	151	10.8	7. Ashiah Glass, Gretna	18	126	7.0
8. Molly Warren, Jeff. Forest	16	163	10.2	8. Gabi Nazigian, Jeff. Forest	17	112	6.6
9. Brynna Elliott, Brookville	18	150	8.3	9. Bekah Funderburk, Rust.	14	77	5.5
10. Holland Saunders, Amherst	13	101	7.8	10. Tiffany Carey, Jeff. Forest	17	92	5.4


GIRLS BASKETBALL • TOP 5


- NO. 1 • JEFF. FOREST (16-2)

The Cavaliers have won five straight after the loss to LCA earlier this month and host Brookville tonight.
- NO. 2 • BROOKVILLE (14-5)

The Bees are 10-1 in the Seminole District and are looking for revenge at Jefferson Forest tonight.
- NO. 3 • GRETNA (15-3)

The Hawks got revenge on Altavista this week and still are on top of the Dogwood District standings.
- NO. RUSTBURG (10-6)

The Red Devils fell to Brookville this week after blowing out Liberty by a whopping 30 points.
- NO. 5 • E.C. GLASS (10-9)

A young and talented group is showing plenty of promise in Lynchburg's midtown under first-year coach Matthew Foy.