

SPORTS

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THE MERIDIAN STAR

An Eagle returns to the nest

I have always believed that things happen for a reason and that opportunities to return to where it all started happen every day in the world of sports. Meridian Community College is one of many colleges around the country that is enriched with players that have gone on to have successful coaching careers. MCC is in a unique situation in that several former players have returned to be coaches at MCC over the past couple of years. Some of those former players are currently coaching at universities around the Southeast, but sometimes it takes one a little longer to come back home.

I was sitting at home several weeks ago and I received a phone call from someone that I haven't heard from in some time and that voice told me that he was coming back to MCC. Former MCC baseball player Justin Brewer was that voice and he informed me that he would be returning to Meridian to be the pitching coach for the Eagles under head coach Dillon Sudduth. I was overly excited about this news because Justin is not only a quality coach, but he knows what it takes to be an Eagle.

Justin played his high school baseball at Clarkdale High School and came to MCC for what was a great pair of seasons for the green and white. Brewer was a member of the 2003 and 2004 squads that made trips to the JUCO world Series in Grand Junction, CO. The 2003 squad finished fifth in the country, while the 2004 team was ranked as high as second during that season. Brewer would later become a pitching coach at two different junior colleges in the state of Mississippi and eventually came back home to Meridian.

Brewer made stops at Co-Lin Community College and East Central Community College where he was a part of several championship teams. During his two year tenure at Co-Lin, Brewer worked with the pitchers and catchers and was in charge of recruiting. Brewer coached two players that moved on to Division I programs and one to another NAIA program at Co-Lin.

During the past four seasons at ECCC, Brewer has coached 1 NJCAA National Male Athlete of the Year, 1 NJCAA All-American, 3 All-Region Players, and 10 1st or 2nd team All-MACJC Conference players.

Brewer has been a part of seeing his players drafted in the MLB Draft each of the last four seasons. In 2010, Kendall Logan, from Co-Lin, was taken in the 43rd Round by the Atlanta Braves. In 2011, former Catcher Kolby Byrd was taken in the 13th Round by the St Louis Cardinals. While at ECCC, Brewer saw two more players taken in the draft, one each of the two seasons. Former Catcher Carlos Leal was taken in the 33rd Round by the Pittsburgh Pirates in 2012. This past season, former All American and NJCAA National Male Athlete of Year Tim Anderson was taken 17th overall in the 1st Round by the Chicago White Sox.

Brewer will now return to where it all started at Meridian Community College for the 2014 season this spring. I want to take the opportunity to welcome Justin back home to MCC and sometimes coming back home is extra special.



Robby Atkinson
Special to the Star



Paula Merritt / The Meridian Star

East Mississippi Community College's Brandon Acker fights his way into the end zone with help from Isaac Johnson Saturday.

Unforgettable

EMCC ties NJCAA record in Homecoming blowout

By Sarah Moomaw

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SCOOBA — When East Mississippi Community College's Drew White lined up to kick the extra point with 4:33 left on the game clock, a miss would have prevented history.

Luckily for EMCC, the ball sailed between the uprights and the scoreboard reflected the 90th point scored by EMCC en route to 90-7 homecoming blowout over Coahoma Community College Saturday afternoon.

The final score ties the NJCAA all-time single-game point record.

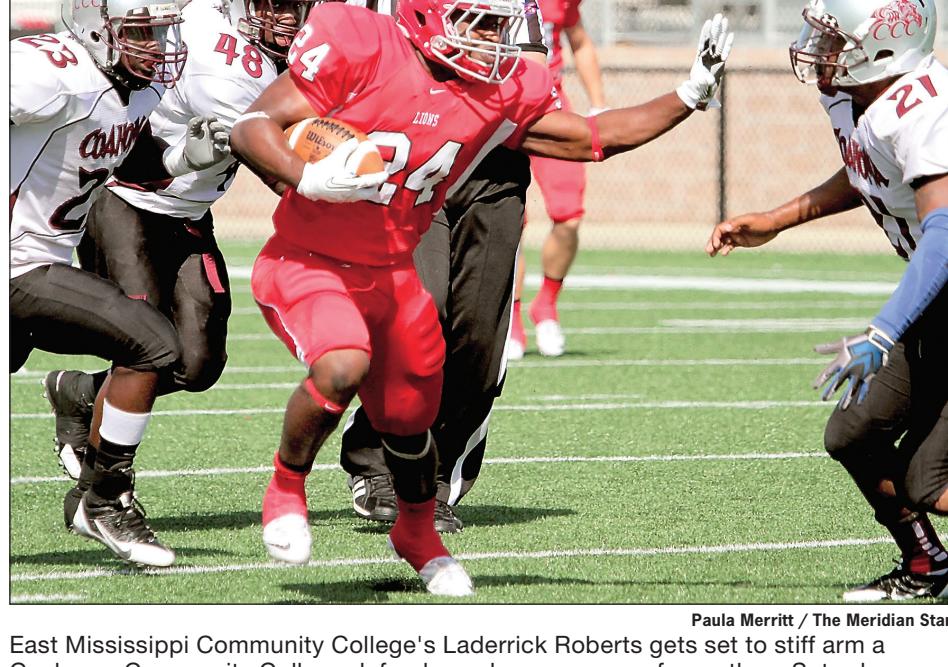
"We knew what it was when we were on that drive," EMCC head coach Buddy Stephens said. "It didn't matter. We were trying to keep from scoring a little bit."

The Lions grabbed the piece of history in front of a full crowd including family members and school alumni who were invited as part of Homecoming festivities.

"Scoring 90 points, that's real special," sophomore quarterback Donteal Pruitt said. "It's special that a lot of people came out to see us. We had some family come down from 10, 11 hours come see their kids play."

At the time of the successful PAT, it was announced that the Lions had claimed solo possession of the record.

A discrepancy between the NJCAA Record Book and game scores from the 2011 season had the Lions and fans thinking they were chasing the 89-point



Paula Merritt / The Meridian Star

East Mississippi Community College's Laderrick Roberts gets set to stiff arm a Coahoma Community College defender as he races away from others Saturday.

mark.

On Sept. 17, 2011, Hutchinson Community College (Kan.) beat Highland Community College (Kan.), 90-7, a week after Butler Community College (Kan.) had shut out Highland, 89-0.

It wasn't until two hours after the game that EMCC officials were able to confirm with NJCAA officials about the true record — alone or shared, EMCC still has a piece of it with the blowout.

After tying the national record, it's only fitting that broke a few school records as well.

The Lions scored 11 touchdowns and reset the school's single-game points record three times in the process.

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Ole Miss stunned by No. 1 Alabama

By Tony Tsoukalas

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TUSCALOOSA, Ala. — After torching Texas for 272 rushing yards two weeks ago, Ole Miss ran into a brick wall Saturday night, falling to Alabama, 25-0. Alabama stacked the box and locked up the middle all night against the Rebels and limited a stagnant Ole Miss offense to just 46 yards on the ground.

"We just didn't run the ball well," Freeze said. "We have to run the ball better up front and not lose some battles and runs that allow them to put five or six people in the box."

Freeze took a gamble on the Rebels' opening drive of the game when he went for it on fourth-and-two from the Alabama 28-yard line. Ole Miss gave the ball to Laquon Treadwell on a sweep play to the right, but the freshman receiver was brought down an inch short of a first down.

"Playing the No. 1 team at their place, I just felt like we could get a first down," Freeze said. "We had planned that play for the first short. I thought we should have got it. I wish we would have put our

foot on the ground a little harder and understood the down and distance, but we didn't and we are going to need to learn from it."

Alabama took over and drove the ball inside the Ole Miss red zone. But the Rebels were able to keep the Crimson Tide out of the end zone, forcing Alabama to kick a 28-yard field goal instead.

Later in the first, Ole Miss would get back into Alabama territory as quarterback Bo Wallace found a wide-open Donte Moncrief for a 26-yard pass to the Alabama 37-yard line. But, once again, the Rebels were unable to capitalize as a wide-receiver pass from Treadwell was intercepted by Alabama's Eddie Jackson the next play.

"We worked it all week," Freeze said of the play. "We love LeQuon Treadwell, he's a great player and a great kid to coach. Every day we worked it, we worked it two ways. He could have either dropped back or tucked it and run it. We should have run it, and we could have

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Associated Press

Alabama running back Kenyan Drake (17) breaks free for a 50-yard touchdown against Mississippi during the second half of an NCAA college football game on Saturday.

