

The high school football season will get underway this Friday for all three local high schools. Salem will open the season with a home game against Mitchell at 7 p.m., while the Senators of West Washington will host Eastern in the school's annual county clash. The following is a look at all three teams and how their seasons shape up for the year. Salem The Lions enter the second year of the RJ Hartsfield era coming off a 5-5 season.

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Football . . .

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Salem has taken their lumps in recent years primarily because they have played so many young players. Those young players are now growing up and the Lions should be a top team in the Mid Southern Conference.

The schedule sets up for Salem to get off to a fast start and build confidence before things get tricky.

The following is a loof at the SHS schedule: Aug. 22, Mitchell; Aug. 29, Silver Creek; Sep. 5, at North Harrison; Sep. 12, Brownstown Central; Sep. 19, at Clarksville; Sep. 26, Charlestown; Oct. 3, at Eastern (Pekin); Oct. 10, Corydon Central; Oct. 17, at West Washington.

Prediction: I think the Lions will be 3-0 going into the Sept. 12 showdown against Brownstown Central. I won't go so far as to pick the Lions to beat the Braves, but I do think Hartsfield will have something for Reed May and Company. George's pick, Salem 7-2.

Eastern

In the overall scheme of things, the Eastern High School football program is still in the infancy stage when compared to most of the teams on its schedule. But that doesn't mean Eastern plans to just wave the white flag before the season starts.

After coming out flat in their pre-season scrimmage last Friday against Tell City, the Musketeers played toe-to-toe against the visiting Marksman.

In the game, Tell City scored six touchdowns, while Eastern put five on the board.

In the JV matchup between the two schools, Eastern scored five touchdowns to Tell City's one.

Eastern also did something that has been lacking since they became a varsity program in 2007, which was defend the pass.

The Tell Cith quarterbacks struggled all night to find an open receiver.

Schedule: Aug. 22, at West Washington; Aug. 29, Clarksville; Sep. 5, at Brownstown Central; Sep. 12, Silver Creek; Sep. 19, at Corydon Central; Sep. 26, at North Harrison; Oct. 3, Salem; Oct. 10, at Crawford County; Oct. 17, Charlestown.

Predictions: The Musketeers' difficult schedule forbids me from going crazy in the win total and since my son plays on the team I won't put an actual number on the win total. I will say this, if Eastern can avoid the injury bug, they should be competitive in most of the games this year.

### West Washington

The Senators were riding high when the 2012 season ended.

They won their first sectional in years and had one of the most successful seasons.

A lot of those players returned in 2013, but Head Coach Phillip Bowsman said it seemed like one thing after another kept his team from hitting their stride.

The Senators eventually got it together and were playing their best football in the sectional.

Bowsman said his approach was to mention last year and encourage his team to move on.

Schedule: Aug. 22, Eastern (Pekin); Aug. 29, at Crawford County; Sep. 5, Mitchell; Sep. 12, at Springs Valley; Sep. 19, Paoli; Sep. 26, at Tecumseh; Oct. 3, Perry Central; Oct. 10, at Eastern Greene; Oct. 17, Salem.

Predictions: West Washington returns three-year starter at quarterback Cody Maudlin and should improve on last year's 5-6 record.

How much they improve will depend on keeping everyone healthy and developing some skill players to replace the talented athletes who have graduated in the past two seasons.