

THE FINAL COUNTDOWN: Calhoun, St. Teresa square off in Class 1A Semifinals on Saturday

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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HARDIN – Calhoun’s Warriors are riding a wave of momentum into the **Class 1A IHSA State Football Playoffs** on **Saturday** for a semifinal matchup against **St. Teresa High School of Decatur**.

The 9-3 Warriors slipped past previously undefeated powerhouse **Tuscola** last week **28-27**. Calhoun and St. Teresa, 11-1, collide at **1:30 p.m.** on Saturday at Calhoun High School's football field.

St. Teresa, blanked **Tolono Unity 27-0** last week at St. Teresa High School in its quarterfinal matchup. The Bulldogs' only loss came from Tuscola, where they fell **33-14** on **Oct. 7**.

“It’s a pretty big deal and everyone around the whole community is very excited,” **Calhoun head football coach Aaron Elmore** said. “I probably haven’t seen this much excitement since I was in high school.”

Elmore said the reason he and the other coaches banded together to build the football program back was so this team could experience the same things they did when they were in high school. Elmore was a member of Calhoun’s last state championship team in 1993.

It is going to be a cold day on Saturday, with highs in the mid to high 40's.



“I am very excited and happy for these kids,” Elmore said. “I know how much work they put in. I want them to experience what I was able to experience in high school. I think they will give their best shot at St. Teresa this weekend, for sure.”

Calhoun will need top-notch performances from players like **Ty Bick, Wes Klocke, Cole Lammy, Jacob Watters, Michael Finch, Cody Gilman, Brady Ellis, Eric Rose, Keaton Rose and Easton Clark**, along with the rest of the team.

St. Teresa is very explosive offensively, Elmore said.

Running back **Jarcadia Wright**, only a sophomore, has 2,339 total rushing yards in 197 carries for an average of 11.9 yards a carry. He has 36 rushing touchdowns and 40 total touchdowns on the season.

Elmore said Wright could be one of the most explosive running backs he has seen in IHSA Class 1A.

“If we can contain him from breaking long runs we will definitely have a chance at winning,” Elmore said.

“They have one of best running backs we have seen on film in several years. They also have a good passing attack and are very versatile on offense. On defense, they get to the ball fairly well.

“For us to win, it will take playing ball hawking defense and getting to the football. We want to put pressure on them and play ball-control offense. We need to keep a hold of the ball and possibly take some possessions away from them.”

Deer and duck hunters will be out in droves for the contest, Elmore said. The coach said he also expects to see several of the rival WIVC players there to see the game. Those players may be dressed in their school colors to show the WIVC support. Before the game, there will be an abundance of tailgating near the field.

Elmore said in times past when Calhoun hosted a playoff game of this magnitude, 4,000-5,000 people would come and he said that could happen again on Saturday.

“This is why we put in all the work,” Elmore said. “We been talking to the boys about this for a few years and what they could accomplish. They are starting to realize all their hard work is paying off and want to continue to play beyond this game.

“They have pushed hard this week and we are going to try to win this game and play for the state championship.”

[The Calhoun and St. Teresa game will be streamed live on RiverBender.com. The game can also be viewed on Facebook, YouTube, on RiverBender.com's Roku and Chromecast channels and by downloading the RiverBender.com app.](#)



[Madelaine Gerard also contributed to this story.](#)