

Rockets have new opponents and fairly tough schedule

With the additions of Southwestern Pulaski and Larue County to their non-district schedule, the first five games should provide an early test for Tom Larkey's Rockets.

The Rockets will open their 2003 campaign at Corbin against Larue County in the Cumberland Falls Pigskin Classic.

Larue County lost pretty heavily due to graduation a year ago, but return enough starters to cause the Rockets some problems early on.

The Bluegrasspreps.com poll ranks Larue County 8th in 2A, and as with Rockcastle County, Larue County has maintained a solid winning program over the past 10 years.

On deck for the Rockets will be the South Laurel Cardinals.

The Rock will play South Laurel in the Renfro Valley Jamboree Bowl on August 29th.

South Laurel's luck against the Rockets in recent years has run pretty thin losing a combined 102-0 the last two years.

South Laurel will return key starters on both sides of the ball making them more of a formidable opponent than in the past couple of years.

Next on the schedule will be Paul Lawrence Dunbar. Dunbar, who the Rockets defeated by only a touchdown last year, will return starters on both sides of the ball. Dunbar finished the season in the state semi-finals with a defeat to eventual state champion Trinity.

They will undoubtedly prove to be the biggest test for the Rockets early on.

The fourth game of the

year the Rockets will play host to a Lincoln County team that suffered a 2-8 season a year ago. However, they return signal caller Chris Hart and all but one player out of their backfield.

After a two year stint off the schedule, the Rockets will once again play Southwestern Pulaski and renew their old rivalry.

Southwestern, a 4A team that was 6-4 in the 2002 season and only lost to Dunbar by four points in the opening round of the playoffs, lost two key starters on both sides of the ball in Western Kentucky University signees Sam Sexton and G.J. Wooldridge.

According to News-Journal sports editor Doug Eads, what looked to be a rebuilding year is actually looking a lot brighter as the Warriors played Louisville Male very competitive during a scrimmage in the pre-season.

The Rockets will then

open district play with the Clay County Tigers in what is scheduled to be Homecoming at the Rock.

Clay County, who has not been on the Rockets schedule in many years was added to the Rockets 3A district in the off-season as they dropped classes from 4A to 3A.

Clay County, who was 0-10 in 2002, only lost two starters to graduation. However, three starters left the team in the off-season decreasing their roster to only 26 players and making for a not so bright future in 2003.

The Rockets will use the October 3rd date as an open week. This year's open week couldn't have come at any better timing as they will travel to Log Mountain to play arch-rival Bell County.

Bell County, who the Rockets defeated 31-14 in the regional championship last year, should return a very skilled football team. The Rockets consistent dismantling of the Bobcats should leave a taste of re-

venge in the mouths of Bell County.

Since Dudley Hilton's return to Pineville, Coach Larkey's Rockets have beaten him and his teams five straight times.

On October 17, the Rockets will play host to Madison Southern. Southern, also a new addition to the district schedule, took four years off from the Rockets and lost 20 starters from a year ago, but the rekindled rivalry still should prove to be a test for the Rockets on Little League Night.

Senior Night will be on October 24th against Perry Central. Central, whose program made great strides in 2002 look to continue and even better their winning ways in 2003 with the return of a four year starter at quarterback and numerous two way starters.

The Rockets will conclude their regular season against Knox Central. Knox Central will return starters on both sides of the ball hopefully proving to be somewhat of a test before the Rockets enter post-season play.

Good Luck Rockets!

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