



## MAIS Dandy Dozen Members

MAIS schools have produced some nation's top athletes for several decades. From 1997 to 2020, MAIS had five players selected to the *Clarion-Ledger's* "Dandy Dozen," signifying being a top recruit in the nation and the State of Mississippi. In 2021, MAIS added one more player to the elite list with the selection of Stone Blanton of Madison-Ridgeland Academy. MAIS athletes in previous classes of the Dandy Dozen have gone on to lead extremely successful football careers as well as professional careers after athletics. There is no doubt that MAIS schools not only produce successful football players but also successful professionals. Take a look at MAIS's six members of the *Clarion-Ledger's* elite Dandy Dozen, their careers and life after football. MAIS Dandy Dozen members are at various stages in their careers: currently playing in the NFL, NCAA, and graduating high school with high potential for many more years on the gridiron.

### **Will Overstreet – 1997**

Defensive Lineman, Jackson Prep

Overstreet was born October 7, 1979, in Jackson, Mississippi. He was a starting defensive back for Jackson Prep. He was selected to the *Clarion-Ledger's* Dandy Dozen and named the Metro-Jackson Area Player of the Year in 1997. Overstreet went on to play for the Tennessee Volunteers, where he was selected captain of the team in 2001. His football career continued into the NFL when he was drafted by the Atlanta Falcons in 2002. Overstreet spent 2 years in the NFL before he retired to pursue business endeavors. After his retirement from the NFL, Overstreet graduated with his MBA in finance in 2006. Overstreet is now the founder and CEO of Voices Heard Media, headquartered in Knoxville, Tennessee.

### **Will Arnold – 2002**

Offensive Lineman, Centreville Academy

Arnold was born December 30, 1984, in Centreville, Mississippi. Arnold's MAIS career was gleaming with success. Arnold led by coach Bill Hurst, recorded 83 tackles on defense and two state championships. Arnold was a physical beast, benching a whopping 455 pounds and not giving up a single sack in his high school career. Arnold was selected first-team All-State not once, but three times, named to the *Clarion-Ledger's* Dandy Dozen, and was the No. 9 offensive tackle in the country. In 2003, he signed with the LSU Tigers, where he was redshirted as a true freshman. In 2004, Arnold played a total of 370 snaps for the Tigers and only allowed one sack. In 2005, Arnold was named second-team All-SEC. By 2006 Arnold was consider one of the top offensive linemen in the nation, but unfortunately suffered a serious knee injury. Despite his injury Arnold was still named second-team All-SEC only having started in five games. In his final season with the Tigers Arnold helped the Tigers defeat Ohio State to secure a BCS National Championship. Arnold is now an SSH&E manager at ExxonMobil, where his expertise in the oil and energy field shines.

### **Cameron Lawrence – 2008**

Quarterback/ Linebacker, Magnolia Heights

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Cameron was born January 20, 1991, in Altus, Oklahoma. His brother, Addison was an offensive lineman at Mississippi state in 2008 and brought the Lawrences to Mississippi. During Cameron's high school football career with Magnolia Heights he led the team as a quarterback and a fierce linebacker to a 22-2 record. He was an MAIS all-state player and was the captain of the MAIS all-star north team during his senior year. He was named to the *Clarion Ledger's* Dandy Dozen in 2008 and went on to play for the Mississippi State Bulldogs following his high school career. Cameron played in all 12 games as true freshman his first year with the bulldogs as a linebacker, safety, and quarterback with an impressive performance on defense and offense. In 2011, Cameron was named to the All-SEC team where he finished his last year with the Bulldogs with a team-high tackle count at 123 tackles. In 2013, Cameron signed with the Dallas Cowboys as an undrafted free agent. Cameron spent time on the practice squad until the Cowboys released Will Allen, and Cameron was promoted to the roster. Cameron played special teams for the Cowboys and tied for second on the team for special team tackles. He played backup weakside linebacker during the last three games of the season with the Cowboys. Cameron suffered an injury in 2015 where he after retired from his NFL career. Cameron is a well-known name in the MAIS for his impressive athletic career and a Mississippi State legend as a feared defensive and offensive weapon.

### **Cody Prewitt – 2010**

Defensive Back, Sylva-Bay

Cody was born December 31, 1992, in Bay Springs, Mississippi. As a star defensive back at Sylva-Bay Academy. Cody helped lead Sylva-Bay to a 12-1 record and MAIS state semifinals. Cody was selected to the *Clarion-Ledger's* Dandy Dozen in 2010 and was considered a four-star recruit. Many NCAA athletic programs sought after Cody, but he accepted an offer from the University of Mississippi. He went on to start for Rebels as a true freshman in 2011 and recorded some impressive numbers. Cody was named first-team All-American in 2013 for his impressive season with the Rebels. After his electric NCAA career with the Rebels Cody signed with the Tennessee Titans as an undrafted free agent in 2015.

### **Ryan Buchanan – 2012**

Quarterback, Jackson Prep

Buchanan was born August 17, 1994, in Jackson, Mississippi. As a star quarterback at Jackson Prep, Buchanan was a 4-star recruit by ESPN, Scout, and Rivals. He was named All-State first team pick by MAIS, played in MAIS All-Star game, and led Jackson Prep to a State Championship and was named to the *Clarion-Ledger's* Dandy Dozen and No. 6 most wanted player in Mississippi. In 2013, Buchanan signed with the Ole Miss Rebels. Buchanan saw action with the Rebels in 2014 and 2015 season. Buchanan is now a corporate risk and insurance advisor for Arthur J. Gallagher & Co. in Jackson, Mississippi.

### **Saahdiq Charles – 2016**

Offensive Lineman, Madison-Ridgeland Academy

Charles was born July 26, 1999, in New Orleans, Louisiana. Hurricane Katrina brought Charles and his family to Mississippi. Charles became one of Mississippi's top 3 players, playing for Madison-Ridgeland Academy. Charles was named to the *Clarion-Ledger's* Dandy Dozen in 2016. In 2017, Charles signed with the LSU Tigers where he played in 13 games and nine total starts as a freshman, playing a total of 687 snaps. Charles's freshman performance led him to being selected to the Freshman All-SEC team. In 2018, Charles started in 10 games for the Tigers where he played a total of 762 snaps, including the Tiger's

win over UCF in the Fiesta Bowl. Charles played in a total of 32 games with 28 starts in his three years with the Tigers, paving the way for LSU running backs to rush for over 1,000 yards each season. Charles elected to forgo his senior season and entered the 2020 NFL draft. Charles was selected in the fourth round by the Washington Football team. He suffered a knee injury in his rookie season with Washington, but reports say that Charles is recovering and chipping away at a starting position in the 2021 NFL season.

### **Jerrion Ealy – 2018**

Running Back, Jackson Prep

Ealy was born August 19, 2000, in Jackson, Mississippi. Ealy's career in MAIS and the NCAA is spotlighted with tremendous success as he played for Jackson Prep and is currently playing for the Ole Miss Rebels. While at Jackson Prep, Ealy led the team to 4 state championships, and was named the top recruit in the State of Mississippi, named to the *Clarion-Ledger's* Dandy Dozen, and earned MVP honors at the 2019 Under Armour All-American Game. He was drafted in the 31st round of the 2019 MLB draft by the Arizona Diamondbacks. Ealy elected to sign with the Rebels in 2019 to play not only football but baseball as well. In Ealy's football freshman year with the Rebels he was named second team All-SEC and a host of Freshman All-SEC awards including Freshman All-American recognition, all-purpose player, True Freshman All-American, and first team All-SEC honors. Ealy played 12 games his freshman year with 722 rushing yards on just 104 attempts and six touchdowns. In Ealy's sophomore season with the Rebels he rushed for 745 yards and nine touchdowns. In just two football seasons with the Rebels Ealy recorded a total of 1467 rushing yards, 327 receiving yards, one solo tackle, and 19 total touchdowns. Ealy is gearing up for his third season with the Rebels in 2021.

### **Dillion Johnson – 2019**

Running Back, St. Joseph Catholic School - Greenville

Dillion was born on June 15, 2021, in Greenville, Mississippi. Dillion was an explosive running back for St. Joseph leading his team to 3 consecutive MAIS state championships and ended his career with St. Joseph on a 24-game winning streak. Dillion was selected to the *Clarion-Ledger's* Dandy Dozen in 2019. Dillion was considered a 3-star recruit and was heavily recruited. Dillion accepted an offer from Mississippi State in 2019. As a true freshman Dillion played in 11 games with one start in the 2020 season. Dillion is preparing for his second season with the Bulldogs and is expected to put up serious numbers heading into the 2021 season.

### **Stone Blanton – 2021**

Linebacker, Madison-Ridgeland Academy

Blanton was born September 12, 2002, in Vicksburg, Mississippi. Blanton's MAIS career has been nothing short of explosive as he approaches his senior year at Madison-Ridgeland Academy. Blanton has led the Madison-Ridgeland Patriots to two state championships so far. Blanton is the No. 7 prospect in Mississippi and a 4-star recruit. Blanton is one of the country's top linebackers and heavily sought after by NCAA schools not only for football but also for baseball, and he has MLB draft nods. Blanton was selected to the 2020 All-State Football team, 2020 MAIS Defensive Player of the Year, 2021 Butkus Award Watchlist and named to the *Clarion-Ledger's* 2021 Dandy Dozen. Blanton has recently narrowed his NCAA picks to just three schools, and the country eagerly awaits his final decision. Blanton has named Mississippi State, South Carolina, and Texas A&M as his top three choices for football and baseball. Blanton also earned a spot in the All-American Under Armour game in

2021. Blanton is eager for his senior year at Madison-Ridgeland and has hopes to lead the Patriots to another state championship and add to his already explosive MAIS high school career. Blanton has his sights on the SEC and will be a top choice to watch on Saturdays.