Titans

from 1B

the Bulldogs kicked a 20-yard field goal to take a three-point lead, 0-3.

John Hardin tried an onside kick, and Mercer recovered it at the 50-yard line. Cox couldn't hold a fourth-down pass, and the Titans turned the ball over on downs to end the first quarter. A 22-yard screen pass put the Bulldogs in the red zone, and they scored on a 13-yard rush up the middle and made the extra point, 0-10.

Miniard fielded another onside attempt to start the Titans offense at their own 45-yard line. Two straight penalties from John Hardin moved Mercer downfield. Freshman quarterback AJ Releford picked up a fourth with his legs, but was banged up on the play. Cox came in at quarterback and was sacked for a seven-yard loss. The Titans couldn't overcome the loss and turned the ball over on downs.

Bess finally brought down the John Hardin running back after a 22-yard gain. Bess made a play in the backfield and forced a fourth down at the Titans' 33-yard line. The Bulldogs lined up for a long field goal on fourth down to try to get the Titans to jump offsides, but had a false start themselves. After a John Hardin punt, Releford and Mercer's offense took over at the Bulldogs' five-yard line. Cox had a big third-down completion, and the Titans rushed to spike the ball with less than a minute left in the half. The Titans offense stalled, and Junior Chase Lopez punted to end the first half.

Out of halftime, John Hardin picked up a first down, but a high snap put them in a third-and-27 to go situation. The Bulldogs punted, and Russell picked up 42 yards on back-to-back runs. Mercer had some incompletions that forced fourth down, and Releford was sacked and fumbled the ball, but the Bulldogs who tried to return it also fumbled, and it was recovered by Smith, giving the Titans a first down.

Bess moved the sticks with a 10-yard catch and Russell was pushed out on the two-yard line after picking up 25 yards. Releford put Mercer on the scoreboard with a keeper, 6-10. A low snap forced Cox to run the ball on the Titans' extra point attempt, and he got the pylon for two points, 8-10.

John Hardin returned the following kickoff to midfield. Five straight runs in a wildcat-style offense ended in an eight-yard rushing touchdown for the Bulldogs, and they made the extra point to end the third quarter up, 8-17. On the Titans' next play on offense, Releford's pass was tipped and intercepted at the line of scrimmage on Mercer's 35-yard line.

A holding penalty and a big play from Bess in the backfield set John Hardin well behind the line to gain, and they punted the ball back to the Titans. Mercer got a free first down from an unsportsmanlike penalty, and Hensley picked up 15 yards on a screen pass. The Titans, in a hurry-up offense, faced fourth and 17; Releford dropped back and completed a 31-yard deep ball to Cox. Bess, who is still playing with a wrapped-up hard cast, made a contested catch for a five-yard touchdown, 14-17. Lopez's extra point was tipped and no good.

Bess blitzed on John Hardin's first offensive play and grabbed both the quarterback and running back in the backfield until Lopez could bring down the ball carrier. On third and long, sophomore Evan Baker came up with a sack that set the Bulldogs back nine yards and forced a punt.

With a little over two minutes left, the Mercer offense took over at their own 35-yard line with a chance to win the game. On third down, Releford was hit while he was throwing the ball and John Hardin came up with an interception. The Bulldogs knelt out the clock to win, 14-17.

The Titans played a good second half, despite letting up pressure. The defense stepped up at the end and forced stops and the passing game worked when Releford had time to throw. Mercer had chances to win the game more than once, but fought hard on senior night.

The Titans head to Christian Academy of Louisville for their first postseason game Friday, Nov. 6 at 7 p.m.



The Harrodsburg Herald/Wesley Bird

Junior Chase Lopez had a tackle for loss in Mercer's senior night lost to the John Hardin Bulldogs Friday, Oct. 30.



The Harrodsburg Herald/Wesley Bird

Champions take center field

The 2006 Mercer County football 2A State Championship team were celebrated for there 20 year anniversary of bringing home the trophy Friday, Oct. 30.



Whitenack

from 1B



The Harrodsburg Herald/Wesley Bird

Anne Whitenack leaves her time as a Titan volleyball player with one piece of advice for the underclassmen, "Talent is useless without the right mind set."

Surpassing 200 career blocks during her senior season gave her a chance to reflect on the work behind those numbers.

"It felt like all the hard work had finally paid off," she said. "All of the hours I spent in the weight room, staying after practice, or just pushing myself in practice were starting to show."

That finish was far beyond what she envisioned when she began high school.

"Honestly, I remember thinking that I wasn't even going to make the varsity team my freshman year," Whitenack said.

Even as she began noticing improvement during her sophomore year, she did not anticipate the statistics she would compile by the end of her senior season.

Developing her blocking required repeated work with coaches on pressing her hands over the net, taking away space from opposing hitters and keeping tension in her arms and hands to direct the ball down.

"I needed to perfect it in practice in order for it to come through in the games," she said.

One of her most memorable performances came against East Jessamine after she learned her grandmother, Cece, had died.

Whitenack said she initially struggled with feeling unprepared and fearing she would disappoint others. After the first set, she began playing for her grandmother.

"It turned out to be a record-breaking game for me," she said. "It goes to show how important mental strength is in volleyball."

Physical challenges also tested her determination. Last year, shin splints made running and jumping painful enough that she questioned whether she would play comfortably again. A few weeks of rest allowed her to return in time to play for her club team in Lexington.

Throughout her development, Whitenack said, coaches and teammates kept believing in her potential. She credited coach Jeremy Carlson with making a significant impact through training and weight-room work.

"My coaches saw the potential and never gave up on me, which I will be forever grateful for," she said.

As a senior and four-year varsity player, Whitenack tried to extend that encouragement to younger teammates. Remembering what it felt like to be an underclassman playing varsity, she offered high-fives and praise to help ease their nerves.

Her family provided steady encouragement, too. Whitenack credited her parents, brother and grandparents with supporting her through games, messages and reminders to have fun. Her grandmother Mary attended whenever possible and watched livestreams when she could not be there.

Despite the records, Whitenack hopes her legacy extends beyond volleyball.

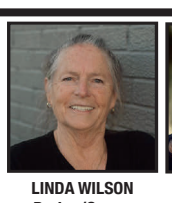
"I knew that my volleyball would eventually come to an end, and to me, it's important that people remember me because of who I am as a person, rather than just a good player," she said.

Whitenack hopes to attend Auburn University to study veterinary science. What she will miss most about Mercer County volleyball, she said, is making memories with her teammates.

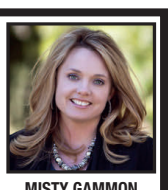
For younger players, her advice is to respond to mistakes with confidence.

"Just believe that you have the ability to fix that mistake and do better on the next point," Whitenack said. "Talent is useless without the right mindset."

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Selling Mercer County really is what we do best. If you've been thinking about selling now is the time, call us today for professional personalized service, from a family business where we treat you like family.

Blue Grass Community Action PARTNERSHIP
Helping People. Changing Lives.

Blue Grass Community Action Partnership Community Needs Assessment Public Meeting

There will be a public meeting held to discuss the needs of the Community and low-income citizens in Mercer County on Nov. 5th, 2026, beginning at 12:00 p.m.
By zoom. https://uky.zoom.us/j/86534277252

Scan for Zoom Meeting

Please contact Amy Perrin at Blue Grass Community Action Partnership at 502-600-3763 with questions.

Laying

from 1B

and being a smaller team forced many freshmen and sophomores into the lineup, especially at the end of the season. Playing time for the younger players will help the Titans down the road as this team and Coach Bryant grow together.

"Our team has a lot of potential; we just need to continue working on piecing everything together on the field. I definitely expect to see us grow over the next few years into a very solid team," said Bryant.

The Titans were playing their best in the final weeks of the season before injuries started to pile up. In the final week of the regular season, they lost in the final minute to an 11-win Marion County team, beat Model 2-0 in a shutout win and tied an eight-win Bourbon County team. In the opening round of the 46th District Tournament, the Titans were without their seniors and lost four players in the game, leaving only one available sub. With time, Coach Bryant and her team can grow and keep improving.



The Harrodsburg Herald/Wesley Bird

Junior Carly Sanders led the Mercer County girls soccer team in assists and shot on goal in the 2026 season.

"While it's easy to look just at a record and determine the success of a season, all coaches know that's simply not the case. We made great strides this season and showed major improvement from the beginning of the season and I am excited to see where we go from here," said Bryant.

ORDINANCE 2026-25

An ordinance amending provisions of the City of Harrodsburg Ordinance 2026-13.

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners of the City of Harrodsburg desires to amend a portion of the budget Ordinance 2026-13.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF HARRODSBURG, KENTUCKY ADOPTING THE ANNUAL BUDGET OF THE CITY OF HARRODSBURG FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2026 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2027 AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE OPERATION OF CITY GOVERNMENT.

WHEREAS, an annual budget proposal and message has been prepared and delivered to the City Commission; and

WHEREAS, The City Commission has reviewed such budget and made necessary modifications; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY OF HARRODSBURG:

Section 1. The annual budget for the City of Harrodsburg for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is hereby adopted as follow:

APPROPRIATIONS:

General Fund:	~~$ 9,715,525.55~~	$10,359,923.51
Water and Sewer Operating Fund:	$ 9,454,424.76	
Cemetery Fund (Perpetual Care):	$ 35,200.00	
Tourism Development Fund (Restaurant Tax):	$ 0.00	
Municipal Aid Fund:	$ 397,766.87	
ABC Fund:	$ 260,000.00	
Total	~~$ 19,862,917.18~~	$20,507,315.14

Section 2. This ordinance shall be effective upon its passage, approval and publication as required by law.

Passed 1st Reading: October 13, 2026
Passed 2nd Reading: October 26, 2026
Published: November 5, 2026

Robert O. "Bob" Williams, Mayor, City of Harrodsburg
Attest: Shavonna Huffman, City Clerk