

Arms in mid-reach, **Kayla McCoy** [12] gains control of the ball as Union Grove players attempt to do the same. "My focus was to try my best to allow the team more than one opportunity to score on offense and defense," McCoy said. "I wanted to limit our opponents to as few offensive rebounds as I could."



Suspended in mid-air, **Allison Goll** [12] jumps out of bounds to save the ball. "My job on the team was to be an emotional leader and to keep the team up when things got bad," Goll said. "It wasn't my job to score lots of points or get lots of rebounds, but to give effort on both ends of the floor."



Eyes trained on the ball, **Audrey Lunstedt** [12] watches her three-point shot in hopes that it will advance her team's score. "My freshman and sophomore year I played post, and never got outside of the point," Lunstedt said. "By my senior year, I transitioned into more of a shooting guard, so I spent a lot of extra time in the gym working on my three point shot."



Eyes on the basket, **Makenzie Goll** [12] avoids her defenders while going in for a layup. "My main goal on offense was to get to the basket," Goll said. "It's fun using different moves to get around your defender and I liked the challenge of it all."



Looking up the floor, **Landry Seimears** [12] dribbles past her Sabine defender. "I liked being able to call all of the plays and decide what the team was going to do next," Seimears said. "Certain plays work better than others, so it was fun trying to decide which play would benefit the team the best."



Farewell to Five

Varsity girls basketball graduate all starters

all photos by mike peery

Through the eyes of the world, White Oak Ladyneck basketball is a just another high school basketball team with teenage girls. What the world does not see is far beyond ten teenage girls running around trying to put a ball through a hoop.

"White Oak basketball has impacted my life by helping me develop qualities that make me a better person rather than just a better basketball player," Allison Goll said. "As I graduate from high school this year, I know I am leaving a better and stronger person because of **Coach Hutchins-Boylett** and her basketball program."

Pre-season is always crucial in preparing for district. Not only does the team finally get together and play multiple games, but it gives them ideas of what they need to work on, individually and as a whole, to prepare for their district opponents. The Ladynecks placed first in the Hughes Springs Tournament also earning two all-tournament and one Tournament MVP honors.

The team made it to the second round of the playoffs for the second consecutive year despite having two team members, Makenzie Goll and **Maci Teague** [11] injured. In the second round of the playoffs, the team lost to the future state semifinalist Little River Academy Bumblebees 60-33. After not having seniors to graduate the past two seasons, it was a heartbreaking loss for the team as they

realized they would never play together again.

"Being injured this year was terrible, because I wasn't able to play one last year with our seniors," Teague said. "But I can't wait to be back on the court again. I've missed the game and just being able to play."

After playing together for years, the starting five donned their jerseys and played together for the last time this year. Over the span of four years, these girls have joined together on and off the court through difficult times to form an unbreakable bond.

"I've been playing basketball for 11 years and it has taught me many things and I'm glad it's been such a huge part of my life," Seimears said. "I've realized how great my friends are and I know that they'll always have my back."

Although the team is mostly comprised of seniors, the time has come for the younger members of the team to step up and be the leaders. Some of them have already starting preparing mentally for their new roles on the team.

"These seniors are some of my best friends, and they mean a lot to the basketball girls," Weeks said. "They are great leaders and the underclassmen are going to have to step up."

Dream Pet Moments:

"I want a chimpanzee named Chippy. I would name it that because it sounds like the name." **Madison Gilbreath** [9]

"I would get a dolphin, because ever since I was in kindergarten I asked for a dolphin for Christmas and I would name it Flipper, because dolphins have flippers." **Kayla McCoy** [12]

"I would get an English Bulldog and name it Bentley, because it fits." **Matthew Fontaine** [11]

"I would have a one-foot tall elephant named Felipe so that I could call him 'Elephelipe.'" **Eli Hernandez** [11]

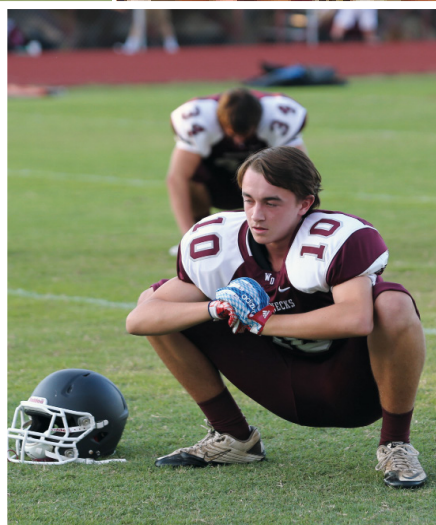
Calling out signals, JV quarterback **Kason Kienzle** [10] stands behind the offensive line before the snap. The JV line was known for getting better every game as the season went on. "I really appreciated the line I had all year," Kienzle said. "I know they worked hard every game, and I had a strong bond between them throughout the season."



Catching the ball with outstretched hands, receiver **Peyton Johnson** [9] catches a pass for a first down. Johnson was one of the primary receivers for the freshman team and played a key role in gaining yardage. "It was great to be a main part of the team," Johnson said.



Focusing on the upcoming game, JV receiver **Justin Benson** [11] leads his team in stretches. The JV followed a certain stretching routine before every game. "It's very important to stretch before games because you don't want to pull a muscle," Benson said. "You want to get loose so you don't get stiff."



Chopping up field, JV running back **Zach Maly** [10] looks to pick up a first down for the offense. "I wasn't sure how I would perform in certain situations," Maly said. "I began to like running back much more as the season went on."



Looking to swat the pass, JV lineman **Wyatt Smith** [10] rushes after the opposing quarterback. Smith eventually got pulled up to varsity after the district games began. "I felt proud because it showed all my hard work had paid off," Smith said.



With eyes down field, freshman team quarterback **Jacob Young** [9] looks for an open receiver. Young eventually got moved up to varsity after injuries took their toll on the squad. "It was nerve racking at first when I got pulled up," Young said. "As the year went on, I started to gain more confidence."



Steppin' UP

JV players fill roles on varsity

Three JV players made an impact on the varsity team once being called up. **Zach Maly** [10] played running back and outside linebacker for varsity after running back **Chandler Gordy** [10] broke his wrist. Maly had several key plays including a touchdown. In the second round of the playoffs, he started the second half at running back.

During week 8, **Wyatt Smith** [10] got pulled up and started at left guard, until he had a devastating leg injury in the second round of playoffs.

Jacob Young [9] played quarterback and defensive back the majority of the season on varsity, after wide receiver and quarterback **Heath Hood** [10] fractured his ankle. Young also had a couple of touchdowns and many key plays throughout the season.

With eager fingers pointing toward their goal, the freshman team looks to persuade the referee that they have the ball. Forcing turnovers played a key role in the sub-varsity wins. "Forcing turnovers gave us many opportunities to score and win, receiver **Peyton Johnson** [9] said.



Following his blockers, receiver **Dalton Sumrow** [9] looks up field to find a running lane. Sumrow played several positions throughout the year. "Playing many positions made me a better player as a whole," Sumrow said. "I felt like I was contributing to the team more by doing that."

With eyes on the receiver's hips, outside linebacker **Trenton Gross** [9] mans up one of Bullard's receivers. Covering pass routes was a strong aspect to Gross's game. "Whenever I covered receivers, I always made sure to stay inside and read the quarterback," Gross said.



Waiting & their Moment

JV football finishes strong, prepares for next season

Hand-me-down shoulder pads and helmets and living in the varsity's shadow, is the status quo each year for JV players. Day in and day out the JV practiced hard against the varsity, which was a way of getting better every week. Even with the hardships of being a JV player, the sub-varsity didn't let this get in their way of seizing their moment each Thursday night.

Even with both the JV and Freshman finishing with losing records, both teams showed a bright future for the upcoming seasons.

"I think our season went well overall," JV linebacker **Stone Palmer** [10] said. "I think that we will improve a lot as we become closer as a team, get bigger and stronger."

Both sub-varsity teams had a rocky start to their seasons. Through the first six games the JV went 2-4, picking up wins against Tenaha and Redwater, while

the freshman went 1-4-1, picking up their only win through the first half of the season against Cushing.

"The rough start gave us the realization that we are going to have to focus to win games," JV lineman **Wyatt Smith** [10] said. "Opponents weren't just going to hand us wins because we were White Oak."

Despite the rough start, both the JV and freshman finished with two strong wins, partly because of the combination of teams. The sub-varsity picked up a shutout against Quitman in a 12-0 win, and finished out the year with an 8-6 victory over Jefferson.

"I think the end of the season went great," JV receiver **Cameron Mills** [10] said. "It brought the team a little closer together, and made us realize what we can do when we work together."

Moment of Truth:

"I look up to my dad because he is always there when I need him. Sometimes whenever I want to go play with somebody, he lets me." **Mac Smith** [K]

"My dad because he helps me a lot. He helps me with reading." **Elli Donally** [1]

"To my mom and dad because they do stuff and help me do homework and learn stuff." **Aelina Lowe** [3]

"I look up to my brothers because they teach me basketball and how to be good at it." **Campbell Sutton** [2]