

LOCAL FOOTBALL



Fort White running back JacQuez Pelham (left) runs past a defender against Hamilton County earlier this season. Pelham was awarded the Indians' top offensive player. Columbia running back Kamario Bell (right) shakes a off defender against Sandalwood in the Preseason Classic.

## HIGH AND TIGHT

JacQuez Pelham and Kamario Bell win Lake City Reporter's Offensive Players of the Year.

### Pelham sparked the Indians to a playoff run.

By **KAYLA LOKEINSKY**  
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FORT WHITE – Fort White relied heavily on its running game this football season, with one Indian in particular leading the charge.

Once the ball got in his hands, there was no stopping him. He bulldozed down the middle of the field, knocking down anyone who stood in the way of him and the end zone.

That playmaker is JacQuez Pelham, and he

is the Lake City Reporter's Fort White Football Offensive Player of the Year.

This season, the junior running back rushed for 1,183 yards on 168 carries in 12 games. He averaged nearly 100 yards per game, and scored 17 rushing touchdowns and one receiving touchdown.

"He's a strong, hard-nosed player," Fort White head coach Demetric Jackson said. "As the games went on and the season went on he got stronger and stronger."

Pelham started playing football when he was nine years old and has loved it ever since.

"I like the feeling when I'm on the field and when I'm around my teammates," Pelham said. "I really also like winning."

The feeling after a win was felt often by Pelham, with the Indians going 9-3 this season. The district champions went undefeated in their district, and made it all the way to the regional finals before their season ended with a 21-17 loss to Madison County.

"I think we did really good compared to last year," Pelham said. "We blew a lot more teams out and we gelled a lot better this season."

**PELHAM** continued on 2B

### Bell has led the Tigers in rushing last two years.

By **ERIC JACKSON**  
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Inconsistency troubled Columbia's offense at times, but the Tigers always seemed to have a lifeline in their senior running back – even in the tightest of situations.

Kamario Bell was somebody teammates could depend on.

Bell was hardly denied and anchored the Tigers' rushing attack this season.

Columbia's two-year starter led his team in rushing yards and touchdowns in 2016.

Bell's production and senior leadership was enough to earn him the Lake City Reporter's Columbia Offensive Player of the Year.

He will truly be missed by teammates and coaches. A throwback Columbia pounder who resembled the bruising running backs who came before him.

"He's been a tremendous player for us," Columbia coach Brian Allen said. "He's a true testament to the hard work part of it. You get out what you put in and he definitely works his tail off. He's been a great example for these [younger] guys watching him."

The Tigers' season ended sooner than hoped. But the next group moves forward

after gaining oodles of knowledge from seniors like Bell.

"I think I did a great job of showing what to do in the weight room [and] how to represent yourself as a Tiger football player in the school," Bell said. "And how to turn on the juice when needed to. I think a lot of the younger players saw that."

Bell ends his career as one of the better running backs to don the purple and gold.

His efforts driving the Tigers to a sixth-straight playoff appearance – including a Final Four berth last season – forever is cemented in Columbia's storied history.

"Not surprised he got the honor," Allen said. "He deserves it."

COLLEGE FOOTBALL

## FSU running back Dalvin Cook gears up for Michigan defense

By **JOE REEDY**  
 Associated Press

TALLAHASSEE — While Dalvin Cook didn't make the trip to New York earlier this month as a Heisman Trophy finalist, the Florida State running back gets to take a trip the he never tires of this weekend.

The 10th-ranked Seminoles (9-3) will arrive in Fort Lauderdale on Saturday to continue preparations for their Dec. 30 Orange Bowl meeting with No. 6 Michigan (10-2). For the junior running back from Miami, who is

the eighth Associated Press All-America selection under Jimbo Fisher, it is another chance to return home to South Florida and play in front of friends and family at Hard Rock Stadium.

Cook though hasn't said if it will also mark his final collegiate game, even though it is expected that he will enter the NFL draft the week following the game.

"To finish our season off in a big bowl game in that stadium, it definitely means a lot," Cook said.

This will be Cook's third FSU appearance at the stadium in Miami Gardens. He has always liked playing there,

but thinks the recent renovations have made it better. "You get the crowd a little more involved with it," he said. "A little noise gets out, but it's so closed in (due to the roof covering the stands) you hear everything. We're practicing for it."

Cook is averaging 121 rushing yards at Hard Rock. In the Oct. 8 game against Miami, he rushed for 150 yards and also had a 59-yard touchdown reception in the Seminoles 20-19 win.

**COOK** continued on 2B

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# SCOREBOARD

## TV LISTINGS

### Today COLLEGE BASKETBALL 12:30 p.m.

ESPN — Diamond Head Classic, seventh-place game, at Honolulu

### 2:30 p.m.

ESPN — Diamond Head Classic, fifth-place game, at Honolulu

### 6 p.m.

ESPN2 — Diamond Head Classic, third-place game, at Honolulu

### 8 p.m.

ESPN2 — Diamond Head Classic, championship game, at Honolulu

### NBA BASKETBALL Noon

ESPN — Boston at New York

### 2:30 p.m.

ABC — Golden State at Cleveland

### 5 p.m.

ABC — Chicago at San Antonio

8 p.m.  
ESPN — Minnesota at Oklahoma City

### 10:30 p.m.

ESPN — L.A. Clippers at L.A. Lakers

### NFL FOOTBALL 4:20 p.m.

NFL — Baltimore at Pittsburgh

### 8:20 p.m.

NBC — Denver at Kansas City

### Monday, Dec. 26 COLLEGE FOOTBALL 11 a.m.

ESPN — St. Petersburg Bowl, Miami (Ohio) vs. Mississippi St., at St. Petersburg, Fla.

### 2:30 p.m.

ESPN — Quick Lane Bowl, Maryland vs. Boston College, at Detroit

### 5 p.m.

ESPN2 — Independence Bowl, NC State vs. Vanderbilt, at Shreveport, La.

### NBA BASKETBALL 8 p.m.

NBA — Indiana at Chicago

### 10:30 p.m.

NBA — Denver at L.A. Clippers

### NFL FOOTBALL 8:15 p.m.

ESPN — Detroit at Dallas

### SOCCER 7:30 a.m.

NBCSN — Premier League, Crystal Palace at Watford

### 10 a.m.

CNBC — Premier League, Bournemouth at Chelsea

NBCSN — Premier League, Sunderland at Manchester United

### 12:10 p.m.

NBCSN — Premier League, Manchester City at Hull City

## BOWL GLANCE

**Monday, Dec. 26**  
**St. Petersburg (Fla.) Bowl**  
Mississippi State (5-7) vs. Miami (Ohio)

(6-6), 11 a.m. (ESPN)

### Quick Lane Bowl

Detroit  
Boston College (6-6) vs. Maryland (6-6), 2:30 p.m. (ESPN2)

### Independence Bowl

Shreveport, La.  
NC State (6-6) vs. Vanderbilt (6-6), 5 p.m. (ESPN2)

### Tuesday, Dec. 27

**Heart of Dallas Bowl**  
Army (7-5) vs. North Texas (5-7), Noon (ESPN)

### Military Bowl

Annapolis, Md.  
Wake Forest (6-6) vs. Temple (10-3), 3:30 p.m. (ESPN)

### Holiday Bowl

San Diego  
Minnesota (8-4) vs. Washington State (8-4), 7 p.m. (ESPN)

### Cactus Bowl

Phoenix  
Boise State (10-2) vs. Baylor (6-6), 10:15

### Wednesday, Dec. 28

#### Pinstripe Bowl

Bronx, N.Y.  
Northwestern (6-6) vs. Pittsburgh (8-4), 2 p.m. (ESPN)

#### Russell Athletic Bowl

Orlando, Fla.  
Miami (8-4) vs. West Virginia (10-2), 5:30 p.m. (ESPN)

#### Foster Farms Bowl

Santa Clara, Calif.  
Indiana (6-6) vs. Utah (8-4), 8:30 p.m. (FOX)

#### Texas Bowl

Houston  
Kansas State (8-4) vs. Texas A&M (8-4), 9 p.m. (ESPN)

### Thursday, Dec. 29

Birmingham (Ala.) Bowl  
South Florida (10-2) vs. South Carolina (6-6), 2 p.m. (ESPN)

#### Belk Bowl

Charlotte, N.C.  
Virginia Tech (9-4) vs. Arkansas (7-5), 5:30 p.m. (ESPN)

#### Alamo Bowl

San Antonio  
Oklahoma State (9-3) vs. Colorado (10-3), 9 p.m. (ESPN)

#### Friday, Dec. 30

#### Liberty Bowl

Memphis, Tenn.  
Georgia (7-5) vs. TCU (6-6), Noon (ESPN)

#### Sun Bowl

El Paso, Texas  
North Carolina (8-4) vs. Stanford (9-3), 2 p.m. (CBS)

#### Music City Bowl

Nashville, Tenn.  
Tennessee (8-4) vs. Nebraska (9-3), 3:30 p.m. (ESPN)

#### Arizona Bowl

Tucson, Ariz.  
Air Force (9-3) vs. South Alabama (6-6), 5:30 p.m. (ASN)

#### Orange Bowl

Miami Gardens, Fla.  
Florida State (9-3) vs. Michigan (10-2), 8 p.m. (ESPN)

## PELHAM

*Continued From 1B*

Pelham's passion for the game shines through on and off the field. At practice, he can usually be seen singing and cracking jokes in between working on plays.

"He's a jokester," Jackson said. "Even at practice he's always upbeat. He always practices hard and you never see him moping around. He has a great attitude."

Next season JacQuez will be a key leader for

Fort White. With the team losing 16 seniors, it's up to Pelham and the rest of the juniors to take over that leadership role next year.

"Looking to the next season it's going to be really hard," Pelham said. "After we gel against we'll be looking for a good season."

As for his own personal goals, Pelham plans to improve his rushing yards as he aims to reach 2,000 in his senior season.

"I'm excited because I know how I did last year and I'm going to work even harder and do even better," Pelham said.



COURTESY

## Mitey Mites

The Richardson Community Center/Annie Mattox Park North Inc. would like to congratulate the Mitey Mite team of the Lake City Pop Warner program. The team recently competed in the National Pop Warner Mitey Mite Bowl on December 3rd in Orlando, FL at the ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex. The Lake City Tigers represented its home town well defeating the Patriots Youth Football of Naperville, Illinois by a score of 25-6 and shutting out the North Springs Blazers of Palmetto, South Carolina 33-0. Front: Katron Cherry (from left), Landon Harmon, Julian De la Cruz, Brandyn Dowell, Isaiah Hernandez, Jeffrey Patterson, Kendrick Allen, Latreveon Coles, Ji'aun Wilson. Omarion Udell (middle, from left), Zhalin Griffin, Zack Paulk Jr., Aiden Harmon, Trevis Johnson, Ja'shon Robinson, Tyndale Mullins, Marlin Haywood, Aaron Holmes. Assistant Coach Zack Paulk (back, from left), Head Coach Allen Pope, Assistant Coach Tyrone Mullins Not Pictured: Players- Lamari Bell, Pierce Proveaux, Parker Proveaux, Team Mom- Michelle De la Cruz.

## COOK

*Continued From 1B*

Trying to put up those same numbers against a Michigan defense that is ranked 13th in the nation against the run will be more difficult. In all but four games the Wolverines held opponents under 85 yards on the ground.

"It's going to be a game where you have to be patient. You have to take

the 2 or 3 yards, and get 4 yards," he said. "We have to do a good job of that, keep your feet going, and managing the run at first. It'll open up."

Michigan's players said earlier this week they haven't faced a back yet like Cook, who comes into the game second among Power Five conference running backs with 1,620 yards and fifth in yards from scrimmage (2,046).

"I know he's kind of a bruising back, but he's got

some speed," nose tackle Ryan Glasgow added. "It will look like someone has him dead to rights on the edge like an overhang guy unblocked and he'll bounce it out and stutter step them."

Cook will leave Florida State as its career rushing leader, but there are a couple more records in his sights. He needs 72 yards to break his own single-season rushing mark which was set last season. Cook is also 284 yards away from the Atlantic Coast Conference

career mark of 4,602 yards set by North Carolina State's Ted Brown. Cook's bigger goal is trying to find a way to end Florida State's two-game losing streak in bowl games. In last year's loss to Houston in the Peach Bowl, he was held to 33 yards on 18 carries.

"Everything is going to play itself out. If you win all those awards and don't win those football games, it wouldn't even matter," he said.

## NFL

# Rivalry games spice up holiday weekend in NFL

By **BARRY WILNER**

*Associated Press*

Steelers-Ravens, Broncos-Chiefs and Vikings-Packers. Big rivalry games with plenty on the line.

Happy Holidays.

There's been plenty of complaining about the NFL schedule this season. Not for Week 16, when those three gems and a few other strong matchups with post-season implications provide some extra gleam to this time of year.

Pittsburgh can ruin Baltimore's January plans with a win that would clinch the AFC North. Kansas City can eliminate defending champion Denver from contention by winning; both of those games are Sunday.

And while Minnesota has virtually no shot at making the playoffs, it could damage Green Bay's chances by knocking off the Packers.

"Most definitely," Vikings cornerback Captain Munneryn says. "If we can't go, they can't go. That's how we're going to look at it. We're going to try to spoil their parade and put them in a bad situation. Try to go out there and play hard for each other in this locker room and go out and play hard for ourselves."

The penultimate week of the regular season began Thursday night when the Philadelphia Eagles snapped a five-game slide by beating the visiting New York

Giants 24-19.

Malcolm Jenkins had the second two-interception game of his eight-year career, returning one for a touchdown for the Eagles (6-9). The loss put the Giants (10-5) in a more difficult spot for ending their four-season playoff drought. They still own the top wild-card position heading into their finale at Washington, and can still get in this weekend if Detroit, Green Bay, Tampa Bay or Atlanta loses.

### Baltimore (8-6) at Pittsburgh (9-5)

Only the Steelers can reach the postseason in this one. But a Ravens win would give them a sweep of Pittsburgh and the tiebreaker with one week remaining.

This one, kicking off late Sunday afternoon, figures to be a brutal, give-no-quarter match.

"It's what you play for. It's an AFC North championship game for us. It's big," Steelers safety Mike Mitchell says. "I would have took it against little sisters of the poor. It really didn't matter."

"When I got here it was just you don't like Baltimore. It was like growing up in the Cold War, you don't like Russia."

Ravens quarterback Joe Flacco is a bit more, uh, diplomatic.

"It might be a little bit illogical, but I think people are going to love it," he says. "I think people are going to be sitting at home

on Christmas and loving the fact that they get to watch Ravens-Steelers."

### Denver (8-6) at Kansas City (10-4)

The nightcap on Christmas night can't possibly match the first meeting in Week 12, perhaps the game of the year, a 30-27 overtime classic.

KC is in with a win or a Ravens loss or tie. Denver's chore is much more difficult; it can't win the AFC West and is in a tight race for a wild card. A loss would be devastating for the champs.

"They're the division rival," Chiefs tight end Travis Kelce says. "We know what we're going to get out of them. We're both in a place where we're fighting for our lives, our playoff lives. It's late in the season where it's that type of grind. It's going to be a heck of a challenge for us; they know us well, we know them well."

### Detroit (9-5) at Dallas (12-2), Monday night

The Cowboys won the NFC East and secured home-field advantage throughout the conference playoffs when the Giants lost at Philadelphia.

Detroit, riding a superb season by quarterback Matthew Stafford and some clutch performances in the fourth quarter and overtime, takes the division with a win and a Packers loss or tie.

A playoff berth is there for

the taking with a victory and a Buccaneers loss, or several other scenarios that Jim Caldwell and Co. are too busy to contemplate right now.

### Tennessee (8-6) at Jacksonville (2-12)

After victories over Denver and Kansas City, this should be easy for the Titans, right? But with the Jaguars changing coaches from the fired Gus Bradley to interim Doug Marrone, many jobs are on the line in the final two weeks.

The Titans have won three straight and seven of 10, and need a victory to make next week's game against Houston for the AFC South title. Their strong running game could dictate matters.

Jacksonville has lost nine in a row and is winless in six games at EverBank Field.

### Tampa Bay (8-6) at New Orleans (6-8)

Despite trailing Atlanta in the NFC South, the Bucs can make playoff plans with a win and losses by Green Bay, Detroit and Washington. For now, Tampa Bay will concentrate on a securing a rare winning record.

This has the elements of a potential shootout, but the Bucs' defense seems more capable of keeping down the score than does the Saints'.

However, Drew Brees emerged from a two-game slump in style last week, passing for 389

yards and four TDs at Arizona. Despite his monster numbers this season, Brees somehow didn't make the Pro Bowl.

### Atlanta (9-5) at Carolina (6-8)

Atlanta moves into the postseason with a win and a Tampa Bay loss, owning the division. There are a few scenarios that give the Falcons at least a wild card if the Bucs also win, with Detroit, Green Bay and Washington involved.

The Panthers are eager to reach 8-8 and not have a completely lost season, and they showed their gumption in Washington on Monday night. They'll need to protect Cam Newton from Vic Beasley, who has five sacks and two forced fumbles in his past two road games, and rookie LB Deion Jones, who has become a force for the Falcons.

### Miami (9-5) at Buffalo (7-7)

A Dolphins victory and a Denver loss puts Miami into the postseason. That's due to Miami winning eight of nine while Denver has swooned.

Dolphins RB Jay Ajayi had a career-best 214 yards rushing in an earlier win over the Bills. QB Matt Moore makes his second consecutive start in place of Ryan Tannehill (strained left knee). Moore had a career-best four TD passes last week.