



# 2022 Nusenda Credit Union State Football Championships

## Gateway Christian Caps Off Perfect Season with 6-Man Championship

For the second year in a row, Gateway Christian is on top of the 6-man football community. The Warriors beat Mountainair 53-14 to win the 2022 Nusenda Credit Union 6-man State Football Championship.

Gateway Christian found the endzone first in the opening quarter when senior Jace Worley scored on a 36-yard run to give the Warriors an 8-nothing lead with 8:30 to go. On the first play of the second quarter, sophomore quarterback Ethaniel Wigley connected with senior Elijah Perry for a 20-yard touchdown pass. Gateway Christian went up 24-nothing before halftime on Jace Worley's second touchdown run of the night.

Mountainair would get on the board in the third quarter, but Gateway Christian would respond with a creative playbook. Wigley pitched the ball to Worley who then threw it back to Wigley who made his way up field for the score and gave Gateway Christian a 32-6 lead in the third quarter. Still in the third, Ethaniel Wigley connected on a 22-yard touchdown pass to senior Hayden Wigley to make it a 40-6 game with 6:52 left in the quarter. Late in the third, Worley would account for his third touchdown of the game on a 27-yard run to make it 47-6 heading into the 4th. In the final quarter, Mountainair would score for just the second time in the game while Gateway Christian's Barton Pieratt would cap off the scoring with a five-yard touchdown.

It's the 8th overall state title for the Warriors. Gateway Christian is currently on a 21-game win streak dating back to last season.



## Fort Sumner-House wins First 8-Man Football Championship

The Fort Sumner/Houses Foxes (11-0) defeated the Lordsburg Mavericks (10-1) in the 2022 Nusenda Credit Union 8-Man State Football Championship, 44-34. This was the Foxes 16th appearance in the state title game, the first competing in the 8-Man division. It's also the 11th state football title in school history and the first since 2017.

The Mavericks were back in the title game for the first time since 2016.

The game was a high scoring affair early on, as both teams exchanged scores through the first 5 minutes on playing, making it 16-16. The Foxes took a 24-16 lead before another touchdown and a safety by Lordsburg gave them back the lead at 26-24 in the second quarter.

Fort Sumner/House regained the lead on the scoreboard with just a few minutes left before halftime, 30-26. Lordsburg threatened to take the lead back but a defensive stop by the Foxes with no time on the clock at the 1-yard line, gave Fort Sumner/House a 4-point advantage at the half.

The second half of the game was much the same to start, as a touchdown by each team early in the third quarter made it a one score game at 38-34.

Defense took over as both teams were unable to score another point until late in the fourth quarter. It was with just over two minutes on the clock that Fort Sumner/House put the game away on a trick play, making it 44-34. The Mavericks had nothing left as The Foxes lifted the blue trophy in the 8-Man Championship.



### **Jal earns First Football Title since 1999**

The Jal Panthers (13-0) defeated the Texico Wolverines (9-4) in the 2022 Nusenda Credit Union 2A State Football Championship, 41-21. This was the first title for the Panthers since 1999. Senior quarterback Alexavier Carreon rushed for four touchdowns and threw for another in the Panthers 20-point victory.

Jal opened the game with a touchdown drive that took nearly seven minutes off the clock in the first quarter. The Panthers extended that lead to 19-0, before Texico was able to get on the board, making it 19-7 to end the first quarter.

The Panthers responded to make it 27-7 and it looked as if the Wolverines had no answer for Jal. However, Texico countered with a touchdown of their own to make it 27-13 at the half.

Jal added another seven points in the third quarter to take a 34-13 lead and then another in the fourth quarter to with a little over eight minutes left in the game to ex-





tend their lead to 41-13.

Texico would add a late touchdown with a minute on the clock, but it was too little too late, as the Jal Panthers captured the 2022 2A Football Blue Trophy with a final of 41-21.

### **Ruidoso Crowned 3A Football Champions**

The Ruidoso Warriors (12-1) hoisted the blue trophy for the first time since 2017, defeating the St. Michael's Horsemen (11-2) at the 2022 Nusenda Credit Union 3A Football State Championship, 12-0. It was the Warriors' ninth state title in the sport of football.

The old saying is 'Defense Wins Championships' and that was the case in the 2022 3A title game. It only took two first quarter touchdowns for the Warriors to secure the blue trophy.



Touchdown passes of 56 and 54 yards from quarterback Cooper Pritchett to wide receiver Logan Sandoval was all the scoring Ruidoso needed. Pritchett threw for 194 yards on 14-of-28 passing, while Sandoval caught nine passes for 142 yards.

"I couldn't be prouder of these young men and what they accomplished this year," head coach Kief Johnson said. "To come away with the state championship in our first year in class 3A, we are on a high right now. I had a great feeling we were going to win the game that day. I wasn't sure two touchdowns were going to be enough because St. Michael's is a good team, but it became a defense battle, and we came out on top."

### **Bloomfield Grabs Football Title for First Time since 1966**

The Bloomfield High School football team won their first state championship in over half a century. Bloomfield beat top ranked Silver 13-7 to win the Class 4A Title at the 2022 Nusenda Credit Union State Football Championships. It's Bloomfield's first state championship since 1966.

On a sunny Saturday afternoon in Bloomfield, Silver (11-2) scored the first points of the game on a Mason Lockett 11-yard touchdown run in the first five minutes of



the game, giving the Colts a 7-0 lead. Bloomfield would tie the game on the first play of the second quarter on a one yard Ryan Sharpe quarterback keeper. The two teams would head halftime tied 7-all. Then in the third quarter, Sharpe connected Jesse Seitzinger for the go-ahead touchdown on a 71-yard score. That was all the scoring they would need as Bloomfield earned the 13-7 championship win.

It was the third finals appearance in four years for the Bobcats. With the win, Bloomfield (12-1) avenged a 45-6 loss to the Colts earlier in the season, their lone defeat on the year. "The defense was outstanding," said Bloomfield head coach Mike Kovacs. "They gave up 45 last time and only gave up seven today. What more could you ask for? I'm so excited for these kids."

### **Artesia Wins 31st State Football Title**

The Artesia Bulldogs added another championship to their already long list of state titles. The top ranked Bulldogs beat Piedra Vista 27-14 to win the Class 5A Title at the 2022 Nusenda Credit Union State Football Championships. It's Artesia 31st state football championship, a New Mexico state record and third most in the country, according to the NFHS record book.



Playing on their home field in Farmington, the Panthers (11-2) scored on their first possession with a 6-yard touchdown pass from Logan Howell to Paul Brown. After trailing 7-nothing, Artesia put up 27 straight points. The Bulldogs (11-2) started their scoring on the next possession when Artesia's Diego Wesson tied the game at 7-7 on a short touchdown run. Nye Estrada would throw the first of his two touchdowns to Julian Rodriguez just before the end of the opening quarter to give Artesia a 14-7 lead.

Peyton Greathouse's 19-yard scoring run in the second quarter would increase Artesia's lead to 21-7 going into halftime. Estrada threw his second touchdown of the game in the third quarter, connecting with Cayden Joy on a 34-yard scoring strike. A fourth quarter touchdown by Piedra Vista's Jacob Ramsted would cap the scoring in the game, giving Artesia a 13-point championship victory. It's Artesia's first state title since 2017.

### **Cleveland Scores 75 Points in High-Scoring 6A Title Game**

It was the highest scoring 6A title game in New Mexico history, as the Cleveland Storm (11-2) and the La Cueva Bears (11-2) combined for 136 points, as the Storm captured the 2022 Nusenda Credit Union 6A State Football Championship, 75-61.

Only Jal High School with 76 in 1959, had scored more points in an 11-man football title game



than Cleveland. For the third consecutive full season, Cleveland hoisted the blue trophy (2019, 2021, & 2022), as there was no fall season in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The two teams combined for just over 1,200 yards on the day, as the Storm rushed for 474 yards and the Bears threw for 522 yards.

Cleveland held an 8-point lead (28-20) with just under a minute to play in the second quarter, before La Cueva scored not once but twice to take a 34-28 into halftime. The Bears extended their lead to 41-28 on the opening drive of the third quarter but the Storm rattled off 20 unanswered points in the third to take a 48-41 lead.

A long touchdown run by Even Wysong and two pick-six interceptions by Andres Aguirre gave Cleveland a 62-41 advantage with six and a half minutes left in the game. The Bears would add 20 more points to their total but the Storm countered, as it was too little too late for La Cueva, as Cleveland won 75-61.

La Cueva's quarterback Aidan Armenta threw for 517 yards and five touchdowns, while Wysong rushed for 246 yards and three touchdowns, while running back Mbuaha rushed for 108 yards and four scores.

