

# mix & *MATCHES*

A look at Monarch's teams, athletes, and everything sports



## AP RUNS THE A-TEAM

Thoughts from new head football coach

“The bigger goal is to create this lifelong fraternity within the program, where people will always come back and say, ‘Man, I loved my time being a Monarch football player. Yeah, we won games. Yeah, I scored touchdowns, I made tackles, all that. But, I love the guys I played with.’ Making sure that is the bedrock of what we stand for, that’s my number one goal.”

— Aaron Paddock

## DRIBBLING TO VICTORY

Girls basketball stands out this season

By Zack Frieder

Dedication plays a massive role in the success of any sports team, and this year, girls basketball has some of the most passionate players yet.

“I like working with kids that really want to be somewhere,” Coach Mike Blakely said. “It’s fun to coach kids in a place that they want to be.”

Not only are the players committed, but they have developed bonds on and off the court.

“We spend a lot of time together, like after practices, we’ll go get lunch or breakfast or whatever, and I think we’ve gotten really close,” Natalie Guanella ‘23 said. “We work well together and we have each other’s backs.”

The team hasn’t won a playoff game in the past two seasons that Blakely has

coached, but this year, he is confident in the team’s post season opportunities.

“We’ll definitely make the playoffs, and have a home game,” Blakely said. “I really want to win one, two, or three of those games, and I think we’re good enough to do that.”

Playoffs are a big deal for any team, especially at Monarch. Girls basketball is one of the school’s only sports that is among the top five in the state. With this ranking, Natalie Guanella ‘23 has high hopes for the rest of the season.

“I think it’d be really cool because Monarch is one of the schools that hasn’t been up there in a while. So, I think for us to even get to the final four would be insane, and everyone on our team knows we can do it.” Guanella said.



Natalie Guanella '23 dribbles down the court during a home game against Legacy High School.