

2026

AVCA Thirty Under 30 High School



Magen Ponder

Cherokee County High School
Assistant Coach

Career Accomplishments to Date:

2025 State Championship: Served as a key member of the coaching staff that secured the school's first 4A state title with a 3-2 victory over Prattville Christian Academy.

Dominant 2025 Season: Helped guide the team to an impressive 51-9 overall record.

Regional Success: Contributed to a 6-2 region record and a #2 ranking within the region.

2024: State Quarterfinalists

North Super Regional – 4th Place

Area Champions

County Champions

2023: State Quarterfinalists

North Super Regional – 3rd Place

Area Champions

2022: North Super Regional Qualifiers

Area Champions

Coaching Roles:

Assistant Coach to the Varsity Team At Cherokee County High School for 7 Years

Head Coach of the Junior Varsity at Cherokee County High School for 2 Years

What made you decide to get into coaching volleyball?

I am a graduate of Cherokee County High School, where I played volleyball for the Lady Warriors. I was driven by my commitment to mentor the next generation of athletes at my alma mater. I am extremely grateful i am able to provide myself as a key stepping

stone in the sport I hold dear to my heart. Being deeply invested in the kids i help coach has always been a passion of mine whether it is on or off the court.

What are your career goals in the sport?

I am dedicated to the holistic growth of our volleyball players, focusing on building their confidence and character through mentorship. My career goal is to foster an environment where our athletes know their coaching staff is fully invested in their future. Beyond the state titles, I am committed to showing up for our girls every day—providing the consistency, heart, and leadership they deserve from their alma mater



Which coaches have influenced you the most?

Amy & Travis Barnes
Dusty Cothran
Tiffany Rieger

What do you enjoy most about your coaching job?

A full-circle journey. Having played for Cherokee County myself, there is nothing more rewarding than standing on the same sidelines and helping our girls experience the same pride and passion I felt. Seeing them achieve the school's first state title wasn't just about the trophy; it was about seeing years of their hard work finally pay off. Also, the best part is the relationships. Showing up every day to be their biggest cheerleader and a steady hand when things get tough. I don't just coach volleyball players; I get to help shape the young women they are becoming.