

# Trick-or-treat: October full of 'spooktacular' sporting events



**Brett LaBore**  
OF THE LAKELAND TIMES

October is one of the best months of the year for a sports fan. There is football, baseball, basketball and hockey all going on at the same time. With Halloween around the corner, I wanted to see which teams/players are getting treats and which teams/players are getting tricks.

Let's start with the World Series matchup. Both the Philadelphia Phillies and Houston Astros are getting treats for making it to the World Series.

What's impressive about the Phillies is

they fired manager Joe Girardi way back on June 3. All they've done since then is win, and they're back in the World Series for the first time since 2009.

The Astros are back... again. I'll give manager Dusty Baker a treat for dealing with all the drama following the cheating scandal of 2017. He's done a great job with this group. Speaking of that, the Astros are still getting a trick for cheating in 2017.

It hasn't been a dream for the Green Bay Packers (3-4) and the Tampa Bay Buccaneers (3-4). It's been more of a nightmare for two teams that had Super Bowl aspirations led by future Hall of Fame quarterbacks in Aaron Rodgers and Tom Brady respectively.

I'm giving the Packers and Buccaneers a trick for their slow

starts. We'll see if they can re-group and make a playoff run by the time Christmas comes.

The Tennessee Volunteers have been getting all the treats recently. Certainly the fans at Neyland Stadium got a treat when they took down the goal posts and threw them in the river following a win over Alabama on Oct. 15.

The Volunteers are ranked third in the AP Poll and are a perfect 7-0. They've already beaten Alabama and LSU, and have a Heisman candidate in quarterback Hendon Hooker.

The Los Angeles Lakers get a trick from me. Things do not look promising in L.A. after an 0-3 start. They're -7.4 in average point differential and can't make 3-pointers. The Lakers are struggling with their rotation as they see who fits best

where. LeBron James may have to leave L.A. if he wants to win another title.

One of my favorite traditions during Halloween is carving pumpkins and making Jack-o-lanterns. One quarterback who has been carving up defenses this year is Patrick Mahomes of the Kansas City Chiefs. Last year, Mahomes didn't always play according to his standards. This year, he ranks first in the NFL in yards, touchdowns, Total Quarterback Rating (QBR) and quarterback rating. He's doing all of that without wide receiver Tyreek Hill and has the Chiefs sitting comfortably at 5-2. Mahomes gets a treat.

I love haunted houses/corn mazes/forests during this time of year. It's been a house of horrors for those in College Station, Texas and

Miami.

Texas A+M came into the college football season ranked sixth in the preseason poll. The Aggies are 3-4 and have lost three straight. They also lost a home game to Appalachian State.

Miami came into the season ranked 16th with high goals of competing in the ACC. The Hurricanes have lost four of five with their best win coming against Virginia Tech. I always like to dress up in costume for Halloween. The Yankees' Aaron Judge will certainly be dressing up next season — the question is for which team?

Judge gets all the treats in New York for his historic season. He set a new American League record with 62 home runs. In addition to that, he led the A.L. in RBIs with 131 and took second in batting

average at .311. Judge bet on himself, and will be rewarded with a huge contract this off-season.

Movies like John Carpenter's "Halloween" and Wes Craven's "Scream" are fun scary movies to watch during spooky season. They're also known as slasher films.

Damian Lillard has been slashing to the hoop, averaging 33.3 points per game. He's got the Portland Trail Blazers off to a 4-0 start. He's also stayed loyal to Portland, giving him a treat for me.

There are all sorts of fun things to do in October. Whether it's going to an apple orchard or watching sports, it's one of the best times of the year.

*Brett LaBore may be reached at [brett@lakelandtimes.com](mailto:brett@lakelandtimes.com) or [sports@lakelandtimes.com](mailto:sports@lakelandtimes.com).*



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOGRAPH

## DAVE BETLEWSKI PROMOTED TO NINTH DEGREE BLACK BELT RANK

Ironwood/Minocqua Karate Institute instructor Dave Betlewski made Martial Art history. On Oct. 2 in front of over 100 Black Belts from Wisconsin/Minnesota, Betlewski was promoted to ninth degree Black Belt rank. The presentation took place in Marshfield at Reis' Karate Championships. Grand Master Robert Likes and W.P.K. test board presented Betlewski with the prestigious award. It was quite an honor to receive such an award in front of my Black Belt son and in my wife's presence. Betlewski has trained since 1995 and celebrated 40 years of teaching in the Northern area.

## Preview

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Salem, Kettle Moraine Lutheran, Northwestern, Mauston, Notre Dame, McFarland, Monroe and Lakeside Lutheran.

There is plenty of unknown amongst those teams. The Thunderbirds beat Shawano by eight points at the sectional meet in Abrams. Clark (16:27.3) ran faster times than Shawano's Will Chelberg (16:46.9) and Ethan Onesti (17:12.1).

"It's really hard to gauge where we are against other teams that we've never raced against and have raced on totally different courses," Drewsen said. "I would like to be in the top 10."

Clark won his seventh individual meet Saturday. He'll have to run a top race in order to be a state champion.

"Owen is going to have

to have a strong finish to get in the top five," Drewsen said.

It will be a packed field in Wisconsin Rapids. Meets like the Roy Griak Invite in Minnesota have prepared the Thunderbirds to competing with many other runners.

"We've run with a lot of people in the Griak race. I think just keeping them mentally focused to do well at state instead of being ok with just getting to state will be the focus," Drewsen said. "We need to keep the team the focus."

The weather looks to be warmer for this time of year, making it good for running.

"Fifties to 60s is a great forecast for running," Drewsen said.

The Division 2 boys' race is set for 2:35 p.m. tomorrow.

*Brett LaBore may be reached at [brett@lakelandtimes.com](mailto:brett@lakelandtimes.com) or [sports@lakelandtimes.com](mailto:sports@lakelandtimes.com).*



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Zach Kline comes to the finish line during a WIAA Division 2 sectional meet Saturday, Oct. 22 at The Patriot Golf Club in Abrams. Kline ended up with a time of 18:58.2 as he makes his first state appearance.