

Mounties Hope to Tame Eagles; WestPAC Showdown Looms

By Brian Carson

Two games with major conference and district implications highlight the week seven high school football slate.

In the Mountain Athletic Conference Small School Division, unbeaten and third ranked Tyrone (6-0, 3-0 MAC) tangles with rival Philipsburg-Osceola (5-1, 2-1 MAC), while in the WestPAC, Portage (6-0, 6-0) squares off for the 20th time with Windber (5-1, 5-1).

The Golden Eagles, ranked first in D6-AA, have allowed only two touchdowns and 16 points for the season. That averages out to only 2.7 points per game. Johnny Shaffer, Brandon Gehret and Josh Bradley are just some of the studs of this unit.

Offensively, Tyrone, like all John Franco-led teams, loves to run the football and this year is no different. Despite the loss of tailback Johnny Franco to a leg injury, the Golden Eagles haven't missed a beat in the running game.

Shayne Tate has stepped in for Franco and filled the loss admirably. The senior has rushed for 704 yards and four scores and along with fullback Brinton Mingle, has the Tyrone offense churning on all cylinders. When Levi Reihart does air it out, his main target is Shane Emigh (11-148).

The Mounties may have been caught looking ahead last week as Jeff Vroman's club dropped a tough 13-10, double overtime decision to Penns Valley last week.

Now it's out of the frying pan and into the fire for P-O. Facing two of the best defenses in the area in back-to-back weeks isn't a fun chore to say the least, but these Mounties back down from no one.

Philipsburg is solid at the skill positions with bruising Dmitri Sidorick (518 yards, 9 TD) at running back, 6-5, 210-pound J.D. Mason (15-325-3) at wideout and Bo Reifer (37-of-82, 619 yards, 7 TD) at quarterback. Add Corey Shimmel, Colton Harris and Jarret Lancaste into the mix and you can see the problems P-O can give opposing defenses.

Shimmel (41 tackles, 4 sacks), Mason (5 INT) and Sidorick (3 sacks) lead the way defensively for the Mounties.

The battle for the WestPAC usually comes down to Portage and Windber and this season is no different. Gary Gouse and Phil DeMarco have led the programs to continuous winning since they arrived at their respective schools, but in head-to-head competition, it's been all DeMarco and his Ramblers.

In the previous 19 meetings, Windber holds a 15-4 edge, including 26-7 last season. The Ramblers were upset 14-13 by Conemaugh Valley and will be looking to get their single-wing offense back in high gear for Friday. Defensively, Windber has surrendered only 9.6 points per game.

The Mustangs live and die by the run and this season, Gary Gouse has his backfield piling up yardage and points. Portage averages 310 yards and 32 points a game. The Mustangs have scored 26 times on the ground.

Leading the way is a trio of backs. Mike Sinosky (65-651-7) and Jarod Pisarchik (62-537-9) are the go-to guys, but Tommy Burgan (52-306-6) has run well all year. Carl Baker (9 sacks) and David Kephart (5 sacks) lead the Portage defense.

Friday Games

Cedar Cliff (Dist 3 AAAA 2-4-0) @ Altoona (Dist 6 AAAA 5-1-0)
Northern Bedford (Dist 5 A 5-1-0) @ Claysburg-Kimmel (Dist 6 A 1-5-0)
Windber (Dist 5 A 5-1-0) @ Portage (Dist 6 A 6-0-0)
Bellwood-Antis (Dist 6 A 4-2-0) @ Chestnut Ridge (Dist 5 AA 4-2-0)
Bishop Carroll (Dist 6 A 1-5-0) @ Somerset (Dist 6 AAA 4-2-0)
Bishop Guilfoyle (Dist 6 A 3-3-0) @ Central Cambria (Dist 6 AA 5-1-0)
Bishop McCort (Dist 6 AA 5-1-0) @ Johnstown (Dist 6 AAA 4-2-0)
Cambria Heights (Dist 6 AA 0-6-0) @ Bedford (Dist 5 AA 1-5-0)
Central (Dist 6 AA 2-4-0) @ Bald Eagle Area (Dist 6 AA 0-6-0)
Central Mountain (Dist 6 AAAA 2-4-0) @ Huntingdon (Dist 6 AAA 2-4-0)
Claysburg-Kimmel (Dist 6 A 1-5-0) @ West Branch (Dist 6 A 0-6-0)
Conemaugh Valley (Dist 6 A 1-5-0) @ Conemaugh Township (Dist 5 A 3-3-0)
Ferndale (Dist 6 A 2-4-0) @ Meyersdale (Dist 5 A 5-1-0)
Forest Hills (Dist 6 AA 3-3-0) @ Penn Cambria (Dist 6 AA 3-3-0)
Hollidaysburg (Dist 6 AAA 5-1-0) @ Bradford (Dist 9 AAA 5-0-0)
Juniata Valley (Dist 6 A 3-3-0) @ Glendale (Dist 6 A 3-3-0)
Lewistown (Dist 6 AAA 1-5-0) @ Bellefonte (Dist 6 AAA 4-2-0)
Marion Center (Dist 6 AA 2-4-0) @ Ligonier Valley (Dist 6 A 6-0-0)
Moshannon Valley (Dist 6 A 4-2-0) @ West Branch (Dist 6 A 0-6-0)
Mount Union (Dist 6 A 2-4-0) @ Penns Valley (Dist 6 AA 5-1-0)
Northern Cambria (Dist 6 A 4-2-0) @ Blairsville (Dist 6 A 3-3-0)
Philipsburg-Osceola (Dist 6 AA 5-1-0) @ Tyrone (Dist 6 AA 6-0-0)
Purchase Line (Dist 6 A 4-2-0) @ Homer Center (Dist 6 A 3-3-0)
Southern Huntingdon (Dist 6 A 5-1-0) @ Williamsburg (Dist 6 A 1-5-0)
State College (Dist 6 AAAA 3-3-0) @ Williamsport (Dist 4 AAAA 0-6-0)
United (Dist 6 A 1-5-0) @ Penns Manor (Dist 6 A 2-4-0)