

Big Games Highlight Week Two

By Brian Carson

Two huge early games dot the District 6 landscape and will highlight week two of the high school football season in central Pennsylvania.

Harrisburg and Altoona, two of the best big school teams in the state, square off after successful opening campaigns last week.

The Cougars, coached by George Chaump, are ranked second in the state AAAA rankings by Pennsylvania Football News and the Patriot News. Altoona, under the direction of head coach Phil Riccio, are rated tenth in the state by the Patriot and are listed as a team to watch by PFN.

Harrisburg defeated Central Dauphin 41-7 in its season opener, while the Mountain Lions disposed of Hollidaysburg 41-0.

Altoona is led by junior quarterback A.J. Alexander, who rushed for 183 yards and scored three touchdowns last week, WR/DB D.J. Patterson, who came away with an 88-yard interception return for a score, offensive lineman Brant Clouser, LB Wes Plummer and running back Alphonso Lewis.

The Cougars are tough on both sides of the ball. QB Nate Brown is a legitimate passer who can also beat you with his legs. Tailback Deries Hodge is a 6-1, 215 pound load and wide receivers Carlo Smith and Lavar and Dennis Burhannan are explosive.

Defensively, Hodge is a force at linebacker, while Zech Runkle is a solid free safety who gets the job done quarterbacking the defense.

In the other big contest of the week, the Golden Eagles, ranked eighth in the state by PFN, travel to Huntingdon to clash with defending D6-AAA champion Bearcats.

The game features two of the best coaches in the state – Tyrone's John Franco and Huntingdon's Jim Zauzig.

Franco is entering his 13th season at the helm of the Golden Eagles. With Tyrone, Franco has a 123-27 mark with one state title (1999), a finals appearance (1996) and eight district championships (1987 AAA, 1995 AA, 1996 AA, 1997 AA, 1999 AA, 2000 AA, 2003 AA, 2004 AA).

Tyrone is led by DL Tyler Hoover, who recorded a safety last week in an impressive 16-0 victory over Bellwood-Antis, fullback Johnny Franco (164 yards) and RB Tyler Gillmen, who missed last week with an injury and may not play again on Friday.

Zauzig begins season number ten at his alma mater. He sports a 78-26 mark with the Bearcats claiming five district titles (1997AAA, 1998 AAA, 2001 AAA, 2003 AAA, 2005 AAA) during his tenure.

Huntingdon, who defeated county rival Mount Union 35-14 last week, is led by TE Zack Reed and backs Joey Riley (139 yards) and Andy Young (80 yards).

Tyrone won last seasons contest by a 27-0 score.

Here's a look at some of the key week two games on tap in District 6:

Bishop McCort @ Forest Hills

The Crushers were stunned in a 25-24 double overtime loss to Bedford last week. Things don't get any easier as McCort must travel to Sidman and take on the Rangers. Forest Hills QB Travis Rearick passed for 161 yards and three touchdowns, all to Ross Carpenter in its 30-8 win over Westmont-Hilltop.

Bishop Carroll @ Penn Cambria

The Huskies survived an overtime contest with Central last week thanks to Noah Creany's extra point in the extra session. The Panthers suffered a tough 14-6 loss to Johnstown after committing three turnovers that proved costly.

Bellefonte @ Philipsburg-Osceola

The Red Raiders eked out a 9-7 victory over Punxsutawney last week and now take on the Mounties, a 13-12 loser to Brookville, in a battle of county rivals. Heath Sprout had seven grabs for 125 yards to lead Bellefonte last week.

Johnstown @ Central Cambria

The Trojans got 73 yards rushing from Antwan Reed, including the game-winner to defeat Penn Cambria 14-6. Central Cambria dominated Somerset 27-7 in its opener.

Penns Valley @ Bellwood-Antis

Rams RB Chris Korn rushed for 226 yards and a touchdown in a win over BEA, while the Blue Devils dropped a 16-0 decision to Tyrone in their annual backyard brawl. All-state tailback Josh Kleinfelter looks to rebound after rushing for only 87 yards last week.

Bishop Guilfoyle @ Indian Valley

The Marauders look to make it 2-0 on the season after defeating Chestnut Ridge 26-12. QB Brent Milliron rushed and threw for a touchdown, while accounting for 168 total yards to lead BG. The Warriors suffered a 12-0 loss to West Perry.

Week Two Schedule:

Northern Bedford (Dist 5 A 1-0-0) @ Southern Huntingdon (Dist 6 A 1-0-0)

Tussey Mountain (Dist 5 A 1-0-0) @ Williamsburg (Dist 6 A 0-1-0)

Bellefonte (Dist 6 AAA 1-0-0) @ Philipsburg-Osceola (Dist 6 AA 0-1-0)

Bishop Carroll (Dist 6 A 1-0-0) @ Penn Cambria (Dist 6 AA 0-1-0)

Bishop Guilfoyle (Dist 6 A 1-0-0) @ Indian Valley (Dist 6 AAA 0-1-0)

Bishop McCort (Dist 6 AA 0-1-0) @ Forest Hills (Dist 6 AA 1-0-0)

Blairsville (Dist 6 A 1-0-0) @ Ligonier Valley (Dist 6 A 1-0-0)

Claysburg-Kimmel (Dist 6 A 0-1-0) @ Everett (Dist 5 AA 0-1-0)

Glendale (Dist 6 A 1-0-0) @ Juniata Valley (Dist 6 A 1-0-0)

Hollidaysburg (Dist 6 AAA 0-1-0) @ Central Mountain (Dist 6 AAAA 1-0-0)

Johnstown (Dist 6 AAA 1-0-0) @ Central Cambria (Dist 6 AA 1-0-0)

Lewistown (Dist 6 AAA 0-1-0) @ Bald Eagle Area (Dist 6 AA 0-1-0)

Marion Center (Dist 6 AA 1-0-0) @ Homer Center (Dist 6 A 0-1-0)

Mount Union (Dist 6 A 0-1-0) @ Chestnut Ridge (Dist 5 AA 0-1-0)

Penns Valley (Dist 6 AA 1-0-0) @ Bellwood-Antis (Dist 6 A 0-1-0)

Richland (Dist 6 AA 1-0-0) @ Central (Dist 6 AA 0-1-0)

Saltsburg (Dist 6 A 0-1-0) @ Penns Manor (Dist 6 A 0-1-0)

Somerset (Dist 6 AAA 0-1-0) @ Bedford (Dist 5 AA 1-0-0)

State College (Dist 6 AAAA 1-0-0) @ Chambersburg (Dist 3 AAAA 0-1-0)

Tyrone (Dist 6 AA 1-0-0) @ Huntingdon (Dist 6 AAA 1-0-0)

United (Dist 6 A 1-0-0) @ Northern Cambria (Dist 6 A 0-1-0)

West Branch (Dist 6 A 0-1-0) @ Moshannon Valley (Dist 6 A 0-1-0)

Westmont-Hilltop (Dist 6 AA 0-1-0) @ Cambria Heights (Dist 6 AA 0-1-0)

Saturday's Games:

Conemaugh Township (Dist 5 A 0-1-0) @ Ferndale (Dist 6 A 0-1-0)

Altoona (Dist 6 AAAA 1-0-0) @ Harrisburg (Dist 3 AAAA 1-0-0) 6

Conemaugh Valley (Dist 6 A 1-0-0) @ Turkeyfoot Valley (Dist 5 A 0-1-0) 6

Portage (Dist 6 A 1-0-0) @ Blacklick Valley (Dist 6 A 0-1-0) 6

Purchase Line (Dist 6 A 1-0-0) @ Laurel Valley (Dist 6 A 0-1-0)