



HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL 2020

SEASON PREVIEW | FULL INDEX ON PAGE 2



HORNETS' GOAL

Carson Andonian, Liam Powers, Kiki Grman, Joey Grazia, Anthony DeMarco and Mason Sullivan are aiming for a third straight state championship this season

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ON THE COVER

Kirtland players Carson Andonian, Liam Powers, Kiki Grman, Joey Grazia, Anthony DeMarco and Mason Sullivan, were photographed by Tim Phillis

This section was printed in advance

OPINION

Teams have earned this chance for a season



John Kampf

The most successful teams are often not just the most talented teams, but the teams who make the most effective and best in-game adjustments.

If any line of thought typified the 2020 high school season, that's it.

Thanks to the novel coronavirus. The 2020 football season was two days from its first games being played when Mayfield announced it was indefinitely suspending its season because two players had tested positive for COVID-19.

Get used to it. Mayfield probably won't be the last team to have to call a timeout or an audible to its season, thanks to the coronavirus.

Mayfield senior Michael Huss, a captain and a four-year starter for the Wildcats, just a week prior voiced how important it was to appreciate the chance to play this fall.

After the winter tournament season was halted in mid-stream last March and after the entire spring season was whacked by the coronavirus, just the opportunity to play — regardless of wins and losses — held merit to the

"We've got to go play with as much energy as we can every snap — that's going to be big — and take every snap like it's our last," Huss said, "because you never know when it could be your last. It COULD be that snap."

Huss and his teammates HOPE the early-season hiatus is just a break, and not a death sentence to their season.

But who knows? After all, the Wildcats, like so many other schools, did what they needed to do to have a season — and COVID still found them.

Football players, their coaches, their schools — everybody involved with their seasons — did what they needed to do to get to this point. The did what was asked of them in June, July and August.

Will it be enough? We honestly don't know the answer to that.

Throughout the summer, they worked out on their own when the office of Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine, the Ohio Board of Health and the OHSAA shut down the schools and their local gymnasiums in an attempt to curb the spread of the deadly virus that — as of this week — had claimed nearly 180,000 lives across the nation.

When restrictions did loosen up, players and

"... teams who win a state title this year will be some of the greatest teams ever assembled because they will have survived so many difficulties and so many obstacles."

— Chardon coach Mitch Hewitt

outs with social-distancing recommendations in place. Yeah, the workouts weren't like those of other summers — for instance, there were no 7-on-7 tournaments against other teams — but the workouts the players were allowed to do with their own teammates, they did.

When fall camps did finally start on Aug. 1, coaches were sanitizing tackling dummies, players and coaches alike were wearing masks, and everyone involved was doing their best to comply with distancing measures while staying six feet apart from each other.

And yet they STILL are hanging in the balance.

As Mayfield found out on Aug. 26.

There IS going to be a season starting this weekend, but it's not going to be like any other. After all, the regular season has been trimmed to six games and attendance has been trimmed considerably so as to further combat any spread of the virus.

despite all the offseason work the players, coaches, trainers and school have done, no matter how stringent schools are with protocols handed down for game nights, and no matter how great of a job everyone does to fight this virus, the season STILL hangs in the balance.

Unfortunately, chances are higher than we'd like them to be that more COVID-19 outbreaks happen sometime this season. As Browns center — and NFL Players Association president — J.C. Tretter said, "this is a contact virus and we play a contact sport."

Here's hoping to the 2020 high school season going on as planned.

But there's a chance it won't.

Just because the season is starting doesn't mean it's safe to let down the guard. Sanitizing, social-distancing, masks being worn by fans and testing is still part of the equation.

Whatever the football schedules in the area are on Aug. 27 — the day be-

well might not play out that way by season's end.

Chardon coach Mitch Hewitt indicated the special nature of what it's going to take to win a state championship this year.

"I think in some way, teams who win a state title this year will be some of the greatest teams ever assembled because they will have survived so many difficulties and so many obstacles," Hewitt said. "I hope we get to crown them, but it'll take a unique team to overcome all these headaches."

On a more broad spectrum, the 2020 football season — and sports season in general — will be some of the greatest teams ever assembled for those same reasons.

If this season goes through to completion, seven teams will be crowned state champions in football.

But each and every team that does get through this season — whether as planned or through more adversity and/or adjusting on the fly — will have the biggest victory in program history to their name.

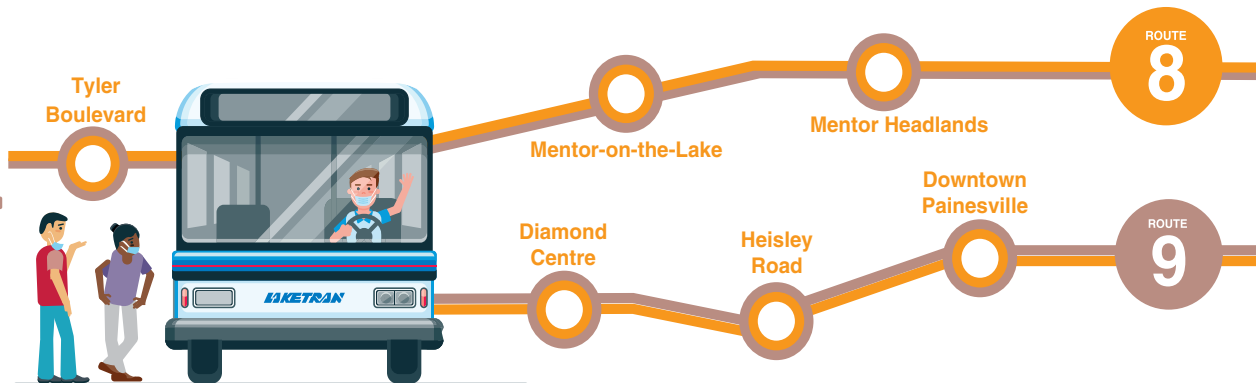
A win over a virus that did everything it could to stop their season.

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HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL

Kirtland going for a three-peat

By John Kampf

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The Kirtland football team keeps raising the bar.

Back in 2006 when coach Tiger LaVerde first took over the Hornets' programs, he fantasized over what it would be like to play in a state championship game.

Once the Hornets achieved that goal by not only playing in, but also winning the Division V state championship in 2011, the program's goals were reset to win another.

Kirtland achieved that goal in 2013.

The next goal was to win two in a row, something the Hornets failed to do a few times, but finally achieved by winning titles in 2018 and 2019.

Does that mean the goals are all complete?

Hardly.

When the Hornets hit the practice field on Aug. 1, the program's goals were recalibrated again.

The new venture?

Three state championships in a row.

"That would mean everything," said Kristian Grman, a senior offensive lineman. "No other team in Kirtland has ever done that. It'd be special."

To be sure, this entire



TIM PHILLIS — FOR THE NEWS-HERALD

Kirtland's Danny Davidson tries to elude North defenders during an Aug. 21 scrimmage.

Tiger LaVerde era in Kirtland has been special. Since taking over the program 15 years ago, LaVerde has led the Hornets to a 174-17 (.911) record, with five state championships and three state runner-up finishes in the last decade alone.

As unfathomable as it might seem, Kirtland could go 9-1 in a regular season and LaVerde's career record

percentage with the Hornets would actually drop.

But this season isn't like others. Because of the novel coronavirus, the season has been trimmed to six regular-season games and an expanded playoff format that will allow all teams in Ohio a big in the playoffs.

So at the most, Kirtland will play 13 games.

No matter how many

games it takes, the Hornets have a bar set.

Three titles in a row.

"Even though we were not allowed in the weight room over the summer, everybody was still working out on their own," said Liam Powers, the returning starting quarterback of the Hornets. "We wanted to get better and win a third straight."

While the drive for three championships in a row is certainly a verbalized goal amongst the players, as usual, LaVerde is more reserved.

"I never say it or talk about it," LaVerde said. "I just say, 'You've got to take care of the next 10 minutes. Get better in everything you do.' If everybody does that, maybe we could be a pretty good team."

Everything suggests the Hornets have to cards in place to do that.

Twelve starters — six on each side of the ball — return from a team that went 15-0 last season and capped the campaign with a dominating 17-7 win over Ironton in the Division V state championship game.

Offensively, first-team All-Ohio running back Mason Sullivan and second-team All-Ohio Grman — both seniors — leading the way. Powers is back under center for the second year in a row, with senior Andrew Demarco back at fullback, junior Gage Sullivan back at receiver/tight end and trusty senior Mario Rodin back at kicker.

Defensively, senior defensive back Joey Grazia is back after earning third-team All-Ohio honors a year ago. Mason Sullivan returns at linebacker,

where he earned first team All-Ohio honors as a sophomore, and lines up next to returning senior Carson Andonian. Noseguard Angelo Blasini, linebacker Mason Rus and safety Demarco are also back for another year in the starting lineup.

"We're a lot more experienced this year," LaVerde said. "Last year, we were really young. I think we only had two starters back on offense when the season started."

The lack of experience obviously didn't hurt the Hornets.

"You never know how good you're going to be," LaVerde said. "You have to go out and practice hard every day."

"I think our program is driven by the work ethic of the kids. They go at it every day. If you work hard, that's the culture that we've set. They kids know what they've been doing, and the results are not a fantasy. It's a reality."

Somewhat surprisingly, despite winning five state titles in the past decade, no quarterback-running back tandem has won two championships.

Powers and Sullivan have a chance to crack that streak this season.

KIRTLAND » PAGE 4

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TIM PHILLIS — FOR THE NEWS-HERALD

Kirtland's Liam Powers carries during a scrimmage against North on Aug. 21.

Kirtland

FROM PAGE 3

Sullivan ran for 1,900 yards and 31 touchdowns last year, including 101 yards and a score in the title win over Ironton. Powers threw for 850 and ran for 250.

There's some youth on the offensive line, though, where Grman is the only returning starter.

"I've got very big shoes to fill. Mike (Alferi) was the leader of the line last year and I'm the only returning starter," Grman

said. "I feel I have to really push these guys every day to get better. (The new linemen) kicked butt on JV. I'm sure they'll get the job done. They're very good."

As for the experienced-laced defense, Grazia — who led the team with nine interceptions last year — said, "We've got to play every play like we did last year and produce as much as we did last year."

Compiling the success they have over the past decade and longer under LaVerde means there's a target on the Hornet's back — no matter who they play.

The season ramps up Aug. 28 at Lake Catholic.

"It's like we're the Super Bowl if teams can knock us off," LaVerde said. "But I don't care about that. Every game we just go out and try to execute. There's about 150 plays in every game. We want to win at least 75 of 'em. If we win a majority of those plays, I think we've got a good chance to win."

There have been no short cuts in Kirtland's journey since LaVerde took over the program.

The Hornets have made the playoffs every year since 2011 and have come

home with five state titles (2011, 2013, 2015, 2018, 2019) and three second-place trophies (2012, 2014, 2017).

Goals have been set and achieved.

The re-calibrated goals this season are set, whether or not LaVerde verbalizes them himself.

To go where no Hornet has gone before.

That's three state titles in a row.

"The kids want a third state title, of course," LaVerde said. "But they also know it's not going to happen if they don't take care of today."

PRESEASON TOP OF THE CROP

Football

1: Mentor

2: Euclid

3: Kirtland

4: Chardon

5: Benedictine

6: Riverside

7: Mayfield

8: Perry

9: North

10: Lake Catholic

Watch list: Wickliffe, South, Chagrin Falls, University, West G

Crop comments: At Mentor, having the reigning Division I offensive player of the year (QB Ian Kipp) and a rising FBS college prospect (DE Brenan Vernon) is a great place to start for a first-year coach (Matt Gray). ... The Panthers have four FBS college commits, and more might be on the way. Defending the multi-faceted Panthers is going to be a chore for those playing Euclid this year. ... A total of 12 starters (six offense, six defense) return from a Kirtland team that went 15-0 and won a state championship last season. Anyone want to bet against the Hornets running the table again this year? ... The Hilltoppers might be too low here. Everyone knows about the vaunted running offense, but keep an eye on that defense this year. ... Benedictine's talent is undeniable. QB Ron Schultz, WR Chris Gales, and a big, physical offensive line. But that schedule a nightmare. ... A ton of returners from last year's Riverside squad, and it's a hungry group. ... The only question at Mayfield is in the trenches, where the brunt of the graduation losses took place. QB Michael Huss and the offensive skill set, as well as the linebackers and DBs, are veterans. ... If freshman QB Brayden Richards emerges as quickly as some think he will, throw Perry's ranking out the window. ... Is this the year the Rangers turn it around and get it going? That offensive line returns four starters, including FBS recruits Ethan Spoth and Ryan Baer. QB Chris Molica can fly. ... Lake QB Joe Malchesky is a threat to run for 1,000 and pass for 1,000, but teams are going to key on him.



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HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL

New era of Mentor football begins

Gray takes over after Trivisonno retirement

By John Kampf

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Matt Gray took a deep breath and scanned the scenery before him.

It was a beautiful fall evening on Sept. 24, 2010, as Gray — then an assistant coach at Willoughby South — took his eyes off the field of play at Mentor's Jerome T. Osborne Stadium to take in the sights.

"It was the first quarter," Gray remembered. "Our fans were packed in behind us. Mentor's side was full. Fans were three-deep around the fence all the way around.

"I was like, 'Man, this is what high school football is all about.'"

A decade has passed since that night when Matt Gray got his first taste of what it's like on Friday nights at the home of the Mentor Cardinals.

Gray is no longer the 23-year-old, wet-behind-the-ears freshman football coach for the Rebels that he was back in 2010.

Truth be known, if someone would have told Gray back on that night when Steve Trivisonno's Cardinals outslugged the Reb-



TIM PHILLIS — FOR THE NEWS-HERALD

First-year Mentor coach Matt Gray shouts instructions during the Cardinals' scrimmage with Chardon on Aug. 21.

els, 48-47, in a Lake County showdown the likes of which haven't been seen since, where he'd be a decade later, he probably wouldn't have bought it.

But here he is 10 years

later — getting ready to jog onto the field at the JTO as the first-year head coach of the Mentor Cardinals.

"South failed a levy in 2011 and my job was on the line," Gray said as he

leaned back in his chair in the Mentor coaching office. "If not for that levy, who knows? We probably wouldn't be sitting here right now having this conversation right now."

Gray, 33, was hired this offseason as the successor to legendary Mentor coach Steve Trivisonno, who stepped down after the 2019 to cap a highly successful 23-year run.

Gray is no stranger to the Mentor program, even though he is a relative newbie to the program compared to assistants Jim Funk and Nes Janiak, who have been with the Cardinals since Trivisonno's first year back in the 1990s.

When South failed that levy in 2011, Gray came on board at Mentor to fill the spot vacated when Jeff Grubich left the offensive coordinator's position to take over at Kenston.

"I started coaching the offensive line here in 2012, and I've been here ever since," said Gray, who eventually worked his way up to offensive coordinator before being hired to take the spot vacated by Trivisonno.

The son of an athletic trainer in the Westlake City School district, Gray was always around sports. The 2005 Avon graduate played collegiately at Dayton, but he found himself coaching

in his final year because of injuries.

After college, he joined the staff at South. But the opportunity to join Trivisonno at Mentor was too good to pass up — and Gray rose through the ranks quickly under Trivisonno's tutelage.

"We had some conversations a couple of years ago," Gray said. "I was looking at a couple of jobs. I knew I wanted to be a head coach."

When the interviews didn't result in a hiring, Trivisonno pulled Gray to the side.

"He said, 'Hey, it might not be a bad idea to stay here and stop putting your name out. I'm not going doing this forever,'" Gray said about that discussion.

There was no guarantee Gray would be Trivisonno's successor, but the opportunity to learn and, as Gray put it, "prove myself and show I could have a big-picture plan," was important.

When Trivisonno announced he was going to step down following the 2019 season, Gray was pinpointed by Trivisonno himself as being a prime candidate who should be considered.

"Hopefully they go that way. But it's not my decision," Trivisonno told The News-Herald last November.

"I've groomed him well and prepared him for the job. This year I've given him a lot more tasks, from fundraising to working with the booster clubs and taking care of the kids. He's well-trained and well-prepared. We've done a good job preparing him for this — he's going to be a great one."

Those tasks — fundraising, booster-club work, community involvement — were all part of the "big picture" work Trivisonno alluded to when he suggest Gray stop applying for other head-coaching jobs.

While there was substantial interest and applicants for the job Trivisonno was leaving, Gray said he was the only internal candidate who applied. But first, he wanted to talk with the other assistants, hoping they were staying on board.

"Absolutely it helps when you've got assistants who have been there before," Gray said.

"Guys like Janiak and Funk have been doing this 30-plus years. Having that well-rounded, experienced staff is so important."

Gray smiled and nodded when it was suggested there are easier first-year coaching gigs than one of the most successful big-school football programs in the state of Ohio.

MENTOR » PAGE 6

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Tony Fisher Award Watch List

By John Kampf

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The Tony Fisher Award goes to The News-Herald's football player of the year.

It is named after the legendary running back from Euclid, who went on to be named Ohio's Mr. Football, then played at the University of Notre Dame and then went on to play in the NFL.

This is a preseason watch list. The candidates can and will change on a weekly basis based on each week's performance.

Jaylen Anderson, Perry: The West Virginia commit heads into his senior year having run for 1,086 yards (with a 9.9-yard average), with 51 catches for 883 yards last year. One of the best playmakers in Ohio.

Vince Ferrante, Chardon: A physical linebacker-running back, Ferrante had

125 tackles, 14 tackles for loss, three sacks and three fumble recoveries last year. He'll also be a big part of the Hilltoppers' running attack this year.

Atiba Fitz, Euclid: The Air Force Academy commit can do it all. Last year on defense he had 31 tackle and three interceptions. On offense, he ran for 412 yards and four TDs in a backup role. Expect huge offensive numbers this year from this playmaker.

Chase Fortkamp, Wickliffe: Division I college recruit ran for 1,043 yards and 16 touchdowns as a junior. On defense, he had 96 tackles. He's going to be a hammer on both sides of the ball for the Blue Devils.

Billy Guzzo, Mayfield: He can do it all on both sides of the ball. He's the leading returning receiver for the Wildcats, and he's coming off a junior year in which he

had six interceptions, eight pass break-ups and 43 tackles on defense.

Michael Huss, Mayfield: The Wildcats' senior quarterback threw for 2,362 yards and 28 touchdowns last year, and also ran for 237 yards and five scores. This is his fourth year as the starting quarterback at Mayfield.

Ian Kipp, Mentor: The co-player of the year in Division I in Ohio last year, Kipp is back for his senior year after throwing for 2,314 yards and 24 touchdowns, and running for 883 yards and 16 scores last year.

Dom Lulow, Riverside: As a junior he threw for 1,534 yards and 15 touchdowns. He has experience on his side now, plus a fantastic skill set around him that includes Matthew Spofford, Cayman Locher and others — as well as a gigantic offensive line in front of him.

Look out.

Joe Malchesky, Lake Catholic: As a junior, Malchesky accounted for 1,951 all-purpose yards. He passed for 1,126 yards and ran for 825. He'll be the key component of the Cougars' offense again this year.

Austin McCourt, Madison: In his first year at Madison, McCourt ran for more than 1,000 yards as the Blue Streaks' bellcow back. Much of the offensive line must be replaced, but he'll again be among the area leaders in rushing this season.

James Pettyjohn, Chardon: He is the Hilltoppers' leading returning rusher from a year ago. Granted a lot of players will get carries — as usual — but Pettyjohn might have the most home-run power because of his speed.

Ira Sampson, South: His sophomore season saw

him run for 775 yards and 10 touchdowns on offense, while piling up 73 tackles, six sacks and 10.5 tackles for loss on defense. He's primed for a monster junior campaign this year.

Ron Schultz, Benedictine: The Bengals' senior quarterback had a breakout junior campaign in which he threw for 2,354 yards and 28 touchdowns. The Bengals' schedule is a tough one, but expect another big year from him.

Armond Scott, Euclid: The Kentucky commit had a breakout season last year with 23 receptions for 580 yards and 10 touchdowns. There's no doubt he'll be a prime target in the Panthers' high-powered offense again this season.

A.J. Shorts, Brush: The Arcs' senior quarterback has a strong arm, has speed when he runs the ball, and he's physical. There's no

doubt Brush's offense will rely heavily on what Shorts brings to the table every Friday night.

Mason Sullivan, Kirtland: He was first team All-Ohio on defense as a sophomore, then was first team All-Ohio on offense as a junior when he ran for 1,900 yards and 31 touchdowns. He is primed to be one of the top players in Ohio this fall.

Charlie Taylor, Geneva: He ran for more than 900 yards last fall and he also anchored the Eagles' defense in the trenches. Expect a heavy dose of Taylor running the ball again this season, as well as plenty of stops on the defensive side.

Trae Zimmerman, West Geauga: He had 786 rushing yards and 12 touchdowns on the ground last year for the Wolverines. As an experienced workhorse, he's going to get a lot of touches again this season.

Mentor

FROM PAGE 5

Throw in the novel coronavirus mess that garbled any "normal" offseason lifting and training agenda Gray might have had, and it's been an interesting Year 1.

"It's really not much different," said senior quarterback Ian Kipp of the new man — Gray — running the show at Mentor. "It's the same message. Just a different person saying it."

Will Gray change things from the Trivisonno era?

Will he keep things the same?

Yes and yes.

In moderation of course. "We're constantly trying to find the best way to do something," he said. "I'm going to be me. My personality is different than Triv's. We've built up several years of a successful program, and there's a reason for that — we've always strived to find something better."

Gray understands there's always a double-edged

sword to taking over for a legendary coach like he did in succeeding Trivisonno.

If you win, it's because the program was handed to you.

If you lose, you can't handle the job.

Gray, who inherited a team that returns the Division I co-offensive player of the year (Kipp), a mammoth and experienced offensive line, and one of the top young defenders in the nation (Brenan Vernon), shrugged his shoulders.

First off, Gray said, he's not worried about what oth-

ers think.

"I don't take it as pressure," he said of coaching the Cardinals. "I'm so thankful and grateful to learn from Triv and mirror my philosophy and thoughts of his."

"I have an advantage, I think, because I've been here and I've seen it. There's a lot of moving parts to this and Triv had me heavily involved in that."

That being said, when Gray jogs onto the field on Aug. 28 when the Cardinals open their season at Medina, things are going

to be different.

When Gray leads the team onto the field Aug. 28 at Medina, it won't be the same as other games.

Gray won't be walking up to the coaching box in anonymity like he's done the last four years. He won't be standing on the visitor's sideline admiring the JTO crowd like he was 10 years ago.

He will be the man.

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Armed with his passion

for the sport, the relationship and trust of his assistant coaches and the fierce competitiveness of the players running onto the field with him, Gray is ready.

It's the shot he's always dreamed of, and now it's here.

"That first night, yeah, there will probably be some butterflies," he admitted, "but it's exciting. The guys I'm with, the type of team I think we can have this year? It's exciting."

"And to have those type of guys running out with me, I'll take that."

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HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL

Scheduling another obstacle to navigate

By Nate Barnes

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Actual or perceived, adversity is a phenomenon oft-deployed by football coaches to generate motivation.

The unprecedented circumstances of a football season staged during the novel coronavirus pandemic present challenges for high school athletics unseen since World War II.

Administrators are out in their stadiums measuring and marking off where their limited number of spectators can sit. Coaches are tasked with implementing and adhering to protocols mandated for practice and competition.

On top of that, who, when and where football teams are playing each week can change on a daily basis.

"Our schedule, it changed on Friday," Wickliffe coach Marce Porcello said after a recent practice. "Things are changing and I told the guys, it's the team that can get through the most obstacles because there's going to be obstacles along the way. It might not be the most talented team but it's the team that can battle through this and beat the odds."

Football season wasn't a certainty until Aug. 18, when Gov. Mike DeWine announced an order re-



NEWS-HERALD FILE

The Riverside football team takes the field prior to a 2019 game against Mayfield.

leased later in the week that gave schools the green light to engage in contact competition this fall. Four days earlier, the OHSAA announced football's regular season would be shortened to six games.

The shortened schedule lessened stress on athletic directors across the state, scrambling to realign football schedules while opponents on their schedules chose to suspend — or cancel, in some cases — fall athletics.

Responsibilities pertaining to game day and scheduling for it intersect for many football coaches who also hold athletic director positions.

Riverside's Dave Bors is among them and schools in the Western Reserve Conference have leaned on one another to help coordinate regular-season slates.

"Luckily, from a football standpoint, the other ADs in the conference are tremendous and the administration in the conference

is tremendous," Bors said. "Collaborating, working together, figuring out, you have a few holes here and there to fill but everyone's in the same boat."

At Villa Angela-St. Joseph, coach Elvis Grbac recently transitioned from athletic director to an assistant. Working alongside new athletic director Adi Taraska, Grbac's been a part of the process in trying to prepare for the 2020 season.

VASJ's schedule includes

Garrettsville, Lake Catholic, Chagrin Falls, Walsh Jesuit, Padua and Notre Dame-Cathedral Latin. VASJ, Lake Catholic, NDCL, Walsh Jesuit and NDCL are former North Coast League members expected to re-organize into a new league ahead of the 2021-22 school year.

"Let's just say it's been trying," Grbac said. "But thank God we're in the Crown Conference now, it won't take effect until another year from now, but we really did a nice job getting everybody together to play each other."

While VASJ and Lake Catholic will match up on the football field for the first time in years, other rivalries may not manifest.

Brush and Mayfield were scheduled to play their 100th game this season but as each team navigates scheduling, plus the inability for the respective communities to fully attend the game, the centennial matchup between the Arcs and Wildcats may need to wait until 2021. Mayfield on Aug. 26 suspended its season until further notice after two players tested positive for the virus.

Euclid's fall season didn't begin until Aug. 11. The school board suspended athletics, in line with a recommendation from the Cuyahoga County Board

of Health, and resumed 10 days later.

Coach Jeff Rotsky's team needed to catch up on its preparation, and cobble together a six-game slate, behind schedule.

"We're going to be ready," Rotsky said. "We're not going to put kids at risk, either, we're going to play a lot of kids early in hopes of really just developing our whole team."

The best-laid plans often go awry, and schedules set before Week 1 begins may still change. Benedictine already needed to adjust after its first opponent, Strongsville, had to cancel the teams' opening game scheduled for Aug. 28 when a student-athlete tested positive for COVID-19.

The Bengals will now open their season at Warren Harding on Aug. 29 and surely won't be the only school tasked with figuring out their schedule on the fly as the season proceeds.

Next to Brush and Mayfield, Chardon, Fairport, Hawken, Kirtland and University have open dates.

"It's just a matter of adjusting, adapting and being flexible," Bors said. "It's unbelievable and this is a season like no other, to this point, and will be this school year. You've got to roll with the punches and do what you've got to do to do the best you can."

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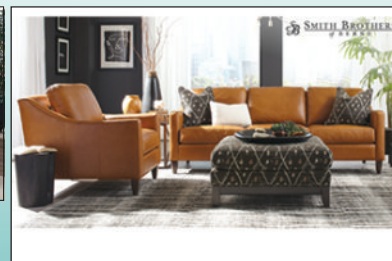
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HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL

Game days in 2020 will be unique

By Chris Lillstrung

CLillstrung@news-herald.com
@CLillstrungNH on Twitter

Perhaps the most united grassroots cause in Ohio high school sports history hasn't taken on its most challenging iteration.

Football game day is melded into the Buckeye State's fabric — but it's never resembled anything like this.

Athletic directors have challenges enough returning student-athletes to competition during the novel coronavirus pandemic.

How to make the grid-iron experience in all its glory functional, though, isn't just a few steps forward.

It's an ultra-marathon through terrain never navigated.

"Every day, you just kind of approach individually and have some foresight to predict and stay ahead of issues and problems, but also deal with what curve balls are being thrown at you at the moment," Riverside athletic director and football coach Dave Bors said. "But everyone is working together and just having a positive attitude.

"I feel like you have a better chance of winning the lottery twice than predicting what the next move in the pandemic is going to be



PAUL DICICCO — FOR THE NEWS-HERALD

Chardon and South kick off their Western Reserve Conference game Oct. 18, 2019 at South.

and what the new orders are going to be. So you're just trying to adjust and adapt and take it one moment at a time."

A cross-section of News-Herald coverage area ADs — Riverside's Bors, Hawken's Jim Doyle and Berkshire's Brian Hiscox — are tapping deep into adaptability.

Following Gov. Mike DeWine's proclamation fall high school sports could proceed, a 12-page pub-

lic health order was issued with protocols outlining how to safely return.

Daily symptom assessments will be made before every practice and event. Prior to boarding a bus, student-athletes will receive symptom and temperature checks. Once that's passed, they will ride the bus with masks on.

Spectators will have to wear masks and distance from those not in the

same family or household. Coaches and officials, due to verbal and whistle cues needed to facilitate events, will be exempted from wearing a mask. Student-athletes will be masked when not competing.

"I was glad to see the mask mandate, honestly," Doyle said. "It makes it a lot easier for people in my position to say, 'You have to wear the mask,' when it's in the mandate. Look,

kids want to play, and we all want to do it the right way."

Congregating will be forbidden. No equipment, drinks, food, towels or face coverings can be shared.

The six-foot social distance that has become familiar is a must in competitive venues, as well, except, as the order outlines, "when necessary on the field or court of play."

Student-athletes are permitted to spread out into

spectator areas to maximize distancing.

Facilities will have to allow for "adequate space" for distancing.

Everything from locker rooms to weight rooms to restrooms to training rooms "must be cleaned and sanitized frequently."

Use of locker rooms will be staggered to allow for disinfection.

It's only the start, not even delving into game-day operation that will be prevalent when football kicks off.

Hiscox noted he felt more confident after two week-end reps, one with soccer and another with volleyball. Coaches and volunteers prepared the Badgers' facilities, and Hiscox tweeted his appreciation for the effort.

"It helped us out a lot, even from (day to day)," Hiscox said. "I have the same kind of help on site, helping us through the events, and everyone is saying today is running even smoother than yesterday.

"Obviously, the football game, with our marching band and cheerleaders and everything and players on teams and whatnot, are our most highly attended event. We've got a good couple of test runs here. We're hoping to iron out the kinks and do it Friday."

UNIQUE » PAGE 9



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Unique

FROM PAGE 8

Just 16 miles to the west at Hawken, Doyle faces a different predicament.

Hawken continues to practice, but is in a "pause" and will not be competing in fall contact sports plus volleyball until at least Sept. 14. The school hopes to commence in-person learning Sept. 8 and see coronavirus numbers continue to decline before proceeding to most of its fall competition.

Doyle and his staff have been working on restart protocols since May — and he's cognizant of how much preemptive action will matter.

"Frankly, in athletic administration, that's what we do," Doyle said. "We have preseason meetings. We have team meetings. We use social media. We communicate with our families in written form and try to make sure everyone is on the same page. We're all putting signs everywhere. We have lines down on the ground to tell people where to go, where to stand, where not to stand. And so we're trying to make it easy for everybody. I think we all recognize that we need our communities to be on board."

Especially, given its mass gathering, with football Friday and Saturday will be unique in 2020.

The public health order states a compliance officer must be in place at each

school to ensure protocols are followed.

Fan attendance will be capped at the lesser of 1,500 or 15% of seating capacity.

"Venues must develop a spectator pathway that allows for physical distancing as spectators move from parking, through box office lines, ticket scanning and security screening to their seats," the Ohio Department of Health mandated in its public order for sports.

There will be one-way entry and exit, with a heavy dose of signage as a reminder of what to do and what not to do. Sections and rows in bleachers will be staggered, with six feet in all directions between groups of fans. That staggering will be noted by tape and signs, and front rows and last rows will be blocked off. Ticketing will be done online to make it contact-free.

"From electronic ticketing to foot traffic, where spectators are seated and not seated, organization of our sidelines, how we're handling halftime, how kids get in and out of the facility, transportation, dissemination of water — all of it," Doyle said.

"We have been working really hard at this, as every athletic department has, since May, and so we're used to it. I feel pretty confident in game-day protocol we've put into place."

In order to space out football players, Hiscox said Berkshire will paint its field boxes from the 10 to the 10 instead of 30-to-30 this fall.

During a recent scrimmage against Lakeside, Bors noted cones and spacers on field level to manage distancing, as well as footballs being sanitized.

The longtime Beavers' coach mentioned, before he makes a point, he now asks his players to spread to ensure adherence to measures.

"Obviously, you don't want to ever turn anyone away, especially if they're coming to watch their kids," Hiscox said. "But there are things we've got to do that the state is mandating us, and if we want to have a season for the kids, we have got to follow these rules. No matter what your opinions are, it's something we've got to do."

High-touch areas such as railings must be frequently cleaned, and hand sanitizer stations must be readily available. The public-health order was so thorough, it outlined having every other sink available in restrooms.

"I think we're going to get in a rhythm of how we go about preparing a venue and how we end up cleaning and sanitizing," Bors said. "I think that will be somewhat of a regular thing."

"These first couple weeks are going to be just figuring it all out. We'll take notes on the data that's presented and what we've tried to do and what can be done better next time. We'll tweak it, and it'll just be an ongoing process."

An ongoing process in which collaboration is vital. Hiscox and Doyle are on a



PAUL DICICCO — FOR THE NEWS-HERALD

Benedictine players celebrate with their fans after a win over Brecksville-Broadview Heights on Nov. 8, 2019.

regular group chat with fellow Chagrin Valley Conference ADs, and Doyle lauded Aurora AD Paul Powers for his efforts in networking administrators so they can share insight.

For the most united grassroots cause ever in

Ohio high school sports — one that will likely be most scrutinized during football game day — there is no "I" in this pandemic fight.

"You can definitely tell," Bors said. "When you're on the field or on the court or the diamond, yeah you're

rivals and competitors. But when you're talking about something like this, to make sure we can all continue to move forward in the most positive manner possible, there is no question we are all on the same team."

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HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL

Alum Mohner eyes Harvey turnaround

By John Kampf

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@NHPreps on Twitter

Mick Mohner settled down at his desk and looked at the pile of work laid out in front of him.

As the first-year head football coach at Harvey, Mohner for weeks had been tackling paperwork, schedules and planning for the upcoming season that was nearing.

Throw in the protocols and uncertainty of the novel coronavirus, and — well — it was a hectic time.

The Harvey alum reached for a package that had arrived in the mail, and gasped when he unwrapped it.

Enclosed were ties — bow ties — and a coach's whistle.

The package was from Barbara Britt, daughter of the late Jack Britt, the legendary Harvey coach after whom Harvey's home stadium is named.

The gifts had not been used, nor worn, since Jack Britt roamed the sidelines leading the Red Raiders.

If he hadn't already felt it, Britt's gift did the trick.

Mick Mohner was officially home.

"It's unbelievable," Mohner said, sitting in his coaching office at Jack Britt Memorial Stadium.



JOHN KAMPF — THE NEWS-HERALD

MOHNER » PAGE 11 First-year Harvey coach Mick Mohner hands a jersey to returning starting quarterback Jake Debevec at Jack Britt Memorial Stadium.

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Mohner

FROM PAGE 10

"I wanted to bring the whistle here because this is where it belongs. I don't know if I'm going to use it, or if it even still whistles. I don't know if I'll use it or not, but it's definitely a cool gift."

The gift Mohner received is a microcosm of the energy the 2008 graduate of Harvey seems to have injected into a struggling football program that has achieved only one winning season (Harvey was 6-4) since Mohner graduated in 2008.

As players spilled into the parking lot at Recreation Park, in which rests Jack Britt Memorial Stadium, the masks the players were wearing couldn't hide the pep in their step as they walked into the stadium for practice.

"It's definitely a blessing to be in this situation and be back home," Mohner said as he sat in the coach's office at the stadium. "It's not something I take for granted. When you have the opportunity to come home and coach where you played, it means a little more. Everything means a little more. You work a little harder. You have more invested because you've been there. You have that connection."

That doesn't mean that the coaches who have been at Harvey over the years since Mohner played for the Red Raiders cared any less



NEWS-HERALD FILE

Then-Harvey quarterback Mick Mohner goes for a stiff-arm during the 2006 Battle of Painesville against Riverside.

or didn't work hard.

But the job kind of has been a revolving door of sorts.

After Mohner's coach, Devlin Culliver, departed after the 2008 season, the Red Raiders have had four coaches in the past 12 years — Marwin Walling, Michael Tucci, Brian Craemer and Dan Cvelbar.

Since Mohner graduated, the Harvey football program has gone 28-92 (.233).

Mohner wants to turn that trend around, and feels he has the talent — as well

as the coaching staff — to do that.

"We've got guys on staff who played here the last time Harvey won an NEC championship," he said of himself and assistant Jerimie Acree. "We've got a guy who was playing the last time Harvey beat Riverside (Rahshahn Alston). We've got guys (Roderick Coffee II, Marwin Walling, Clinton Fleshman) who are in the community and in the school.

"I think it's easier to talk about what you want to do

here because (the coaches) HAVE been here before."

The movie, "Field of Dreams" suggests, "If you build it, he will come."

Well, Mohner hasn't built anything yet, and players are still coming in to be part of it.

Roderick Coffee III hasn't played football since junior high. Yet the 6-foot-4 multi-talented basketball player who is one of the top junior basketball players in Ohio, came back out for football this year.

Rick Coleman, Jr., who

played last year at Lake Catholic, transferred back to Harvey this year.

Deuce Coffee, who missed the past two seasons with injuries and could have hung up his football cleats because of it, is back in camp this year to, as he put it, be part of something special.

"Playing again with my boys, that's the main thing," said Coleman of transferring back to Harvey.

Roderick Coffee III took it a step further.

"The coaching staff they

hired," he said of why he came back to the gridiron. "I knew these were the right people to coach the team. I wanted to bring my talents to the football field.

"Everybody thinks of us as a losing program and a trash football team. We want to put Harvey back on the map."

Besides the new players, there are plenty of returners, such as senior quarterback Jake Debevec.

"We've got a lot of new guys, but also a lot of returning guys," Debevec said. "We just want to put it all together."

In looking over the hand he has been dealt, Mohner said he has a 'weird amount' of depth and options at skilled positions.

Even before the addition of Coffee III and Coleman, the Red Raiders returned their entire four starting receiving corp from a year ago.

"We could be exciting to watch," Mohner said.

Mohner knows Rome wasn't built in a day. It's his first year as head coach and everyone is smack-dab in the middle of a pandemic, which has changed both the preparation of the off-season as well as the pre-season camps.

His immediate goal for his program is simple.

"I want us to come out and chance the way Harvey football is thought about," Mohner said. "I want it to be, 'if you're playing Harvey, you've got to play 48 minutes.' It's not going to be the same old Harvey."

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HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL

Anderson family enjoying gridiron success

By John Kampf

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@NHPreps on Twitter

The heart of Walter Anderson sank as he sat in the office of an orthopedic specialist's office for a consultation.

Walter's second-born, Jaylen, was just over 2 years old. He was just starting to walk. But he was bow-legged to the point that the specialist was concerned.

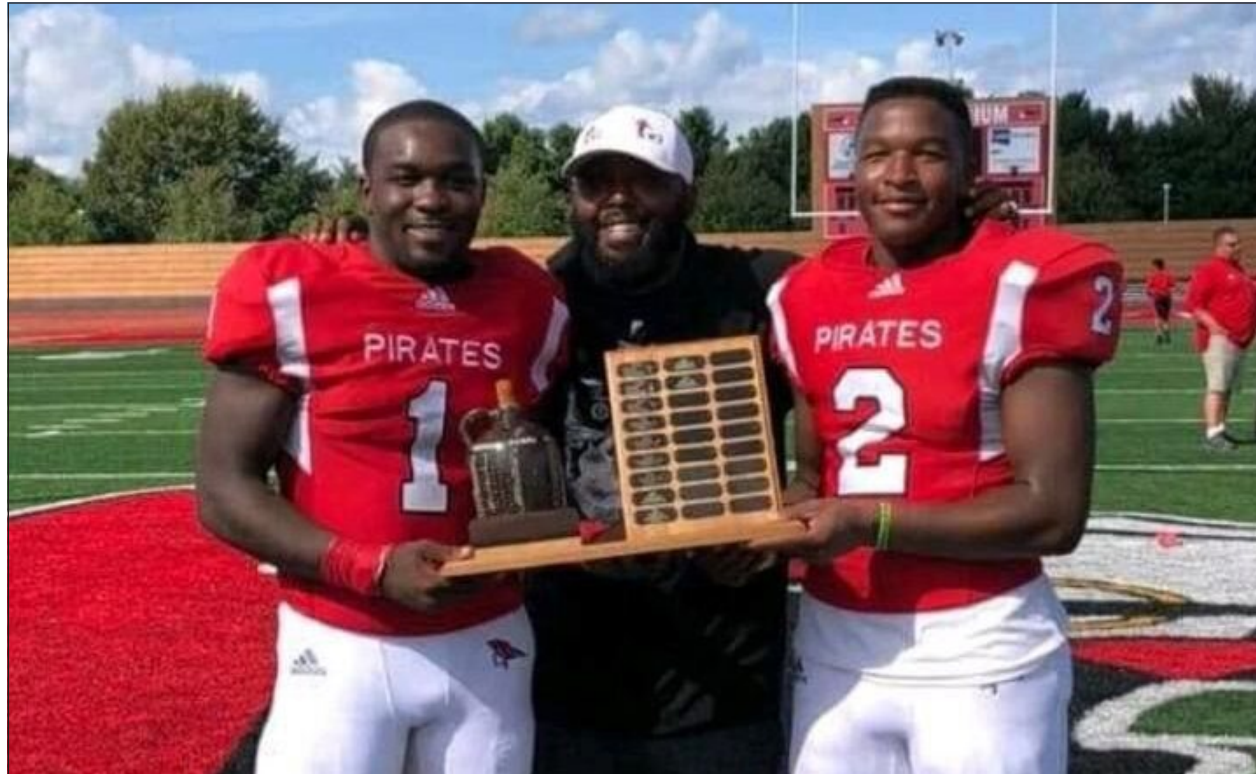
"They said Jaylen would never grow out of it," Walter said. "They wanted to break his legs, reset them and put braces on him. I was like, 'Don't break my son's legs.'"

More than 15 years have passed since that day when Walter Anderson placed his faith in prayer and fate — and also faith in Jaylen — while turning away from the specialist's recommendation.

On Friday nights this fall, Walter Anderson will be sitting in the stands at Perry football games, beaming with pride over the young man donning No. 1 in the Pirates' jersey, running up and down the field virtually as well as one of the top running backs in Ohio ...

His son, Jaylen — the boy who went from being severely bow-legged to being an FBS football recruit for the West Virginia Mountaineers.

"I had faith he was go-



SUBMITTED

Walter Anderson, center, with his sons Jaylen (left) and Jadyann (right) holding The Little Brown Jug trophy the Pirates won with a win over Madison last year.

ing to grow out of it, and he did," the proud father said of the early years of leg issues his son endured. "We go to church. We prayed. Our family believes in God and we put it in his hands. We trusted Him. Jaylen was so young. To break his legs ..."

One positive is that Jaylen was so young, he doesn't remember being that bow-

legged. His parents shielded him from the doctor's recommendation to break his legs.

But he does know that he wasn't always the talent that he is on the football field today.

"My first year playing when I was 5, I was literally the worst player on the team," Anderson said with a laugh. "I hated football. No

one knows that."

His father chuckled. "Yeah, he sucked at first. But he got better," Walter said.

In a big way.

He heads into his senior year having rushed for 2,642 yards (an 8.5-yard average) with 34 rushing touchdowns, 108 career receptions for 1,642 yards (a 15.2-yard average) and 29

touchdowns, a kick return for a touchdown and a defensive touchdown.

In all, he has 4,803 all-purpose yards (rushing, receiving and returns) with 65 touchdowns and a two-point conversion — equaling 392 career points through three seasons.

"When I took the kick-off back (to the house) my freshman year — that was

my first touch — I knew," said Anderson of the moment he knew football was his ticket to college. "I could play at the next level. I had played 7-on-7 all summer and was a freshman playing with seniors."

Jaylen isn't the only Anderson doing big things on the gridiron. His younger brother Jadyann started last year as a sophomore on defense, and will be a two-way starter this year, adding tight end duties to his repertoire.

While Jaylen has already given a verbal commitment to West Virginia, Jadyann (6-2, 210) has gotten his share of early offers as well, including Akron and Bowling Green.

"When Jaylen was getting all his offers and doing his thing, I thought if I worked as hard as him, I could get to that next level, too," said Jadyann, affectionately known as "Pops" to those around him. "Early on, I wasn't very good. If you threw me the ball, I couldn't catch it. I'd trip over my feet. They put me on the line because I could block. But I got better."

The Anderson boys — two of six in their household — credit their success to many people, including Perry coach Matt Rosati and strength coach Mike Crissinger.

ANDERSON » PAGE 13



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SUBMITTED

Walter Anderson with his sons Jaylen (center) and Jadyann (right) during the youth football days in Perry.

Anderson

FROM PAGE 12

But a huge amount of credit comes from home, from their father.

Walter Anderson was a standout multi-sport athlete in his playing days at Harvey in the mid-1990s. But he said his genes would only get his children so far.

“I didn’t really have people pushing me when I was younger,” Walter said. “When I saw my kids’ potential — and once I saw they loved (football) and wanted to get better — I couldn’t and wouldn’t let them fail. It takes everyone — the dad, the mom, the coaches — to push these kids to reach their potential.”

All three — Walter, Jaylen and Jadyann — laugh when the topic of Walter’s highlight films from Harvey is brought up. Walter hasn’t yet found the VHS tapes to show his kids, but vowed he will.

Until then, the boys will have to settle for the verbal comparisons.

“I was big like Jadyann when I was younger, but I had Jaylen’s ability with speed and cutbacks,” Walter said. “They’re both like me in separate ways.”

As Perry’s season-opener on Aug. 28 against visiting Edgewood nears, the Andersons are enjoying the ride.

After this season, things will be forever different because Jaylen will be off to WVU to start his college ca-

reer next fall.

So while this 2020 Perry season is about achievement and success, it’s also about making memories, enjoying the moment. And maybe a little bit of gratitude for putting their faith in God and hard work over a recommendation to break Jaylen’s legs 15 years ago.

Because it’s safe to say things have worked out pretty well as is.

“It’s so exciting and gratifying to see all the hard work paying off,” Walter said. “When you push your sons and daughters to do sports, they’ve got to want it, and I’m glad my kids are willing to do that work.”

“My kids are doing what they love and they’re shining at it. I thank God for that.”



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Jaylen Anderson, left, and his brother Jadyann pose for a picture while taking a visit to West Virginia on Feb. 1. Jaylen Anderson, a nationally ranked running back from Perry, committed to West Virginia on Feb. 16.



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HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL

Race to get a banner is murky at best

By John Kampf

JKampf@news-herald.com
@NHPreps on Twitter

Who's ready to hang a conference championship banner this year?

Everybody.

Who is going to hang a conference championship banner this year?

Who knows? Perhaps nobody.

Because of the novel coronavirus, football schedules across the area — and for the state, for that matter — don't look anything like they did when they were originally formulated months ago.

Gone are 10-game schedules in which teams played each other in their conference.

Say hello to a six-game regular-season schedule in which some conference teams play each other while others don't.

Also wave goodbye to the North Coast League, which folded during the offseason, leaving Catholic schools from that league scrambling to fill independent schedules, many of which still feature old NCL teams they have always played, only as non-league games this time around.

So will conference champions be crowned this year?

The jury is still out on that.

"GCC titles are TBA right



JOHN KAMPF — THE NEWS-HERALD

Perry coach Matt Rosati and his Pirates are riding the crest of a four-year winning streak in the CVC Chagrin.

now," said Mentor athletic director Jeff Cassella of the Greater Cleveland Conference slate. "A final decision hasn't been made yet."

A big reason for that is that A) Solon is still Phase 1 of its season and isn't go-

ing to be playing games at season's start and B) Shaker Heights has left the conference. So there are only five teams going from Day 1 in the GCC as of now.

The same "TBA" status is intact for the Chagrin Val-

ley Conference.

"Not all of our teams are playing because of COVID-19, so we don't know if there will be conference champions," said league commissioner Dr. Don Lewis. "Our goal is to rec-

ognize the kids for their accomplishments (with individual all-conference selections), but because the schedule is so fluid, I don't know if there will be conference champions."

In the Western Reserve

Conference, Brush has filled only three games — and none are vs. WRC foes.

The other seven members of the WRC could play each other and fill a six-game schedule, but that apparently isn't going to happen. Riverside doesn't have Kenston on its schedule as of now, and both Mayfield and Chardon have "TBA" weeks on their schedule.

Still, Chardon coach Mitch Hewitt feels a league champion could and should be crowned.

"If the schedule remains intact and no games get canceled, I see no reason why we cannot have a conference champion," Hewitt said. "I would anticipate the possibility of a co-champion, but that happens in many 'normal' seasons as well. If someone goes 5-0 they should be the conference champion."

One of the most interesting approaches has been adopted by the Northeast Athletic Conference, in which Fairport is a first-year member.

There are six league members who play football — Fairport, Southington, Vienna Mathews, Windham, St. John and Pymatuning Valley. They will all play each other this season. Week 6 will pit 1 vs. 2, 3 vs. 4 and 5 vs. 6. The winner of 1 vs. 2 is the league champ.

BANNER » PAGE 15

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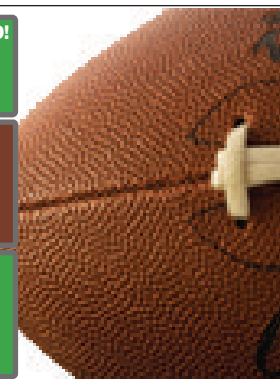
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Banner

FROM PAGE 14

"We are excited about joining the Northeastern Athletic Conference," Fairport coach Cameron Ruff said. "Competing against new teams is exciting, although we are somewhat familiar having scrimmaged Pymatuning Valley and Southington the past several years.

"The kids have that idea of a conference title in the back of their minds, but we've got to focus on one game at a time and a season to finish before that opportunity arises. They know that we can never overlook an opponent."

With conference schedules so far out of whack, from a normalcy point of view, here's a look at who could be the favorites in each conference under normal circumstances.

Granted, not much about this season can be classified as "normal."

CVC Chagrin

FAVORITE » Perry
DON'T FORGET ABOUT » Chagrin Falls, West Geauga
OUTLOOK » The Pirates have the best player in the conference — senior Jaylen Anderson — and a lot of experience in big games. Coach Matt Rosati's team has gone four straight years without a conference loss. Chagrin plays Perry in Week 4, while the Pirates and Wolverines do not play this year.

CVC Valley



PAUL DICICCO — FOR THE NEWS-HERALD

Wickliffe's Evan Rypinski pitches the ball to Chase Fortkamp against Trinity on Oct. 19, 2019, in Bedford.

FAVORITE » Kirtland
DON'T FORGET ABOUT » Anyone else
OUTLOOK » As of now, Kirtland's only CVC Valley games are against Cardinal, Crestwood and Grand Valley. No matter. The Hor-

nets — riding the crest of a 30-game winning streak — will be heavily favored in all three. In short, the rest of the division is playing for second place.

CVC Metro

FAVORITE » Wickliffe
DON'T FORGET ABOUT » Independence, Cuyahoga Heights
OUTLOOK » The Blue Devils have a huge and talented senior class. They're big and physical on the lines, and

the skill — led by FBS recruit Chase Fortkamp — is fast and physical. Cuyahoga Heights plays Wickliffe in Week 3, and Independence plays Wickliffe in Week 5.

Greater Cleveland

Conference

FAVORITE » Mentor
DON'T FORGET ABOUT » Medina, Euclid
OUTLOOK » With Solon not in the picture — at least not yet — the Cardinals get the nod. But a lot could be decided early on, as Mentor plays at Medina in Week 1 and at Euclid in Week 2. That Euclid-Medina game in Week 5 could loom large.

Western Reserve Conference

FAVORITE » Chardon
DON'T FORGET ABOUT » Riverside, Mayfield, North
OUTLOOK » There is going to be a weekly, physical slugfest in the WRC. Mayfield and Kenston are super young and inexperienced this year, which doesn't count them out, but it stacks the deck against them a little. Chardon gets the nod because of its depth, defense and experience in a deep playoff run last year. But those games with Riverside, Mayfield and North are going to be doozies all year whatever the weekly matchups might be.

Northeast Athletic Conference

FAVORITE » Pymatuning Valley
DON'T FORGET ABOUT » Fairport, Southington
OUTLOOK » The Lakers have the biggest, most physical team and that means a lot in a Division VII-loaded conference. The rest of the league will have to defend against attrition.

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HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL

Chardon's Wing-T has stood test of time for 40 years and running

By John Kampf

JKampf@news-herald.com
@NHPreps on Twitter

Bob Doyle stepped in front of a young group of Chardon football players and threw a doormat down on the ground.

"Here is the problem," said Doyle to the group of high-schoolers mired in a losing streak that spanned a few years. "This is what everyone thinks of us. We're doormats to them. But I'm telling you. That's going to change."

That 1979 season, well, things didn't go very well as the Hilltoppers extended their losing streak further with an 0-10 season.

But a handful months later, Doyle and his staff installed the Delaware Wing-T offense, forever changing the look, mindset and fortunes of the program.

When the 2020 Chardon Hilltoppers take the field on Aug. 28 for their season-opening game, they will do so by celebrating the 40th anniversary of Doyle introducing the Wing-T to the program.

With the exception of some new wrinkles — some glaring, some not so noticeable — Chardon has run the same Wing-T type of offense for 40 years. With it, the Hilltoppers have won 12 league championships and qualified for the playoffs 17 times, including a state championship in 1994.

Some might call it, "Good, old-fashioned Chardon football."

To those involved with the program, the Wing-T and all of its variations are simply "football."

An offense that not only forever changed Chardon football, but also one that has stood the test of time.

"It's not your grandfather's Wing-T anymore. It's not Tubby Raymond's old Delaware Wing-T," said Coach Mitch Hewitt of the former Delaware coach who made famous the run-oriented offense that Chardon still hangs it hat. "It's a lot more complex than that now because it has evolved."

"What it has done is that it has allowed us to be competitive when we're less talented in certain sea-



NEWS-HERALD FILE

Coach Bob Doyle departs his team's huddle during Chardon's game against Euclid in 1997. Doyle brought the Wing-T to Chardon 40 years ago, and the Hilltoppers still run that offense — or variations of it — today.

sons. And it's allowed us to go deep and win titles when we're talented. We like the fact our brand of football has survived four decades."

Prior to the start of the 1980 season, Chardon assistant Bill Overton — who is still a Chardon assistant today — enticed Doyle to take a look at the Wing-T offense, something Overton's brother, George, was running on the high school level outside Pittsburgh.

Doyle marveled at the misdirection, the speed, the precise nature of the offense.

"I was watching film of good college kids running to the wrong side of the field because they didn't know where the ball was," Doyle said. "I started thinking, 'If you can do this in college, you can do this in high school. If you can fake out the defense in college with this, you can fake them out in high school, too.'"

The names Jeff Mineo, Fred Pavlic, Bob Hopkins and Dave Catley might not be known to many — if anyone — but that was the first Wing-T backfield in Chardon history.

They were the trend-setters.

"It was the second half of the Riverside game in 1980 when it finally clicked," Doyle said. "We ended up losing, but you could see — and the kids saw — things had changed."

"We broke the losing streak the next week against Harvey. Afterward, we went out to midfield, set



TIM PHILLIS — FOR THE NEWS-HERALD

Chardon running back Vince Ferrante takes a jet-sweep handoff from quarterback Drew Fetchik while Sean Carr lead blocks. The Hilltoppers have been running the Delaware Wing-T, or variations of the Wing-T, for 40 years now.

that door mat on fire and burned it."

Since then, Chardon has been a pillar of consistency in area football. They won league championships in 1981, 1982 and 1983, and became regulars in the playoffs.

There have been tweaks over the years, such as in 2001 when

Jim DiPofi took over as head coach and introduced the pistol formation to the Chardon attack, but by and large, the Chardon offense has been the same for the past 40 years.

So what makes the Chardon offense so effective? How has it survived 40 years with no signs of

slowing down?

First off, there have only been three head coaches in the past 40 years — Doyle, DiPofi and Hewitt — and all are of Doyle's Wing-T tree.

Secondly, it's a brand of football that is based on hard-nosed play, precision and perfection, and the

program embraces those traits.

Thirdly, players in Chardon run the same offense from the time they're in youth football up through varsity.

"I think I started playing this style when I was 8, in youth football," said this year's starting quarterback Drew Fetchik. "So much of

it is in your mind — ISO, jet — because we've been doing this since we were young. I know a lot of programs change offenses and stuff, but we've stuck to the script. And that has paid off, definitely."

It wasn't easy. In fact, many times it was grueling and borderline punishing.



COURTESY BOB DOYLE

After defeating Harvey on Sept. 12, 1980, Nick Skidmore and his Chardon teammates burned a doormat to show the program wasn't going to be one anymore.



TIM PHILLIS — FOR THE NEWS-HERALD

Chardon works on the Wing-T during an Aug. 17 practice.

"Years ago, I remember saying, 'We're not coming off the field until we run 50 perfect plays,'" Doyle said, a tradition that continues under Hewitt today as the "Perfect 50" series. "It was grueling, no doubt. If I could see who had the ball, the play didn't count. Coach Overton measured the splits of the linemen. If they were not exactly 24 inches, the play didn't count."

Hewitt laughed. "If I ask a kid in the backfield, who isn't in on the play, what the play is and he doesn't know — the play doesn't count," Hewitt said. "If you don't break the huddle right, it doesn't count."

"The goal is to make everyone

accountable for what it is."

Said Doyle: "One time we were out there for five hours trying to get 50 perfect. We ordered pizza for the coaches because we couldn't get it right and were there so long."

Hewitt noted when his team's offense — the old Wing-T with all the new frills — at its best is a nightmare to defend.

"The inadvertent whistle is a huge badge of honor," Hewitt said. "There are a lot of games where the fakes are so good that the whistle blows (because the officials thought the ball-carrier was tackled) and the ball is still running down the field."

The style has worked.

The Wing-T achieved its goal. It brought Chardon football back to life and to the healthy state that it is today, where the Hilltoppers are a yearly threat to win a conference championship and make a deep run in the playoffs.

Armed with its run-oriented style, Chardon again heads into 2020 with lofty goals. A year ago, Hewitt & Co. went 10-3 and advanced to the Division III, Region 9 championship game, where the Hilltoppers lost to Aurora, 22-19.

"We were so close last year," said All-Ohio linebacker Vince Ferrante. "I want us to get a step closer and get to state."

If they're able to do that, it'll be the same blueprint the Hilltoppers have used the last 40 years — physical play, hard-nosed defense and that vaunted running game.

"If we run it like we did last year, I don't think there will be any passing game," said leading rusher James Pettyjohn with a chuckle.

Doyle said he still attends many Chardon football games, often standing it the far end zone away from the crowds watching the punishing Chardon rushing attack beat teams into submission with the offense he and Overton brought to Chardon in 1980.

He admits he feels somewhat like a proud papa watching the same style he brought 40 years ago being used today.

"I remember back when we beat Newbury, 6-0, because Mike Davies intercepted a pass and ran it back for a touchdown," Doyle said. "Next thing you know we're playing against St. Edward and holding Euclid to only eight plays in the second half — and that's when they had Tony Fisher — because we had the ball the rest of the time."

Even though it might not look exactly like it did when it was first introduced to Chardon football, the Wing-T has changed Chardon football and has stood the test of time.

"It's been a game-changer," Hewitt said. "It'll be interesting to see if it survives another 40 years."

Benedictine » Bengals

Just the facts

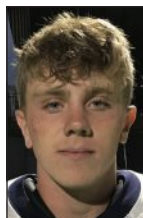
Conference: Independent
Coach: Jarritt Goode, second year (10-2)
OHSAA: Division II, Region 6
2019: 10-2
Twitter: @BeneBengalsFB
Home field: Euclid Community Stadium

Outlook

Jarritt Goode's first season restored the sense of tradition to his alma mater, as Benedictine won 10 games before falling to Avon in a Division II regional semifinal. The Bengals return most of their core from last year's group, which reached a double-digit win total for the first time since 2015. Quarterback Ronnie Schultz enters his senior season behind an experienced offensive line stuffed with college talent, namely Robert Morris commit Luke Beltavski, Thomas Jolly, Jacob Vasko and Sawyer Hamrick. Offensively, the Bengals need a replacement for Jalen Edwards — the area's rushing leader in 2019 — and will feature five new starters on defense.

Player to watch

Ronnie Schultz enters his second season starting at quarterback for the Bengals and expectations are high for the Benedictine senior. He finished second in the area in passing yards during the regular season with 1,887, behind only Fisher Award winner Drew Schiano, and threw for 23 scores. Schultz is mobile and throws well off the run. He's more than a quarterback, willing to make any play — whether scrambling for a first down or throwing a block on the edge. Schultz's weapons include Chris Gales, Angelo Lott and Terrance Hollon, and he'll lead one of the top offensive units in the area.



Schultz

Underclassman to watch

Derrell Bedingfield saw time on the field as a sophomore and made such an impact for

the Bengals defense that he netted offers from Akron and Cincinnati. Next to Hollon and Gary Merrill, Bedingfield is primed to take a step forward and become a high-caliber difference-maker at outside linebacker.



Bedingfield

Bottom line

IF: the Bengals' defense rises to the level of their offense; **THEN:** the Men of Benedictine will factor into how their region is decided.

Schedule

Aug. 29: Benedictine at Warren Harding, 7:30
Sept. 4: Benedictine at Akron SVSM, 7
Sept. 11: Hoban at Benedictine, 7
Sept. 18: Benedictine at Massillon, 7:30
Sept. 26: Austintown Fitch at Benedictine, 7
Oct. 2: St. Edward at Benedictine, 7

Projected lineup

OFFENSE

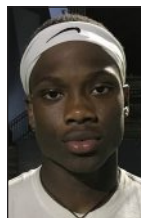
Position: Name	Year
QB: Ronnie Schultz*	Sr.
RB: Gary Merrill*	Sr.
RB: Terrance Hollon*	Sr.
WR: Andre Rodgers*	Sr.
WR: Terrell Grier	Jr.
LT: Sawyer Hamrick*	Sr.
LG: Thomas Jolly*	Sr.
C: Luke Beltavski*	Sr.
RG: Brandon Black*	Sr.
RT: Jacob Vasko*	Sr.
K: Ivan Shuran*	Sr.



Beltavski

DEFENSE

Position: Name	Year
DE: Thomas Jolly*	Sr.
N: Deon Womack	Sr.
DE: Grigor Gavris	Sr.
OLB: Derrell Bedingfield	Jr.
MLB: Gary Merrill*	Sr.
MLB: Terrance Hollon*	Sr.
OLB: Javon Floyd*	Sr.
DB: Michael Hatcher	Jr.
DB: Christopher Gales*	Sr.
DB: Myles Byrd	Sr.
DB: Andre Rodgers*	Sr.
P: Christian Cora	Jr.



Gales

Key reserves: Marvin Conkle*, Jr., Deon Diggs, Sr., Brandon Johnson, Sr., Angelo Lott*, Sr.

Best in the classroom: Ivan Shuran, 4.48 GPA, Terrance Hollon, 4.27 GPA, Luke Beltavski, 4.11 GPA

Returning lettermen: 32

— Nate Barnes

Berkshire » Badgers

Just the facts

Conference: CVC Valley
OHSAA: Division V, Region TBA
Coach: Josh DeWeese, eighth year (27-44)
2019: 6-4
Twitter: @Badgersfbal
Home field: Dr. William A. Reed Field

Outlook

Hope is prevalent in the heart of Burton, with Berkshire's 2019 lineup having been so junior-heavy. QB Jacob Brown, who threw for 13 TDs last fall, has options as his disposal. The interior of a good-sized offensive line returns intact — and of course, when a 6-foot-4 left tackle and 285-pound right tackle can be plugged in as new starters, that's a benefit. On defense, the Badgers are active and return playmakers. Evan McDermott, taking over as the lead RB for the productive Ryan Pennypacker and after recording 10.5 TFLs at LB in 2019, will be pivotal to the Berkshire cause.

Player to watch

J.J. Perrin, a 6-foot, 195-pound senior, was an edge force a year ago with 16 TFLs. DeWeese lauds Perrin as a "workout warrior" who has been a constant in the weight room since his sophomore campaign — a facet evidenced by his recent team-best 265-pound bench press. Perrin is expected to see reps at RB as well.

Underclassman to watch: Junior LT Lucas Stoddard (6-4, 220) would have started in 2019 were it not for a knee injury. His technique and intelligence, DeWeese noted, set him apart.

Bottom line

IF: the defense can be disruptive and McDermott thrives in a lead back role behind a



TIM PHILLIS — FOR THE NEWS-HERALD

Berkshire's Evan McDermott in 2019.

big line; **THEN:** the Badgers have the experience and savvy to be 4-2 or perhaps better.

Schedule (subject to change)

Aug. 28: Cardinal at Berkshire, 7
Sept. 4: Berkshire at Grand Valley, 7
Sept. 11: Lutheran West at Berkshire, 7
Sept. 18: Crestwood at Berkshire, 7
Sept. 25: Berkshire at Hawken, TBA
Oct. 2: Beachwood at Berkshire, 7

Projected lineup

OFFENSE

Position: Name, Year, Ht., Wt.
QB: Jacob Brown*, Sr., 5-11, 190
RB: Evan McDermott*, Sr., 5-11, 190
WR: Blake Jenkins*, Sr., 5-10, 160
WR: Hunter Gifford*, Sr., 5-9, 150
WR: Josh Brown, So., 5-10, 160
TE: Chris Groudle*, Sr., 5-10, 170
LT: Lucas Stoddard, Jr., 6-4, 220
LG: Brandon Catley*, Sr., 5-11, 215
C: Kaige Martin*, Jr., 5-11, 210
RG: Denton Yoder*, Jr., 5-11, 220
RT: Jeremy Boshier, Jr., 6-2, 285
K: Salvatore Vargas, So., 5-9, 145



Groudle

DEFENSE

Position: Name, Year, Ht., Wt.
DE: Lucas Stoddard, Jr., 6-4, 220
DT: Brandon Catley*, Sr., 5-11, 215
DT: Aidan Sayre, Sr., 6-2, 210
DE: J.J. Perrin*, Sr., 6-0, 195
LB: Evan McDermott*, Sr., 5-11, 190
LB: Chris Groudle*, Sr., 5-10, 170
LB: Denton Yoder, Jr., 5-11, 220
CB: Josh Tribuzzo*, Sr., 5-6, 135
CB: Blake Jenkins*, Sr., 5-10, 160
FS: Josh Brown, So., 5-10, 160
SS: Jack Kuehn, Jr., 6-0, 165
P: Chris Groudle*, Sr., 5-10, 170
*** — returning starter; Returning letterwinners:** 17
Key reserves: Brian Brent, Sr., 5-6, 160, Justin Heiden, Sr., 5-11, 127
Best in the classroom: Lucas Stoddard, 4.24 GPA, Mason Mendolera, 4.0, Natalie Hering, 3.918, Blake Jenkins, 3.902
Best bench press: J.J. Perrin, 265 pounds
Best 40 time: Hunter Gifford, 4.52
Best squat: Lucas Stoddard, 440 pounds



McDermott

— Chris Lillstrung



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Brush » Arcs

Just the facts

Conference: WRC

Coach: Edmund Hall

OHSAA: Division II, Region TBA

2019: 0-10

Twitter: @BrushAthletics

Home field: Korb Field

Outlook

Numbers are a little down this year for Hall and the Arcs, but there's a pretty strong group of talent to work with. It all starts with senior QB A.J. Shorts and his running/passing ability. The Arcs are going to more of a run-oriented option attack this year, which fits Shorts' skill set well. RB Marshon Taylor (5-4, 145) isn't real big, but he's shifty and quick. If he gets into space, look out. Big 6-foot-7 tight end Antwone Woolfolk is a Division I college prospect. He's going to cause some problems matchup-wise for whoever the Arcs face this year. Because of the smaller roster this season, depth is a little bit of a concern. The secondary and linebacking corps are inexperienced, but a few games early should help with that.

Player to watch

A.J. Shorts is entering his third year as the starting quarterback. Not only does he have experience on his side, but he has also trimmed down to 6-2, 210, about 20 pounds lighter than he was a few years ago. That's going to help with his mobility. He is good at getting the ball to playmakers as well. It all starts with him.

Underclassman to watch: Coach Hall feels junior tight end Antwone Woolfolk is the best tight end prospect he's ever coached, and that says a lot since Hall coached former Ohio State tight end and current New England Patriot Rashod Berry. The 6-7, 250-pound Woolfolk is a matchup nightmare for the opposition.

Bottom line

IF: the Arcs can stay away from injuries and keep Shorts on his feet; **THEN:** Brush



JOHN KAMPF — THE NEWS-HERALD

Brush QB A.J. Shorts lets a pass fly during a preseason practice on Aug. 19.

is going to have a successful season.

Schedule (Subject to change)

Aug. 28: Brush at Lakewood, 7
Sept. 4: Lutheran East at Brush, 7
Sept. 11: Warrensville Heights at Brush, 7
Sept. 18: TBA
Sept. 25: TBA
Oct. 2: TBA

Projected lineup

OFFENSE

QB: A.J. Shorts* Sr., 6-2, 210
RB: Marshawn Taylor, Jr., 5-4, 145
RB: Tanell Rose, Fr., 5-10, 170
TE: Antwone Woolfolk* 6-7, 250
WR: Jaylen Richardson* Sr., 6-0, 160
WR: Kweli Coleman, Jr., 6-2, 150
LT: Ababacar Seck, Jr., 6-2, 210
LG: Kendrell Goodwin, So., 6-0, 240
C: Lamour Barrett, So., 5-8, 225
RG: Derian Farley* So., 5-8, 290
RT: Maliek Williams* Jr., 6-2, 250
K: Matt Kendig* Sr., 5-7, 145

DEFENSE

DE: Daquan Ross* Sr., 6-2, 215
DE: Antwon Woolfolk* Jr., 6-7, 250
DT: Maliek Williams* Jr., 6-2, 250
ILB: Alfred Murry, Jr., 6-2, 230
ILB: Christian Bolden* Sr., 5-6, 160
OLB: Derrell Tellis, Jr., 5-10, 160
OLB: Addonis Santiago, Sr., 5-10, 190
CB: Isiah Fox, Jr., 5-0, 160
CB: Christian Ray, Sr., 5-7, 147
S: Marshawn Taylor, Jr., 5-4, 145
S: Kalil Littlejohn, Sr., 6-0, 145
Key reserves: Davion Britten, Sr., 6-0, 170, Dameon Scott, Sr., 5-9, 185, Colin Conner, Sr., 5-6, 150, Steven Loya, Sr., 6-3, 160.
Returning letterwinners: 7
Best in the classroom: Christian Bolden 4.3
Best bench press: Derian Farley 365 pounds
Best 40 time: Jaylen Richardson 4.55 seconds
Best squat: Derian Farley 425 pounds



Shorts



Woolfolk

— John Kampf

Cardinal » Huskies

Just the facts

Conference: CVC Valley

OHSAA: Division VI, Region TBA

Coach: George Gresko, second year (4-6)

2019: 4-6 (2-4 CVC)

Twitter: @huskies_fb

Home field: Richard A. Moss Field

Outlook

One significant plus as far as continuity is in the trenches on the lines, with three returning starters on the O-line with bookends in LT Mike Soltis (6-2, 260) and RT Gavin Williams (6-2, 245) and C Jon Avalon (6-0, 255). That group also has the chance to be disruptive on the D-line with that size. On a fairly young team, senior RB-LB Brandon Collins will play an integral role with his leadership and production. Cardinal could be improved in Year 2 under Coach George Gresko. It will require a lot of new faces to come in and perform.

Player to watch

Senior Joey Soltis (13 passing TDs; 568 yards, seven rushing TDs in 2019) has grown to 6-foot-2, 210 pounds, and Gresko has been pleased with his offensive system handle. His strong arm and moxie with an almost entirely new skill corps will go a long way toward the Huskies' success.

Underclassmen to watch: Ethan Detweiler, a 5-10, 165-pound sophomore, could be poised for a breakout campaign. Gresko lauds his burst with a 4.6 40 and believes the RB could flourish behind a zone-blocking scheme.

Bottom line

IF: an inexperienced skill corps develops around Soltis and that big line; **THEN:** the Huskies could get to 4-2 amid a challeng-



PATRICK HOPKINS — FOR THE NEWS-HERALD

Cardinal quarterback Joey Soltis hands off during a 2019 game at Beachwood.

ing slate.

Schedule (subject to change)

Aug. 28: Cardinal at Berkshire, 7
Sept. 4: Independence at Cardinal, 7
Sept. 11: Cardinal at Kirtland, 7
Sept. 18: Beachwood at Cardinal, 7
Sept. 25: Cardinal at Grand Valley, 7
Oct. 2: Cardinal at Brooklyn, 7

Projected lineup

OFFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
QB:	Joey Soltis*	Sr.	6-2	210
RB:	Ethan Detweiler	So.	5-10	165
RB:	Brandon Collins*	Sr.	5-10	185
WR:	Tony Soltis	Jr.	6-0	160
WR:	Sabastian Granito	Sr.	5-10	155
WR:	J.R. Kochoy	Jr.	6-0	190
LT:	Mike Soltis*	Jr.	6-2	260
LG:	Andrew Tucholski	So.	5-10	190
C:	Jon Avalon*	Jr.	6-0	255
RG:	Ty Simms	So.	5-10	220
RT:	Gavin Williams*	Sr.	6-2	245
K:	Mac Robinson*	Jr.	6-2	190



Collins

DEFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
DE:	Chase Simak	Jr.	5-11	185
NT:	Jon Avalon*	Jr.	6-0	255
DT:	Mike Soltis*	Jr.	6-2	260
DE:	Gavin Williams*	Sr.	6-2	245
LB:	Aaron Reese*	Jr.	5-9	180
LB:	Brandon Collins*	Sr.	5-10	185
LB:	Austin Strevler	Jr.	5-10	180
CB:	Dylan Frieburg	Sr.	5-11	190
CB:	Aidan Gallagher	Fr.	5-10	155
FS:	Trevor Bachna	Sr.	6-1	185
SS:	Tony Soltis	Jr.	6-0	160
P:	Cameron Carrao	Jr.	5-10	190

* — returning starter; Returning letterwinners: 11
Key reserves: WR-CB Jordan Kwiecinski, Sr., 5-10, 155

— Chris Lillstrung

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Chagrin Falls » Tigers

Just the facts

Conference: CVC Chagrin
OHSAA: Division IV, Region TBA
Coach: Mark Iammarino, 26th year (179-95)
2019: 5-5
Twitter: @chagrinAD
Home field: C.S. Harris Stadium

Outlook

Having a seasoned backfield and four returning starters on the offensive line is a strong start. Xavier Perez, a 5-foot-11, 165-pound senior, is one of The News-Herald's coverage area's most versatile threats, having averaged nearly 10 yards per touch last fall, including 44 catches and 16 total TDs. The linebacker corps is savvy, paced by Owen McClintock (82 tackles in 2019), and quality options abound in the secondary. Andrew Kirkpatrick is one of the area's top kickers/punters and will also be employed at tight end. After six seasons hovering around the .500 mark, Chagrin Falls is hungry for improved fortune.

Player to watch

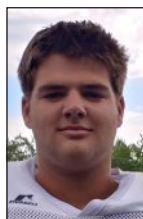
Dawson Pierce, a 6-foot-3, 230-pound senior, will be integral to the Tigers' cause, in his third year as a starting QB/LB. Iammarino lauds his maturity as a leader on the squad, as well as his arm strength and presence in the pocket.



Pierce

Underclassman to watch:

Junior LT Nick Dalessandro (6-5, 265), a returning second-team All-Ohioan, is getting Division I looks. With concerted effort in the weight room and home training, he has bulked up around 40 pounds vs. 2019. He will also start at DE.



Dalessandro

Bottom line

IF: a diverse offense is harnessed and the



PAUL DICICCO — FOR THE NEWS-HERALD

Chagrin Falls quarterback Dawson Pierce pitches to Xavier Perez during the Tigers' Oct. 25, 2019 game against West Geauga.

new starters on defense plug in effectively; **THEN:** a 5-1 regular season seems doable for Chagrin.

Schedule (subject to change)

Aug. 28: Harvey at Chagrin Falls, 7
Sept. 4: Lakeside at Chagrin Falls, 7
Sept. 11: VASJ at Chagrin Falls, 7
Sept. 17: Chagrin Falls at Perry, 7
Sept. 25: Chagrin Falls at Orange, 7
Oct. 2: West Geauga at Chagrin Falls, 7

Projected lineup

OFFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
QB:	Dawson Pierce*	Sr.	6-3	230
RB:	Xavier Perez*	Sr.	5-11	165
RB:	Owen McClintock*	Sr.	6-0	205
WR:	Will Tropp*	Sr.	5-10	175
WR:	Owen Lewis	Sr.	5-10	170
TE:	Josh Norton	Sr.	6-2	202
LT:	Nick Dalessandro*	Jr.	6-5	265
LG:	Andrew Bazzone*	Jr.	5-10	220
C:	Jackson Chiunizi*	Sr.	6-0	240
RG:	Ben Streicher*	Sr.	6-1	195
RT:	Max Moore	Jr.	6-3	215
K-TE:	Andrew Kirkpatrick*	Jr.	6-4	240



Kirkpatrick

DEFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
DE:	Nick Dalessandro	Jr.	6-5	265
DT:	Tommy Conway	Jr.	5-10	210
NT:	Peter Winkelman	Jr.	5-10	210
DE:	Grady Zeigler*	Sr.	6-0	220
OLB:	Josh Norton	Sr.	6-2	202
ILB:	Owen McClintock*	Sr.	6-0	205
ILB:	Dawson Pierce*	Sr.	6-3	230
CB:	Miguel Demastus	Sr.	5-7	165
CB:	Xavier Perez	Sr.	5-11	165
CB:	Owen Lewis	Sr.	5-10	170
FS:	Will Tropp	Sr.	5-10	175
SS:	Cam O'Connor/Charlie McLaughlin, Sr./Sr.,	5-6/ 5-9, 150/ 170		

* — returning starter

Key reserve: Wes Kaas, Jr., 6-1, 190

Best in the classroom: Owen McClintock, 4.43 GPA

— Chris Lillstrung

Chardon » Hilltoppers

Just the facts

Conference: WRC
Coach: Mitch Hewitt, 10th year (70-31)
OHSAA: Division III, Region TBA
2019: 10-3
Twitter: @topperfb
Home field: Memorial Field

Outlook

The Hilltoppers are loaded. Chardon welcomes back 25 seniors, as well as 26 returning letterwinners, from a team that made a deep playoff run last season. Chardon is widely known for its vaunted run offense, and rightfully so, but the headliner of this team is its defense, where eight starters return. Height, speed and physicality across the board. FBS recruit Myles Mendeszoon at DE, All-Ohioan Vince Ferrante and 6-4 safeties Brady Toth and Nathanael Sulka headline the defense. Offensively, Drew Fetchik takes over the reins at quarterback. All three running backs return, including speedy James Pettyjohn, and the line is huge and physical. The smallest lineman is 6-foot 260-pound veteran Nick Fay. Finding question marks is almost nit-picking. If the Hilltoppers stay healthy, there's no limit as to how far this team can go.

Player to watch

There's a lot of directions to go here, but senior linebacker Vince Ferrante was an All-Ohioan last year on defense, and he's also going to be part of the running back mix. He has athletic talent, but he also has that competitive edge that makes Chardon football Chardon football.

Underclassman to watch: Nathanael Sulka is a 6-foot-4, 205-pound playmaking machine. On defense he's the ultimate backline defender with his height and athleticism. On offense, if the ball is close to him in the air, he's going to go get it.

Bottom line

IF: The Hilltoppers stay healthy and don't turn the ball over, **THEN:** this team is very



TIM PHILLIS — FOR THE NEWS-HERALD

Chardon head coach Mitch Hewitt and his Hilltoppers have 25 seniors this season.

much in the conversation for a Division III final four appearance

Schedule (subject to change)

Aug. 28: North at Chardon, 7
Sept. 4: South at Chardon, 7
Sept. 11: Chardon at Kenston, 7
Sept. 18: Chardon at Riverside, 7
Sept. 25: Mayfield at Chardon, 7
Oct. 2: TBA

Projected lineup

OFFENSE

QB:	Drew Fetchik	Sr.	6-1	180
FB:	Sean Carr*	Jr.	5-11	190
HB:	James Pettyjohn*	Sr.	5-11	170
HB:	Evan Ash*	Sr.	6-1	185
WR:	Brady Toth*	Sr.	6-5	185
TE:	Alex McDonald	Jr.	6-3	205
LT:	George LeMaster	Sr.	6-5	265
LG:	Nick Fay*	Jr.	6-0	260
C:	Dylan Friend	Sr.	5-10	285
RG:	Matt Kloski*	Sr.	6-3	285
RT:	Jesse Decipeda*	Sr.	6-1	290
K:	Nathan Taggart	Jr.	6-1	175



Sulka

DEFENSE

DE:	Myles Mendeszoon*	Sr.	6-4	210
DT:	Gavin Slive*	Sr.	6-1	230
DT:	Evan Gardner	Sr.	6-0	200
LB:	Cade McDevitt*	Sr.	6-0	195
LB:	Vince Ferrante*	Sr.	5-11	195
LB:	Blake Barker	Sr.	6-2	205
LB:	Christian Hall	Jr.	6-0	205
CB:	Kevin Doyle*	Sr.	6-0	180
CB:	Trey Liebhart	So.	5-11	16
SS:	Nathanael Sulka*	Jr.	6-4	205
S:	Brady Toth*	Sr.	6-5	185
P:	Alex McDonald*	Jr.	6-3	205



Ferrante

* — returning starter; **Returning letterwinners:** 26

Key reserves: Adam Jackson, Jr., 5-11, 215, Angelo Ferrante, Sr., 5-11, 175, Ryan Petersen, So., 6-4, 185, Zoran Vujaklija, Jr., 6-0, 170

Best in the classroom: Jeffrey Fletcher, 4.0 GPA

Best bench press: Evan Gardner 350 pounds

Best squat: Nick Fay 550 pounds

Best 40: Blake Barker, James Pettyjohn 4.7

— John Kampf

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Euclid » Panthers

Just the facts

Conference: GCC

Coach: Jeff Rotsky, sixth year (44-16)

OHSAA: Division I, Region 1

2019: 9-3

Twitter: @EUCFOOTBALL

Home field: Euclid Community Stadium

Outlook

Euclid returned only three starters to its 2019 team that proceeded to go 9-3 before falling to St. Edward in a Division I regional semifinal. Experience won't be an issue for coach Jeff Rotsky this season. The Panthers bring back eight starters on offense and six on defense. Euclid's secondary is one of the best in the state, led by Atiba Fitz, Rasheed Evans, Cam Smith and Glenville transfer Michael Gravely — who is committed to Michigan State. The Panthers have one major question mark at quarterback, where Malachi Davis and Dre Rallings are battling to become the replacement for Dion Valentine.

Player to watch

Atiba Fitz, an Air Force commit, is a leader for Euclid on each side of the ball. He's next in line as a highly productive tailback in the Panthers' offense. Defensively, he mans the free safety position in a secondary teaming with Division I talent. Euclid will lean on his ability to carry the ball as the Panthers determine who will run the offense behind center.



Fitz



Ivory

Underclassman to watch:

Claihon Ivory returns after starting at receiver during a breakout sophomore season. Ivory was a third-team News-Herald all-star in 2019 after racking up 684 yards and

nine touchdowns on 37 receptions. Ivory already has an SEC offer from Kentucky in hand and, if he takes a step forward, will provide a premier weapon for the Panthers' offense.

Bottom line

IF: the Panthers develop consistent quarterback play; **THEN:** Euclid will become a factor at the top of its region in Division I.

Schedule (subject to change)

Aug. 28: Euclid at Brunswick, 7
Sept. 4: Mentor at Euclid, 7
Sept. 11: Euclid at Cleveland Heights, 7
Sept. 18: Strongsville at Euclid, 7
Sept. 25: Medina at Euclid, 7
Oct. 2: Euclid at Elyria, 7

Projected lineup

OFFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
QB:	Malachi Davis/Dre Rallings	Sr.	5-9	192
RB:	Atiba Fitz*	Sr.	5-11	200
FB:	Ty Howard*	Jr.	5-11	200
WR:	Armond Scott*	Sr.	6-2	200
WR:	Claihon Ivory*	Jr.	5-9	165
Slot:	Jaylen Morris*	Sr.	5-10	180
LT:	Herman Taylor*	Sr.	6-4	300
LG:	Eddie Baker	Sr.	5-11	295
C:	Harold Jarvis*	Sr.	5-10	270
RG:	Tavion Redfearn	Sr.	5-9	230
RT:	Alex Reese*	Sr.	6-3	285
K:	Aiden Turos	Jr.	5-10	155



Rees

DEFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
DE:	Brandon Krivacic	Sr.	5-11	215
DE:	Mekhi Sykes/Evin Harris	So.	5-11	215
DT:	Chrishaun Edwards*	Sr.	5-8	285
DT:	Alex Reese/Harold Jarvis*	Sr.		
LB:	Ty Howard*	Jr.	5-11	200
LB:	Ryan Merrill	So.	5-11	220
LB:	Ahjay Cody*	Sr.	5-10	190
CB:	Rasheed Evans	Sr.	5-9	165
CB:	Michael Gravely*	Sr.	6-1	195
SS:	Cam Smith*	Sr.	6-3	180
FS:	Atiba Fitz*	Sr.	5-9	182
P:	Allonte Pryor	Jr.	5-7	155



Edwards

* — returning starter; Returning letterwinners: 21

Key reserves: Jordan Rees, Sr., 6-1, 170, Tyonne Parks, Sr., 5-8, 170, Allonte Pryor, Jr., 5-7, 155, Andre Tilman, Sr., 6-2, 215

Best in the classroom: Jordan Rees, Chrishaun Edwards, Michael Gravely, Harold Jarvis

Best bench press: Chrishaun Edwards, 340 pounds

Best 40 time: Armond Scott, 4.44 seconds

Best squat: Harold Jarvis, 525 pounds

— Nate Barnes

Fairport » Skippers

Just the facts

Conference: NAC

Coach: Cameron Ruff, fourth year (8-22)

OHSAA: Division VII, Region 25

2019: 4-6

Twitter: @SkippersFB

Home field: Greig Field

Outlook

Fairport enters a new era as the Skippers moved from the Chagrin Valley Conference into the Northeastern Athletic Conference. Things are going to look different for coach Cameron Ruff's squad on the field, as well. Fairport returns five lettermen from last year's team that went 4-6. The Skippers have two returning starters on offense, both linemen, and four on the defensive side. The question for Fairport now becomes if its inexperienced players are prepared to step into starting roles, and the team has adopted "Prove It" as its mantra entering the season.

Player to watch

Senior Dom Knesebeck is a cornerstone on the field for Fairport as one of the few returning starters on each side of the ball. He brings toughness and a high work ethic, both on Friday nights and when running gassers during conditioning sessions at practice. Knesebeck's leadership is quiet, but his hard-nosed style of play sets an example for his younger teammates. Knesebeck will be counted on to help pull the Skippers' sophomores and juniors along.



Do. Knesebeck



Cooper

Underclassman to watch:

Josiah Cooper is a physical specimen and the Skippers have high expectations for him as he steps into the starting role at running back. Cooper started at linebacker last season and will

see his workload increase on offense.

The 5-foot-8 junior will be counted on a difference-maker at running back, as all of Fairport's projected starters at the skill positions enter their first year holding No. 1 jobs on the depth chart.

Bottom line

IF: Fairport's young roster acclimates to varsity competition; **THEN:** the Skippers will make a push for a winning season in their first year as NAC members.

Schedule (subject to change)

Aug. 28: Fairport at Vienna Mathews, 7
Sept. 4: Southington at Fairport, 7
Sept. 11: Fairport at Windham, 7
Sept. 18: Pymatuning Valley at Fairport, 7
Sept. 25: Fairport at St. John, 7
Oct. 2: NAC Rematch, TBD

Projected lineup

OFFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
QB:	Will Fazekas	So.	6-3	250
RB:	Josiah Cooper	Jr.	5-8	175
WR:	Joey Tanker	Jr.	5-11	160
WR:	Tai Malone	Jr.	6-3	155
WR:	Sam Honkala	Jr.	6-0	145
TE:	Dillon Knesebeck	Jr.	6-4	190
LT:	Ryan Hejl	Jr.	5-11	25-
LG:	Conner Williams	Jr.	5-9	195
C:	Andrew Turner	So.	6-2	265
RG:	Dominic Knesebeck*	Sr.	6-0	210
RT:	Quentin Piotrowski*	Sr.	6-1	185
K:	Zane Malkamaki	So.	5-9	140



Di. Knesebeck

DEFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
NT:	Andrew Turner	So.	6-2	265
DE:	Quentin Piotrowski*	Sr.	6-1	185
DE:	Conner Williams	Jr.	5-9	195
LB:	Josiah Cooper*	Jr.	5-8	175
LB:	Dillon Knesebeck	Jr.	6-4	190
LB:	Dominic Knesebeck*	Sr.	6-0	210
OLB:	Joey Tanker	Jr.	5-11	160
OLB:	Ryan Heller	Jr.	6-4	185
CB:	Sam Honkala	Jr.	6-0	145
CB:	Jeremy Sundman	So.	5-7	135
FS:	Tai Malone*	Sr.	6-3	155
P:	Maverrick Piotrowski	Fr.	5-8	145

* — returning starter

Best in the classroom: Gino Coraretti, 4.0 GPA, Mitch Myers, 4.0 GPA

Best bench press: Quentin Piotrowski, 255 pounds

Best squat: Dominic Knesebeck, 410 pounds

Best 40 time: Tai Malone, 4.75 seconds

Returning lettermen: 5

— Nate Barnes



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Geneva » Eagles

Just the facts

Conference: CVC Chagrin
Coach: Chip Sorber, sixth year (20-29)
OHSAA: Division III, Region TBA
2019: 8-2
Twitter: @FBGeneva
Home field: SPIRE Institute

Outlook

The Eagles graduated a large senior class that helped the team to its best record (8-2) in more than two decades. That being said, it's still an upperclassman-heavy roster. So that bodes well, as does the good numbers throughout the program. Charlie Taylor (RB-DL) is a dominating player. He ran for nearly 1,000 yards last season and was a difference-maker in the trenches on defense. Ben Scibona can both run and pass at quarterback. Keep an eye on junior Brady Peet running the ball and at linebacker. His brother, Blake, excelled in those roles last year. Zane Francis adds physicality both on the offensive line and at linebacker. There's a lot of talent on this team, it's just inexperienced on the varsity level.

Player to watch

Charlie Taylor is going to be around the ball constantly. He will either be the battering ram on offense as the key ball-carrier in the Eagles' run-oriented scheme, or he's going to be making tackles on defense. A versatile three-sport athlete who also stands out in wrestling and track. Taylor is durable. He'll need to be this year, because the Eagles will lean on him a lot.

Underclassman to watch: Get ready to see another Peet take a prominent role this year. Junior Brady Peet did a fine job as a defensive starter last year as a sophomore. He'll start on offense as a running back this year, too. He's fast, physical and is just a flat-out player — just like his brother Blake.

Bottom line

IF: The the Eagles get contributions besides Taylor on offense, **THEN:** Geneva's



DAVID C TURBEN — FOR THE NEWS-HERALD

Charlie Taylor ran for nearly 1,000 yards last season. He is back for his senior year this year with the Geneva Eagles.

offense is going to be difficult to defend this year.

Schedule (subject to change)

Aug. 28: Madison at Geneva, 7
Sept. 4: Edgewood at Geneva, 7
Sept. 11: Geneva at West Geauga, 7
Sept. 18: Lakeside at Geneva, 7
Sept. 25: Geneva at Harvey, 7
Oct. 2: Perry at Geneva, 7

Projected lineup

OFFENSE

QB: Ben Scibona*	Sr.	6-5	215
FB: Charlie Taylor*	Sr.	6-3	250
RB: Brady Peet	Jr.	5-11	170
RB: Dylan Hamilton	Jr.	5-11	175
TE: Gage Baker	Sr.	6-0	180
LT: Brian Spencer	Sr.	5-11	230
LG: Austin Massena*	Sr.	5-9	230
C: Gavin Juodenas	Jr.	5-11	215
RG: Zane Francis*	Sr.	6-0	200
RT: Matt Gruzinski	Sr.	6-5	255
K: Ethan Yost	Jr.	6-0	160

DEFENSE

DL: Austin Massena	Sr.	5-9	230
DL: Ben Scibona	Sr.	6-5	215
DL: Charlie Taylor*	Sr.	6-3	250
LB: Gavin Juodenas	Jr.	5-11	215
LB: Zane Francis	Sr.	6-0	200
LB: Brady Peet*	Jr.	5-11	170
LB: Clayton Queen	Jr.	6-0	160
DB: Wyatt Fuduric	Jr.	6-1	180
DB: Cole Smith	Sr.	6-0	170
DB: Gage Baker	Sr.	6-0	180
P: Charlie Taylor*	Sr.	6-3	250

* - returning starter; Returning letterwinners: 9
Key reserves: Johnny Haeseler, So., 5-11, 220, Mike Amato, Jr., 5-11, 160

Best in the classroom: Gavin Juodenas 4.25
Best bench press: Charlie Taylor 300
Best 40: Dylan Hamilton 4.6
Best squat: Charlie Taylor 465



Taylor



Peet

— John Kampf

Gilmour » Lancers

Just the facts

Conference: Independent
OHSAA: Division IV, Region TBA
Coach: Chris Kosiorek, sixth year (29-24)
2019: 4-6 (1-2 NCL)
Twitter: @GALancerAD
Home field: Weber Stadium

Outlook

The Lancers' roster numbers have never been better under Coach Chris Kosiorek, and there is reason for optimism, particularly on offense. Four returning starters on the line is always a plus. Michael Snelling (6-4) and Charlie Snelling (6-3) provide big targets for QB Thomas Richardson at WR and height not often seen at DB. How Mick Hopkins develops at RB to complement Santino Harper, to go with being a returning starter at LB, will be a key. Also of note are the amount of sophomores seeing significant varsity time. Gilmour has a chance to be a solid club this fall.

Player to watch

QB Thomas Richardson, a 6-foot-2, 205-pound junior, will be a vital cog as Kosiorek hopes he can take the next step as the leader of the offense. Kosiorek lauded Richardson's weight-room approach, which allowed him to add 15 pounds in the offseason.

Underclassman to watch: Santino Harper, a 5-6, 181-pound sophomore, showed promise as a ninth-grader at RB. Kosiorek labels Harper as a "dynamic" runner who has become more vocal in team circles. His production will go a long way toward a successful campaign.

Bottom line

IF: Harper can have a big year and the defense jells; **THEN:** the Lancers could push for around four wins in a shortened season.

Schedule (subject to change)

Aug. 29: Lutheran East at Gilmour, 2
Sept. 5: Warrensville Heights at Gilmour, 2
Sept. 17: Gilmour at Hawken, 7
Sept. 26: Warren JFK at Gilmour, 2



PATRICK HOPKINS — FOR THE NEWS-HERALD

Gilmour prepares to kick off during a 2018 playoff game against Orrville.

Oct. 3: Gilmour at University, 2

Projected lineup

OFFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
QB:	Thomas Richardson*	Jr.	6-2	205
RB:	Santino Harper*	So.	5-6	181
RB:	Mick Hopkins	Jr.	6-0	185
WR:	Michael Snelling*	Sr.	6-4	170
WR:	Charlie Shepherd*	Sr.	6-1	205
WR:	Charlie Snelling	So.	6-3	172
OL:	Louka Babic*	So.	5-6	170
OL:	Sam Palumbo	Jr.	5-7	250
OL:	C.J. Johnson*	Jr.	5-10	200
OL:	Hunter Sebulsky*	So.	6-0	256
OL:	Jimmy McCrone*	Sr.	5-8	215
K:	Anders Sorensen	Jr.	5-8	148



Richardson

DEFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
DL:	Dan Jevnikar	Jr.	6-1	200
DL:	Trey Guice	So.	6-3	230
DL:	Joe Rottinghaus	Sr.	5-11	175
DL:	Will Lazzaro*	So.	6-3	210
LB:	Mick Hopkins*	Jr.	6-0	185
LB:	Rocco Hice*	So.	5-9	172
LB:	Santino Harper*	So.	5-6	181
LB:	Charlie Shepherd*	Sr.	6-1	205
DB:	Michael Snelling*	Sr.	6-4	170
DB:	Tommy McCrone	So.	5-8	139
DB:	Charlie Snelling	So.	6-3	172
P:	Trey Guice	So.	6-3	230



Harper

* — returning starter; Returning letterwinners: 25

Key reserves: OL Tim Sargi, So., 5-8, 186, LB Mitch Lamosek, Sr., 5-11, 155, DB Andy Kavcic, Fr., 5-6, 140, DB Jake Kavcic, Fr., 5-6, 130, DB Will Foster, Sr., 6-1, 162

Best in the classroom: Joe Rottinghaus, 4.1 GPA

Best bench press: Louka Babic, 300 pounds

Best squat: Santino Harper, 405 pounds

— Chris Lillstrung



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Harvey » Red Raiders

Just the facts

Conference: CVC Chagrin

Coach: Mickey Mohner, first year

OHSAA: Division III, Region TBA

Last year: 2-8

Twitter: @GooooooRaiders

Home field: Jack Britt Memorial Stadium

Outlook

The Red Raiders are under the tutelage of former Harvey star quarterback Mickey Mohner. The team hasn't had a lot of success since Mohner graduated, but there's a buzz in camp as senior Jaden Debevec returns to pilot the offense. He has a slew of talent around him. Willie Grimes, Elijah Rowdy and Shareef Clayton all started at receiver last year, and that trio is joined by newcomers Roderick Coffee III and Rick Coleman Jr., The skill set on both the offensive and defensive sides should be potentially electric. The key will be the offensive line — where Rishon Anderson is the only returning starter — and the defensive front seven. The team doesn't have much big-game or varsity experience. So some early season success could go a long way toward the team's confidence.

Player to watch

It's a luxury to have a veteran quarterback with the intelligence of Jaden Debevec. He has the physical tools to lead the offense, but on top of that, he's got a coach-like intelligence on the field where he can see what the defense is trying to do and pick it apart. He's a great ball-distributor in this offense.

Underclassman to watch: Rick Coleman got his varsity feet wet last year at Lake Catholic. Now he's back at his home school and will start at both receiver and as a defensive back. He's only a junior, but he'll be a veteran leader for this team on both sides of the ball.

Bottom line

IF: The offensive line can hold up its end of the bargain, **THEN:** the Red Raiders have



NEWS-HERALD FILE

Jaden Debevec of Harvey throws a pass last season against Berkshire.

the skill set to put a lot of points on the board.

Schedule (subject to change)

Aug. 28: Harvey at Chagrin Falls, 7

Sept. 4: Perry at Harvey, 7

Sept. 11: Harvey at Lakeside, 7

Sept. 17: Harvey at West Geauga, 7

Sept. 25: Geneva at Harvey, 7

Oct. 2: Harvey at Edgewood, 7

Projected lineup

OFFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
QB:	Jaden Debevec*	Sr.	6-2	175
RB:	Kaleb Puckett*	So.	5-6	235
WR:	Willie Grimes*	Sr.	6-0	150
WR:	Elijah Rowdy*	Sr.	5-6	135
WR:	Shareef Clayton*	Sr.	6-4	165
WR:	Roderick Coffee III	Jr.	6-3	185
WR:	Rick Coleman Jr.	Jr.	6-0	165
LT:	Jaydyn Early	Jr.	6-1	245
LG:	Tyree Alston	So.	5-7	260
C:	Cesar Hernandez	Jr.	5-8	260
RG:	Rishon Anderson*	Sr.	5-11	245
RT:	Maurice Coffee II	Jr.	6-0	230
K:	Jaden Debevec*	Sr.	6-2	175



Coleman Jr.

DEFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
NG:	Rishon Anderson*	Sr.	5-11	245
DE:	Tyree Alston	So.	5-7	260
DE:	Jalaun Gorham	Sr.	5-11	185
LB:	Kaleb Puckett*	So.	5-6	235
LB:	Davon Badley	Fr.	6-1	190
LB:	Jay Jackson	Sr.	5-10	180
CB:	Willie Grimes*	Sr.	5-10	150
CB:	Rick Coleman Jr.	Jr.	6-0	165
CB:	Dre Smith	Jr.	5-7	150
FS:	Shareef Clayton*	Sr.	6-4	165
SS:	Elijah Rowdy*	Sr.	5-6	135
P:	Roderick Coffee III	Jr.	6-3	185

* - returning starter; Returning letterwinners: 15

Key reserves: Katory Shaw, Fr., 5-11, 155, Dashaun Anderson, Sr., 6-3, 210, Jay Jackson, Sr., 5-10, 180.

Best in classroom: Roderick Coffee III, 4.3 GPA

— John Kampf

Hawken » Hawks

Just the facts

Conference: CVC Valley

OHSAA: Division IV, Region TBA

Coach: Brian Stephenson, third year (3-16)

2019: 3-7 (1-4 CVC)

Twitter: @HawkenFootball

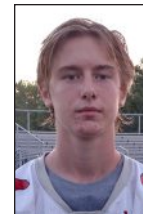
Home field: Cliff Walton Stadium

Outlook

The offense, with QB Terrence Robinson II (1,438 passing yards, 15 TDs in 2019) and dual threats in RB Zach Miller (1,059 total yards, 13 TDs) and WR Dominic Johnson, has a shot to be prolific. An all-underclassmen offensive line has time to develop and is an exciting facet. The defense knows it needs to improve after yielding 4,058 yards last fall, but eight returning starters will aid that cause. There is justification to believe the Hawks can take a step forward in 2020. But with game possibility paused until at least mid-September, there's no telling what form that will take.

Player to watch

Cooper Jared, a 6-foot, 163-pound senior, has been vital according to Coach Brian Stephenson in helping to change the Hawks' team culture as a leader and tone-setter. His unselfishness and trust level makes his teammates better. His production diversifies the offense so Robinson II, Miller and Johnson can be better utilized.



Jared

Underclassman to watch: Stephenson revels in the "dynamic" threat and leadership brought by Johnson (5-4, 135), who impressed as a ninth-grader with 572 rushing yards, 24 catches for 234 yards and 11 total TDs.

Bottom line

IF: the Hawks get enough game reps with



BARRY BOOHER — FOR THE NEWS-HERALD

Hawken's Ben Elenin, right, converges with a host of Hawks for a tackle during a 2018 game at Harvey.

that good, young offense; **THEN:** won-lost improvement is there to be had.

Schedule (subject to change)

NOTE: Hawken has paused its fall contact sports until Sept. 14 at the earliest.

Sept. 17: Gilmour at Hawken

Sept. 25: Berkshire at Hawken

Oct. 2: TBA

Projected lineup

OFFENSE

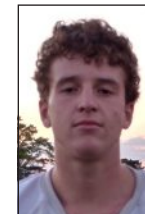
Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
QB:	Terrence Robinson II*	Jr.	6-1	197
RB:	Zach Miller*	Sr.	5-10	165
WR:	Cooper Jared*	Sr.	6-0	163
WR:	Dominic Johnson*	So.	5-4	135
WR:	Stone Zashin*	Sr.	6-4	153
TE:	A.J. Sands*	Jr.	6-0	182
LT:	Jack Bellar	Fr.	5-10	172
LG:	Thomas Gorenc	Jr.	6-0	261
C:	Louie Justice	Fr.	6-4	256
RG:	Tyler Gipson*	So.	6-1	262
RT:	Chris Shea*	So.	5-10	176
K:	Josh Lombardo*	Jr.	5-8	145



Robinson

DEFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
DE:	A.J. Sands*	Jr.	6-0	182
DT:	Thomas Gorenc	Jr.	6-0	261
DT:	Tyler Gipson*	So.	6-1	262
DE:	Ryan McMullen	Sr.	6-0	174
LB:	Chris Shea*	So.	5-10	176
LB:	Zach Miller*	Sr.	5-10	165
DB:	Dominic Johnson*	So.	5-4	135
DB:	Jordan Harrison*	Jr.	5-8	147
DB:	Ben Elenin*	Jr.	5-9	142
DB:	Cooper Jared*	Sr.	6-0	163
DB:	Sean Hodges Jr.	Jr.	5-9	155
P:	Terrence Robinson II*	Jr.	6-1	197



Reitman

* - returning starter; Returning letterwinners: 16

Key reserves: Danny Grajzl, So., 5-11, 158, Blake Reese, Fr., 5-8, 184

Best 40 time: Jordan Harrison, 4.60 seconds (FAT)

— Chris Lillstrung



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Kenston » Bombers

Just the facts

Conference: WRC

Coach: Jeff Grubich, ninth year (57-33)

OHSAA: Division III, Region TBA

2019: 8-3

Twitter: @Bomber_Football

Home field: Bomber Stadium

Outlook

The Bombers graduated a star-studded senior class last spring that won a state championship in 2018 and went to the playoffs again last year. So there's a lot of inexperience on this team, with only three starters returning on offense and one on defense. But the coaching staff has been excited about the work ethic of the younger players itching to make a name for themselves. Sophomore Nikko Georgiou takes over at QB from All-Ohioan Jon Tomcufcik, and senior Stanley Sell is the new feature back, taking over for All-Ohioan Jack Porter. Keep an eye on 6-foot-6, 230-pound tight end Ryan Miller. He's a playmaker. Kale Doyle is the lone returning starter on the line. Defensively, linebacker Anthony Valocci is the lone returning starter. WR-S J.P. Germano can make plays on both sides of the ball.

Player to watch

Junior tight end Ryan Miller is a 6-foot-6, 230-pounder who has two years of varsity experience under his belt. A big-time college recruit. Miller will not only make plays, but by drawing double coverage, defenders will have to leave someone else open.



Miller

Underclassman to watch: Nikko Georgiou raves of the tutelage of two-time All-Ohio quarterback Jon Tomcufcik. Only a sophomore, Georgiou will have three years at the helm. He's a smart, talented leader.

Bottom line

IF: The inexperienced players perform with poise and stay healthy, **THEN:** Kenston is



DAVID C TURBEN — FOR THE NEWS-HERALD

The Kenston football team runs onto the field before a game last season.

going to have a winning season.

Schedule (subject to change)

Sept. 4: Kenston at Madison, 7

Sept. 11: Chardon at Kenston, 7

Sept. 17: North at Kenston, 7

Sept. 25: Orrville at Kenston, 7

Oct. 2: Kenston at South, 7

Projected lineup

OFFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
QB:	Nikko Georgiou	So.	6-0	175
RB:	Stanley Sell	Sr.	5-10	205
TE:	Ryan Miller*	Jr.	6-6	230
WR:	Carson Rivera-Gebeau	Jr.	6-0	180
WR:	JP Germano*	Jr.	6-0	165
WR:	Thomas Burke	So.	5-10	180
LT:	Aaron Manis	Sr.	6-1	200
LG:	Sean Doyle	Fr.	6-0	260
C:	Kale Doyle*	Fr.	6-2	275
RG:	Anthony Valocci	Sr.	6-1	230
RT:	Donaldo Valadez Fuentes	Sr.	6-0	210
K:	Parker Munday	So.	5-6	165

DEFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
DL:	Aaron Manis	Sr.	6-1	200
DL:	Connor Kluesner	Jr.	6-1	260
DL:	Aiden Vanderbilt	Jr.	6-1	205
OLB:	Sean Lennon	Sr.	5-10	170
ILB:	Anthony Valocci*	Sr.	6-1	230
ILB:	Garrett Uhlir	Jr.	5-11	210
OLB:	Braden Krupp	Jr.	6-0	180
CB:	Sean Patrick	Fr.	5-8	165
CB:	Logan Toft	So.	5-10	170
FS:	JP Germano	Jr.	6-0	165
SS:	Lucas Simmons	So.	5-10	170
P:	Nikko Georgiou	So.	6-0	180

* - returning starter; Returning letterwinners: 18

Key reserves: Sean Patrick, Fr., Ben DiMarco
Best in the classroom: Ryan Miller 3.8, Garrett Uhlir 3.86, Braden Krupp 3.7

Best bench press: Cale Doyle 380 pounds

Best squat: Cale Doyle, Anthohny Valocci, Donaldo Valadez Fuentes 465 pounds



Georgiou

— John Kampf

Kirtland » Hornets

Just the facts

Conference: CVC Valley

Coach: Tiger LaVerde, 15th year (174-17)

OHSAA: Division V, Region TBA

2019: 15-0

Twitter: @Kirtlandfb

Home field: Rogers Field

Outlook

The Hornets come into the season with a state-best 30-game winning streak and two straight state championships. They also return six starters on each side of the ball. Goals are high, including a third straight state title. On offense, RB Mason Sullivan and LG Kiki Grman were both first team All-Ohioans last year. RB Anthony DeMarco is a physical runner, and RB Danny Davidson is the fastest player on the team. The offensive line has some youth to it, but the lifting program always has players ready, experience or not. Gage Sullivan (6-3, 190) is a matchup nightmare when Kirtland does pass, and QB Liam Powers showed last year how well he can throw and pass. Defensively, the Hornets have size and experience at linebacker. The defensive line is inexperienced. DB Joey Grazia is back after picking off nine passes last year.

Player to watch

Mason Sullivan was first-team All-Ohio as a sophomore on defense. Last year, he ran for 1,900 yards and was first team All-Ohio on defense. The 6-foot, 200-pound senior can do it all. He will be the linchpin of both the offense and defense.

Underclassman to watch: No one will forget the catches Gage Sullivan made in the state championship game last year. A tall (6-3) and athletic receiver who can also block a tight end, the younger of the Sullivan brothers is a big-time playmaker in clutch situations.

Bottom line

IF: The the Hornets stay healthy and the inexperienced D-line grows up fast, **THEN:**



TIM PHILLIS — FOR THE NEWS-HERALD

Liam Powers of Kirtland hands the ball off during the Hornets' scrimmage with North on Aug. 21.

will anyone bet against Kirtland going 13-0 and winning another state title?

Schedule (subject to change)

Aug. 28: Kirtland at Lake Catholic, 7

Sept. 4: Kirtland vs. Crestwood, 7

Sept. 11: TBD

Sept. 18: Kirtland vs. Cardinal, 7

Sept. 25: Kirtland vs. Grand Valley, 7

Oct. 2: Kirtland vs. Lakeside, 7

Projected lineup

OFFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
QB:	Liam Powers*	Sr.	5-10	175
RB:	Anthony DeMarco*	Sr.	5-11	190
RB:	Danny Davidson	Sr.	5-11	165
FB:	Mason Sullivan*	Sr.	6-0	200
WR:	Gage Sullivan*	Jr.	6-3	190
WR:	Joey Grazia	Sr.	5-10	150
LT:	Jonathon Withrow	Jr.	6-0	20
LG:	Kiki Grman*	Sr.	5-9	225
C:	Kelly Faber	Sr.	5-11	190
RG:	George Prusock*	Sr.	6-0	225
RT:	T.J. Green	Sr.	6-2	220
K:	Mario Rodin	Sr.	6-0	160



G. Sullivan

DEFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
DL:	Nick Schwartz	Sr.	5-9	225
DL:	Brad Davis	Sr.	5-10	180
DL:	Luke Gogolin	Sr.	5-9	165
LB:	Mason Sullivan*	Sr.	6-0	200
LB:	Mason Rus*	Jr.	6-0	170
LB:	Carson Andonian*	Sr.	6-0	170
LB:	Joseph Coleman	Jr.	6-0	180
DB:	Ramon Lescano	Jr.	5-9	155
DB:	Anthony DeMarco*	Sr.	5-11	190
DB:	Danny Davidson	Sr.	5-11	165
DB:	Joey Grazia*	Sr.	5-10	150
P:	Gage Sullivan	Jr.	6-3	190

* - returning starter; Returning letterwinners: 22

Key reserves: Alex Fellingner, Sr., 6-0, 270, Philip LaVerde, So., 5-10, 170

Best in the classroom: Anthony DeMarco 4.3

Best bench press: Kiki Grman 315 pounds

Best squat: Kiki Grman 520 pounds

Best 40: Danny Davidson 4.58 seconds



M. Sullivan

— John Kampf

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Lake Catholic » Cougars

Just the facts

Conference: Independent

Coach: Marty Gibbons, second year (4-6)

OHSAA: Division IV, Region TBA

2019: 4-6

Twitter: @LCCougarfb

Home field: Jerome T. Osborne Stadium

Outlook

The Cougars went 4-6 last season with a senior-heavy team. But 12 underclassmen and a number of key contributors return this year, so optimism is high in Year 2 of Coach Marty Gibbons' tenure. Offensively, only four starters return. The biggie is QB Joe Malchesky, who has the ability to run and pass for 1,000 yards. He has an inexperienced skill set around him. TB Tyler Seacrist has great speed. Tight end Brady Bowser is a reliable veteran. The new receivers will need to grow up in a hurry. The line is anchored by holdovers Sean Gibbons and Johnny Geiger. Defensively, no question the strength is at linebacker with Simon Taraska and Ryan Joy in the middle. They are two hard-hitting playmakers. Three starters returning on the D-line helps, too.

Player to watch

Joe Malchesky is back for a second year at quarterback. A year ago he accounted for 1,951 yards of total offense between passing and running. The Cougars will lean on not only his athleticism and playmaking ability this year, but also his ability to make good decisions.



Malchesky

Underclassman to watch: Aidan Fitzgerald made a name for himself as a freshman on the varsity basketball team. Now it's time for him to shine (WR-DB) in basket-

ball.

Bottom line

IF: the inexperienced playmakers on offense make plays and take the total focus off Malchesky; **THEN:** the Cougars are going to give opposing defenses trouble.

Schedule (subject to change)

(home games at Jerome T. Osborne Sr. Stadium)

Aug. 28: Kirtland at Lake Catholic, 7
Sept. 5: Lake Catholic at VASJ, 2:30 (at Euclid)
Sept. 11: Lake Catholic at NDCL, 7
Sept. 17: University at Lake Catholic, 7
Sept. 25: Lake Catholic at Walsh Jesuit, 7
Oct. 3: Padua at Lake Catholic

Projected lineup

OFFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
QB:	Joe Malchesky*	Sr.	6-1	185
TB:	Tyler Seacrist	Jr.	5-8	155
TE:	Brady Bowser*	Sr.	6-2	205
WR:	Luke Rako	Sr.	6-2	185
WR:	Charlie Vincent	Sr.	5-11	180
WR:	Ryan Globokar	Sr.	5-10	155
LT:	Owen Kaufman	Jr.	6-3	230
LG:	Sean Gibbons*	Sr.	6-0	230
C:	Aidan Sweeney	Sr.	6-0	240
RG:	Nick Pisano	So.	5-11	255
RT:	Johnny Geiger*	Sr.	5-10	255
K:	Luke Hadley	Sr.	5-9	150

DEFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
DE:	Brady Bowser*	Sr.	6-2	205
DT:	Danny Morgan	Jr.	6-3	220
NT:	Jake Green*	Sr.	5-10	205
DE:	Jacob Owens*	Sr.	5-11	210
NI:	Tyler Seacrist	Jr.	5-8	155
ILB:	Simon Taraska*	Sr.	5-9	185
ILB:	Ryan Joy*	Sr.	6-1	215
CB:	Ryan Globokar	Sr.	5-10	155
CB:	Aidan Fitzgerald	So.	6-2	160
S:	Alexis Pacheco	Jr.	5-10	1990
S:	Joe Malchesky*	Sr.	6-1	185
P:	Joe Malchesky*	Sr.	6-2	185

* - returning starter; Returning letterwinners: 12

Key reserves: Braeden Hamilton, Jr., 6-0, 190, Domenic Sassano, Sr., 6-1, 205

Best in the classroom: Luke Rako 4.5, Nick Antonelli 4.3, Nick Brandt 4.3

Best bench press: Simon Taraska 335 pounds

Best squat: Ryan Joy, 500 pounds

Best 40: Joe Malchesky 4.78 seconds



Fitzgerald

— John Kampf

Madison » Blue Streaks

Just the facts

Conference: WRC

Coach: Mike Gilligan, first year

OHSAA: Division II, Region TBA

Twitter: @MadFootball212

Home field: Dick Hamblin Field

Outlook

There are a lot of new faces on the Blue Streaks this year after the graduation of a massive (and experienced) senior class. But the same hard-nosed, Madison style is expected under first-year coach Mike Gilligan, a longtime assistant on Tim Willis' staff. The running of Austin McCourt and Brad McKeon is expected to be the Blue Streaks' forte as first-year QB Michael O'Brien gets his feet wet. The line is big and physical, anchored by Jake Laurie. Defensively, Madison will again play fast and physical. Linebackers Vince Fisher, Danny Alley and Gabe Hejl are hammers. The only real question for Madison is experience, with only three starters returning on offense and two on defense. But this is a hungry group.

Player to watch

They don't call Austin McCourt "Bam" for nothing. He's only 5-6, 175, but the senior back packs a punch when he has the ball in his hands. He ran for more than 1,000 yards last year behind a big, physical offensive line. He's no doubt going to command a lot of attention this year, but rest assured he'll enjoy the challenge.

Underclassman to watch: Sophomore Cole Sundquist (6-3, 260) virtually blocks out the sun when he emerges from the locker room. He's big and physical for a sophomore, and will anchor the young defensive line. He will probably command a double-team, thus opening up teammates to make tackles, too.

Bottom line

IF: The inexperienced players step in and play like veterans quickly, **THEN:** the Blue Streaks are going to have a winning record



COLEEN MOSKOWITZ — FOR THE NEWS-HERALD

Madison's Austin McCourt carries against North last year.

heading into the playoffs in Week 7.

Schedule (subject to change)

Aug. 28: Madison at Geneva, 7
Sept. 4: Kenston at Madison, 7
Sept. 11: Madison at North, 7
Sept. 18: Madison at South, 7
Sept. 25: Riverside at Madison, 7
Oct. 2: Mayfield at Madison, 7

Projected lineup

OFFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
QB:	Michael O'Brien	Jr.	6-2	175
RB:	Austin McCourt*	Sr.	5-6	170
Slot:	Brad McKeon*	Sr.	5-11	175
WR:	Noah Tweedy	Sr.	6-1	165
WR:	Sam Coast	Jr.	5-10	160
TE:	Will Eaton*	Sr.	6-5	250
LT:	Gabe Hejl	Sr.	5-11	230
LG:	Peyton Schroeder	Jr.	5-10	200
C:	Jake Laurie*	Sr.	5-10	230
RG:	Andrew Molnar	So.	5-11	200
RT:	Ryan Kadas	Sr.	6-1	230
K:	Carter Horvath	Sr.	6-1	170



McCourt

DEFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
DL:	Cole Sundquist	So.	6-3	260
DL:	Will Eaton	Jr.	6-5	250
DL:	Jake Laurie*	Sr.	5-10	230
DL:	Berat Gasi	Sr.	5-11	185
LB:	Gabe Hejl	Sr.	5-11	230
LB:	Danny Alley	Jr.	5-11	220
LB:	Vince Fisher	Sr.	5-10	185
CB:	Sam Coast	Jr.	5-10	160
CB:	Charlie Wade	Jr.	5-8	160
FS:	Truman Myers*	Sr.	5-10	165
SS:	Ryan Crim	Jr.	6-1	175
P:	Brad McKeon	Sr.	5-11	175



Sundquist

* - returning starter; Returning letterwinners: 18

Key reserves: Jordan Watt, Jr., 6-3, 245, Jaren Havens, Jr., 5-8, 160, Randy Taubee, 6-1, 230, Bryant Perkins, Fr., 5-10, 175

Best in classroom: Jake Laurie, 4.2 GPA

Best bench press: Austin McCourt 315 pounds

Best 40 time: Brad McKeon 4.5 seconds

Best squat: Gabe Heil 465

— John Kampf

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Mayfield » Wildcats

Just the facts

Conference: WRC

Coach: Ross Bandiera

OHSAA: Division II, Region TBA

2019: 11-1

Twitter: @MayfieldFB

Home field: Wildcat Stadium

Outlook

The Wildcats are coming off their first undefeated regular season in 25 years, and have the talent to do it again. Their season is on hold because of positive coronavirus tests. But when they return, the skill set is tremendous, leading off with four-year starter Michael Huss at quarterback. The likes of Joey Dostal and Billy Guzzo are back at receiver. There's a lot of youth on the line. But it's big, agile and physical. Spreading defenses out allows for the running game of Jack Klika to excel. Similar to the offense, the defense has inexperience in the trenches. But that linebacker corps, where three starters return, and the combo of Guzzo and Timmy Steffens and safety, makes the defense dangerous. Expect a typical Mayfield team, one that plays fast, puts points up in a hurry and his physical on defense.

Player to watch

Michael Huss has been starting at quarterback since early in his freshman year. Now a senior, he has the experience and skill to lead a team and drive the opposition crazy. A 4.0 student in the classroom, his intelligence spills over onto the gridiron, where he figures out defenses with relative ease.

Underclassman to watch: Matt Snider is the next big thing — literally — for the Wildcats in the trenches. The 6-foot, 290-pound junior is physically strong and has good footwork. He's going to be a problem for teams trying to run the ball because of his strength and balance.

Bottom line

IF: the the inexperienced offensive and defensive lines hold up their end of the bargain; **THEN:** the Wildcats very well could



BARRY BOOHER — FOR THE NEWS-HERALD

Billy Guzzo is hoisted up by his teammates after catching the winning touchdown in overtime against Riverside.

have an undefeated regular season and deep playoff run again.

Schedule (subject to change)

Note: Mayfield has suspended its season indefinitely.

Sept. 4: Riverside at Mayfield, 7

Sept. 11: Mayfield at South, 7

Sept. 18: TBA

Sept. 25: Mayfield at Chardon, 7

Oct. 2: Mayfield at Madison, 7

Projected lineup

OFFENSE

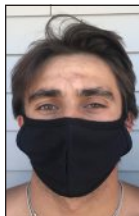
Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
QB:	Michael Huss*	Sr.	5-10	175
RB:	Jack Klika	Sr.	5-10	175
WR:	Josh Cope*	Sr.	6-0	175
WR:	Billy Guzzo*	Sr.	5-11	175
WR:	Joey Dostal*	Sr.	6-1	210
WR:	Matt Osler	Sr.	5-8	150
LT:	Jalen King	Sr.	5-9	270
LG:	Niko Willrich	Sr.	6-0	220
C:	Antonio Mangelluzzzi*	Sr.	6-1	285
RG:	Nick DelBalso	Sr.	6-1	275
RT:	Ricky Chilson	Sr.	6-3	265
K:	Ryan Miller*	Sr.	5-9	140



Snider

DEFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
DL:	Shane Trivisonno	Sr.	6-0	195
DL:	Matt Snider	Jr.	6-0	290
DL:	Kam Smith	Sr.	6-2	25
LB:	Eddie Barch*	Sr.	6-3	210
LB:	Mikey Trayczk	So.	6-0	175
LB:	Nick Tatko*	Sr.	6-0	190
LB:	Grant Woods*	Jr.	6-2	210
CB:	Steven Daugherty	Jr.	6-0	175
CB:	Anthony Thyret	Sr.	6-0	170
S:	Billy Guzzo*	Sr.	5-11	175
S:	Timmy Steffens*	Sr.	6-2	195
P:	Austin Ziance	So.	5-10	160



Huss

* — returning starter; Returning letterwinners: 9

Key reserves: Nick Biega, So., 5-11, 170, Jimmy Shaw, Sr., 6-0, 200

Best in the classroom: Matt Osler, 4.0 GPA, Michael Huss, 4.0, Nick DelBalso, 4-0

Best 40 time: Nick Biega 4.57

— John Kampf

Mentor » Cardinals

Just the facts

Conference: GCC

Coach: Matt Gray, first year

OHSAA: Division I, Region TBA

2019: 13-1

Twitter: @MentorRedline

Home field: Jerome T. Osborne Sr. Stadium

Outlook

Just because longtime head coach Steve Trivisonno has retired doesn't mean expectations change. There are a slew of returners from a team that advanced to the Division I state final four last season, including three-year starter Ian Kipp at quarterback and a trio of starters on the offensive line. The offensive skill set, aside from Hutch Baird, is new. But Kipp's experience and that O-line are big. The front four, anchored by big-time college recruit Brenan Vernon (DE) is the strength of the defense. Noah Gladish's return from an injury is big in the defensive backfield. Kicker Andrew Smith is one of Ohio's best.

Player to watch

Ian Kipp is one of the best players in Ohio. He was the Division I co-player of the year in the state last year after throwing for more than 2,500 yards and rushing for more than 1,000. He'll again be a huge part of the offense, in yards and touchdowns, but also in leadership.

Underclassman to watch: Anyone who hasn't yet heard of sophomore defensive end Brenan Vernon is living under a high school football rock. The 6-foot-5, 255-pounder has big-time college offers from around the nation and is going to be a wrecking ball for the next three years. His presence makes all the other defenders around him better.

Bottom line

IF: The inexperienced skill players on offense step up and the young linebackers grow up in a hurry, **THEN:** the Cardinals are good enough to get back to the state final four.



TIM PHILLIS — FOR THE NEWS-HERALD

Senior quarterback Ian Kipp, throwing a pass during a recent practice, is a three-year starter for the Cardinals.

Schedule (subject to change)

Aug. 28: Mentor at Medina, 7

Sept. 4: Mentor at Euclid, 7

Sept. 11: St. Edward at Mentor, 7

Sept. 18: Mentor at Brunswick, 7

Sept. 5: Elyria at Mentor, 7

Oct. 2: Strongsville at Mentor, 7

Roster

OFFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
QB:	Ian Kipp*	Sr.	6-3	215
RB:	Riley Coughlin	Sr.	5-10	205
WR:	Hutch Baird	Sr.*	6-1	185
WR:	Colin DePasquale	Sr.	6-0	180
WR:	John Sieputowski	Sr.	6-2	180
WR:	Eric Coode	Sr.	5-10	175
LT:	Hunter Colao*	Sr.	6-0	280
LG:	Danny Call	Jr.	6-0	260
C:	Stan Zalewski*	Sr.	5-11	265
RG:	Tommy Shea*	Sr.	6-1	285
RT:	Ethan Bostelman	Jr.	6-2	250
K:	Andrew Smith*	Sr.	6-5	190



Vernon

DEFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
DE:	Greg Predina*	Sr.	6-4	245
NT:	Preston Cardina*	Sr.	6-1	285
DE:	Brenan Vernon*	So.	6-5	255
OLB:	Evan Boyd*	Sr.	5-11	195
OLB:	Brandon Lewis	Sr.	5-11	205
LB:	Andrew Edwards	Sr.	6-0	195
LB:	Aiden Fellows	Jr.	6-2	210
CB:	Noah Gladish	Sr.	6-0	180
CB:	Eriq Martemus*	Sr.	6-1	175
S:	Aiden Limtury	Sr.	6-0	185
S:	Aiden George	Jr.	5-11	170
P:	Hutch Baird	Sr.	6-1	185



Kipp

* — returning starter; Returning letterwinners: 30

Key reserves: Cam Kaska, Sr., 5-11, 175, Evan Harper, Jr., 6-1, 185, Michael Harrison, Jr., 5-10, 165, Michael Call, Sr., 6-0, 175.

Best in the classroom: Hutch Baird, 4.3 GPA, Tyler Wilkinson 4.1 GPA, Brendan Baroni 4.1 GPA

Best bench press: Preston Cardina/Hunter Colao 325

Best squat: Stan Zalewski 570

Best 40: Noah Gladish 4.5 seconds

— John Kampf



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NDCL » Lions

Just the facts

Conference: Independent
Coach: Andrew Mooney, sixth year (35-21)
OHSAA: Division IV, Region TBA
Twitter: @NDCL_Football
2019: 3-7
Home field: Lozick Field at Lion Stadium

Outlook

The Lions are young and relatively inexperienced this season — sort of. There are only four starters back on offense and five on defense — and that includes uber-talented kicker/punter Gianni Spetic. But a slew of guys got experience last year in backup roles, as the 30 returning letterwinners suggest. Most of the offensive skill set is new. Junior Jacob Koenig looks to be the new quarterback, and he has a few big, strong backs behind him in 210-pound Jaiden Mangelluzzi and 205-pound Ashton Gotham. Senior Jack LeGath returns to anchor the offensive line. Defensively, captains Dom Roberts, Steve Degner, Nathan Slattery and Triston O'Brien will help hold down the fort. Roberts has a ton of experience and can also run the ball. Spetic and long-snapper O'Brien are among the area's best. The North Coast League disbanded this year, so technically NDCL is an independent. Some early success will be good for the team's momentum going forward.

Player to watch

Dom Roberts is moving in on his third year in the starting lineup. The 5-foot-10, 215-pounder is the latest standout defensive lineman for the Lions, and he can also be a battering ram at running back. A healthy year for Roberts is a biggie for NDCL.

Underclassman to watch: Jacob Koenig is a talented quarterback who can both run and pass. A junior, he has come up through the system and now it's his turn to run the show.

Bottom line

IF: The Lions can run the ball effectively



NEWS-HERALD FILE

Ashton Gotham runs the ball last season against Benedictine.

and stay healthy, **THEN:** NDCL will have a winning record heading into the playoffs.

Schedule (subject to change)

Aug. 28: Walsh Jesuit at NDCL, 7
Sept. 4: NDCL at Canfield, 7
Sept. 11: Lake Catholic at NDCL, 7
Sept. 18: NDCL at Padua, 7
Sept. 25: NDCL at University, TBD
Oct. 2: VASJ at NDCL, 7

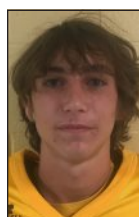
Projected lineup

OFFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
QB:	Jacob Koenig	Jr.	5-11	160
RB:	Ashton Gotham	Jr.	5-9	205
RB:	Jaiden Mangelluzzi	Sr.	6-1	210
TE:	Nathan Slattery	Sr.	6-1	190
WR:	Noah Coyne		6-4	200
WR:	Adam Zakrajsek*	Sr.	6-4	200
LT:	Josh Seibert	Sr.	6-3	267
LG:	Nathan Sieminski	Sr.	5-9	238
C:	Bryan Taylor*	Jr.	5-10	260
RG:	Ryan Pesho	So.	6-2	215
RT:	Jack Legath*	Sr.	6-2	245
K:	Gianni Spetic*	So.	5-10	150



Roberts



Koenig

DEFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
DL:	Dominick Roberts*	Sr.	5-10	215
DL:	Ethan McKaskey	Sr.	5-8	180
DL:	Ryan Zucker	Jr.	6-2	180
DL:	Liam Worthington	Sr.	6-3	200
LB:	Steven Degner*	Sr.	6-1	200
LB:	Triston O'Brien	Sr.	6-3	200
LB:	Nathan Slattery	Sr.	6-1	190
DB:	James Cipolla*	Jr.	6-1	165
DB:	Ryan Niska	Jr.	6-0	160
DB:	Andrew Ryan	Jr.	5-10	165
DB:	Matt Farrell*	Jr.	6-0	170
P:	Gianni Spetic*	So.	5-10	150

* - returning starter; Returning letterwinners: 30

Key reserves: Will Eppich, Jr., 5-8, 155, Tim Mamone, Jr., 6-2, 155, Mark Tomei, Jr., 5-10, 145, Ryan Callahan, So., 5-10, 180, Matt Urda, So., 5-10, 170, Luke Peroni, So., 6-0, 192.

Best bench press: Dominick Roberts 275 pounds

Best squat: Nathan Sieminski 475 pounds

— John Kampf

North » Rangers

Just the facts

Conference: WRC
Coach: Shawn Dodd, sixth year (18-33)
OHSAA: Division II, Region TBA
2019: 3-7
Twitter: @northrangers
Home field: Nick Carter Stadium

Outlook

The Rangers feature the biggest offensive line in The News-Herald area, and that's what North is going to hang its hat on this year. Senior Ethan Spoth (6-4, 315) is a Toledo commit and Ryan Baer (6-7, 320) has a slew of FBS offers to his name. They will anchor an offense that is run-based — obviously — with a lot of speed behind them. QB Chris Molica is fast and slippery. He's the key to the offense. Mo Morgan is a very good back as well. The Rangers should be able to run the ball and eventually wear teams down with their size. Defensively, five starters return, including senior linebacker Adam Kleinhenz who missed a chunk of last year with injuries. But there is a lot of inexperience on the line and at safety.

Player to watch

Even with the two big D-I college linemen on the team, the key to the Rangers is QB Chris Molica. The Rangers' offense calls for fakes, misdirection and running ability. Molica will be in charge of making decisions and big plays. Against teams that load up against the run, Molica will sprinkle in some passes.

Underclassman to watch: Junior Ryan Baer already has an impressive is of college offers, and more are going to continue to spill in. He's a physical machine at 6-7, 320, and also has that powerful nasty streak to overcome the opposition lined up across from him.

Bottom line

IF: The Rangers can move the ball effectively with the ground game, **THEN:** they are going to wear teams down and over-



TIM PHILLIS — FOR THE NEWS-HERALD

North's defense collapses on Kirtland's Nick Schwartz in an Aug. 21 scrimmage.

come them with their physicality

Schedule (subject to change)

Aug. 28: North at Chardon, 7
Sept. 4: University at North, 7
Sept. 11: Madison at North, 7
Sept. 17: North at Kenston, 7
Sept. 25: South at North, 7
Oct. 2: North at Riverside, 7

Projected lineup

OFFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
QB:	Chris Molica*	Sr.	5-8	160
RB:	Mo Morgan	Jr.	5-11	185
RB:	Donyea Ward	Sr.	5-8	160
RB:	Steven Cammack	Fr.	6-0	165
WR:	John Lanning*	Sr.	5-9	165
WR:	Zack Kozel	Sr.	5-9	160
LT:	Ryan Baer*	Jr.	6-7	320
LG:	Ethan Spoth*	Sr.	6-4	315
C:	Ryan Volk*	Sr.	6-3	280
RG:	Josh Barzal*	Sr.	5-9	280
RT:	Noah Shannon:	Sr.	5-11	200
K:	Ryan Volk*	Sr.	6-3	280



Baer

DEFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
DL:	Sean Pesci	Sr.	6-2	200
DL:	Sam Kingery	Sr.	5-9	190
DL:	Jayden Klym	Sr.	5-11	235
LB:	Adam Kleinhenz*	Sr.	6-0	215
LB:	Nate Stuck*	Sr.	5-11	175
LB:	Joey Skolny*	Sr.	5-11	175
LB:	Anthony Gallo	Jr.	5-10	190
CB:	Dom Marciante*	Jr.	5-8	150
CB:	Josh Lanning*	Sr.	5-9	165
S:	Curtis Thomas	So.	5-8	150
S:	Lorenzo Casaanova	Jr.	5-11	160
P:	Chris Molica	Sr.	5-8	160



Molica

* - returning starter; Returning letterwinners: 13

Key reserves: ReonTae Lowery, Fr., 5-8, 155, Sean Shanley, Sr., 6-1, 175, Alvin Mamaril, Sr., 5-8, 150, Collin Hasul, Jr., 6-3, 180.

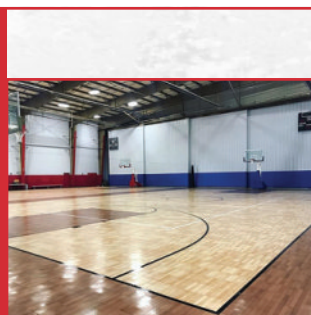
Best in the classroom: Scott Blatnik 4.48 GPA, 36 on ACT

Best bench press: Ryan Baer 400 pounds

Best squat: Ryan Baer 500 pounds

Best 40: Chris Molica 4.6 seconds

— John Kampf



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Perry » Pirates

Just the facts

Conference: CVC Chagrin

Coach: Matt Rosati, 14th year (106-42)

OHSAA: Division IV, Region TBA

2019: 12-1

Twitter: @PerryPirates

Home field: Alumni Stadium

Outlook

The Pirates graduated some record-setting players the last few years, but 23 letter-winners return this year and there's plenty of talent to make a deep playoff run like previous years. Key is freshman Brayden Richards, a first-year quarterback with a lot of promise. He'll have to grow up quickly. Having big-time college recruits like the Anderson brothers — senior Jaylen and junior Jadyann — helps a lot. But the entire receiving crew is new, as is 80 percent of the offensive line. The front seven on defense is fast, active and hard-hitting. Getting a good pass rush so as to take the pressure off the youthful secondary will be important. Kicker Calvin Rowan was automatic last year. That's a luxury the Pirates will enjoy this year again.

Player to watch

This is an easy one. Senior Jaylen Anderson is 6-foot, 220-pound highlight reel as a running back who can catch the ball out of the backfield. He has committed to West Virginia University. He's so talented, teams can defend him properly and he's still good enough to make a defender miss and take it to the house. A fun player to watch, unless you're the opposing team.

Underclassman to watch:

One of the few players in the area who might be able to get a good hit on Jaylen Anderson is his younger brother Jadyann.



Jay Anderson



Jad. Anderson

The 6-2, 220-pound junior tight end/linebacker is getting a lot of Division I looks and offers, too. Expect a big year from "Pops" on both sides of the ball this year.

Bottom line

IF: Young quarterback Brayden Richards gets good protection and grows up quickly, **THEN:** the Pirates offense is going to be tremendously scary again and a big playoff run is possible.

Schedule (subject to change)

Aug. 28: Edgewood at Perry, 7

Sept. 4: Perry at Harvey, 7

Sept. 11: Orange at Perry, 7

Sept. 17: Chagrin Falls at Perry, 7

Sept. 25: Perry at Lakeside, 7

Oct. 2: Perry at Geneva, 7

Projected lineup

OFFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
QB:	Brayden Richards	Fr.	5-11	165
RB:	Jaylen Anderson*	Sr.	6-0	220
RB:	Aidan Lefelhoc	Jr.	5-10	185
WR:	Brandon Mason	Sr.	5-10	170
WR:	Mateo Aguirre-Shaw	Sr.	6-0	170
TE:	Jadyann Anderson	Jr.	6-2	220
LT:	Evan Forro	Jr.	5-11	185
LG:	Jimmy Kailburn	Jr.	5-11	185
C:	Joey Conroy	Jr.	6-0	210
RG:	Jacob Marjak	Jr.	6-3	260
RT:	Seann Norman*	Sr.	6-0	230
K:	Calvin Rowan	So.	5-7	145

DEFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
DE:	Bryce Harper	Sr.	6-0	240
DE:	Jeffrey Harris*	Sr.	5-8	270
DT:	Tommy Jackson*	Sr.	6-2	235
LB:	Jadyann Anderson*	Jr.	6-2	220
LB:	Nathen Smith*	Sr.	5-11	185
LB:	Javin Richards*	Jr.	6-2	180
LB:	Colin Koenig	Sr.	5-9	170
DB:	Brock Sivon	Jr.	6-0	175
DB:	Desmond Malone	Jr.	6-2	175
DB:	Connor Zbrebnak	Jr.	6-0	175
DB:	Brian Cox	So.	6-0	180
P:	Brian Cox	So.	6-0	180

* — returning starter; Returning letterwinners: 23

Key reserves: Jayden Hacking, So., 5-10, 165, Anthony Schultz, Jr., 6-2, 265, Tyler Croyle, Jr., 6-0, 00, Layomi Sunmono, Sr., 6-2, 225

Best in the classroom: Blake Schubert, 4.13, GPA, Brandon Mason, 3.61, Layomi Sunmoni 3.56.

Best bench press: Jaylen Anderson 300 pounds

Best 40 time: Jaylen Anderson 4.51

Best squat: Bryce Harper 485 pounds

— John Kampf

Riverside » Beavers

Just the facts

Conference: WRC

Coach: Dave Bors, 11th year (51-52)

OHSAA: Division II, Region 5

2019: 4-6

Twitter: @_RHSFootball

Home field: Riverside Stadium

Outlook

Riverside comes off a 4-6 campaign but coach Dave Bors is anxious for the season to begin as any in his 11-year tenure leading the Beavers football program. Riverside returns a bevy of talent and experience from 2019, highlighted by quarterback Dom Lulow, lineman Alex Sigh and receiver/defensive back Matt Spofford. The Beavers have 10 starters back on offense, and eight on the defensive side of the ball. Two years removed from the school's first-ever playoff win, expectations are high for a group that could top that nine-win team's accomplishments.

Player to watch

Quarterback Dom Lulow racked up 1,534 passing yards and threw for 11 touchdowns as a junior, stepping in to replace the graduated Andrew Keller. Lulow filled the role well and should be one of the area's most dangerous players behind center in 2020. A dynamic quarterback, Lulow will begin the year as one to watch in the chase for The News-Herald's Tony Fisher Award, annually presented to the area's football player of the year.

Underclassman to watch:

Nick Messenger started on Riverside's offensive line as a sophomore and will take on a starting defensive role in 2020, as well. At 6-foot-2, 265 pounds, Messenger is among many big

bodies the Beavers will count on to protect Lulow and pave the way for Riverside's ground game. The average height and weight listed for the Beavers' projected starting line measures 6-foot-3 and 258 pounds.

Bottom line

IF: Riverside's experience and talent delivered on its potential; **THEN:** the Beavers have the tools to put together one of their all-time best seasons on the gridiron.

Schedule

Aug. 28: South at Riverside, 7

Sept. 4: Riverside at Mayfield, 7

Sept. 11: Walsh Jesuit at Riverside, 7

Sept. 18: Chardon at Riverside, 7

Sept. 25: Riverside at Madison, 7

Oct. 2: Riverside at North, 7

Projected lineup

OFFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
QB:	Dom Lulow*	Sr.	5-8	175
WR:	Jamir Francis*	Sr.	6-2	190
WR:	Matt Spofford*	Sr.	6-3	205
WR:	Kaden Tinner*	Sr.	5-10	165
WR:	James Bruno*	Sr.	5-10	185
RB:	Caymen Locher*	Sr.	5-10	205
LT:	Matt Watson	Sr.	6-3	270
LG:	Ryan Hafer	Sr.	6-0	220
C:	Dylan Yowell*	Sr.	6-5	285
RG:	Nick Messenger*	Jr.	6-2	265
RT:	Alex Sigh*	Sr.	6-4	250
K:	Luke Griffith*	Jr.	5-10	185

DEFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
DL:	Alex Sigh*	Sr.	6-4	250
DL:	Nick Messenger	Jr.	6-2	265
DL:	Matt Watson*	Sr.	6-3	270
LB:	Nick Tekavic*	Sr.	5-11	185
LB:	Henry Busch	Jr.	5-11	185
LB:	Dom Tromba	Jr.	6-0	195
LB:	Wyatt Wunderle	Jr.	6-2	230
DB:	Matt Spofford*	Sr.	6-3	205
DB:	Jamir Francis*	Sr.	6-2	190
DB:	Kaden Tinner*	Sr.	5-10	165
DB:	Mason Stephens*	Sr.	5-11	170
P:	Dom Lulow*	Sr.	5-8	175

* — returning starter

Key reserves: Landon Purdef, Sr., 6-0, 155, Ryan Hafer, Sr., 6-0, 220, Ryan Becker, Sr., 5-9, 165

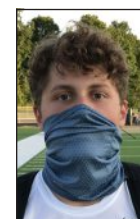
Best bench press: Matt Watson, 305 pounds

Best squat: Matt Watson, 475 pounds

Best 40 time: Matt Spofford, 4.56 seconds

Total returning lettermen: 24

— Nate Barnes



Lulow



Messenger



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South » Rebels

Just the facts

Conference: WRC

Coach: Matt Duffy

OHSAA: Division II, Region TBA

2019: 6-5

Twitter: @southathletics

Home field: Harry E. Winters Stadium

Outlook

The Rebels are young, with only three seniors in the starting lineup, but they are also experienced, with 34 letterwinners returning. That means South played a TON of sophomores a year ago when it finished 6-4 and qualified for the Division II playoffs. Sophomore Colin Quinlan gets the nod at QB this season. He has a hammer of a running back lining up behind him in Ira Sampson. Teams will key on the 6-foot, 220-pound junior, which could/should open the passing game. Vince D'Eusanio is the lone returning receiver, but it's a solid group of pass-catchers. On defense, the front three all return, as does Sampson at linebacker. The rest are new starters, so the back end might get tested early and often this year. A pass rush will be important. It's a fast and tough team with a lot of depth. A very high-ceiling, young team.

Player to watch

Ira Sampson is only a junior, but he's one of the most versatile and best two-way players in the area. The 6-foot, 220-pounder will be the bellcow back in South's offense, while also being a ball-hawking linebacker on defense.

Underclassman to watch: Junior Dom Vittori isn't the biggest dude in the trenches, but he'll be among the most tenacious. At 5-11, 205, he will start at left tackle and nose guard, just like he did last year as a sophomore.

Bottom line

IF: the Rebels' young QB and receivers produce and take some of the focus off of Sampson running, **THEN:** South is going to be a very dangerous offensive team this year.



DAVID C TURBEN — FOR THE NEWS-HERALD

Ira Sampson runs the ball for South against Madison last season.

Schedule (subject to change)

Aug. 28: South at Riverside, 7

Sept. 4: South at Chardon, 7

Sept. 11: Mayfield at South, 7

Sept. 18: Madison at South, 7

Sept. 25: South at North, 7

Oct. 2: Kenston at South, 7

Projected lineup

OFFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
QB:	Colin Quinlan	So.	6-0	180
RB:	Ira Sampson*	Jr.	6-0	220
WR:	Tyrone Singleton	So.	5-9	160
WR:	Carson VonSeggern	Jr.	6-0	175
WR:	Vince D'Eusanio*	Sr.	6-1	20
WR:	David McClain	Jr.	5-10	160
LT:	Dom Vittori*	Jr.	5-11	205
LG:	Alec Vittori	Jr.	5-11	200
C:	Michael Pushey	Sr.	5-9	245
RG:	Alex Azre	So.	6-1	260
RT:	Jack Barnoski	Sr.	6-2	250
K:	Sam Patrizi*	Jr.	6-0	180



Sampson

DEFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
DE:	Treviion Barrow*	Jr.	5-11	195
DE:	Vince D'Eusanio*	Sr.	6-1	220
NG:	Dom Vittori*	Jr.	5-11	205
LB:	Ira Sampson*	Jr.	6-0	220
LB:	Daevon Holsey	Jr.	6-0	180
LB:	Alec Vittori	Jr.	5-11	200
LB:	Jayden Searcy	Jr.	5-10	190
DB:	Ryan Dondrea	Jr.	6-0	175
DB:	David McClain	Jr.	5-10	160
DB:	Bryce Figler	So.	5-11	170
DB:	A.J. Hanslik	Jr.	5-10	160
P:	Tom Funk	Jr.	6-0	175



Vittori

* — returning starter; Returning letterwinners: 34

Key reserves: Mamadou Sy, Jr., 5-10, 180, Tyrone Singleton, So., 5-9, 160

Best in the classroom: Jack Barnoski 4.5, Michael Pushey 4.27, Dom Vittori 4.35, Sam Patrizi 4.24

Best bench press: Michael Pushey 330 pounds

Best squat: Michael Pushey 440 pounds

Best 40: Daevon Holsey 4.56 seconds

— John Kampf

University » Preppers

Just the facts

Conference: Independent

OHSAA: Division II, Region TBA

Coach: Ben Malbasa, sixth year (32-21)

2019: 6-4

Twitter: @USFootball1890

Home field: Scovil Field

Outlook

The offense will be guided by senior QB Solomon Perez, whose persistence to gain the starting nod has inspired. So many new starters in the receiving corps is unusual for US, but that group perennially finds a way to step up. LT Karson Baldwin will be an anchor for a fairly young line. The defense is paced by a trio of senior playmakers in Khari Tidmore, who shifts to DL from LB, and LBs Bobby Ware (eight TFLs in 2019) and Jack Novak (seven TFLs). Enthusiasm is evident, as a new-look group seeks to establish its own identity in Hunting Valley.

Player to watch

Nick Flowers, a 6-foot, 175-pound senior, is a multi-sport standout for US, a third-team News-Herald all-star forward in hockey (13-15-28 in 2019-20). He was productive as a junior on the gridiron, with 556 rushing yards and 13 TDs. An ascent as the lead back would go a long way in bringing more scope to the US offense.

Underclassman to watch:

Coach Ben Malbasa is bullish on junior RT Gianfranco Calabrese (6-0, 195). Malbasa loves his motor and toughness as a physical performer on the line.

Bottom line

IF: US' underclassmen can rise to the



FRANK GAMBATESE — FOR THE NEWS-HERALD

University left tackle Karson Baldwin lines up during a 2019 game at South.

challenge to complement a talented senior class; **THEN:** an over-.500 campaign and chance to be a playoff threat is doable.

Schedule

Aug. 28: Mogadore at University, 5

Sept. 4: Open

Sept. 11: Lutheran East at University, 5

Sept. 17: University at Lake Catholic, 7

Sept. 25: NDCL at University, 4:45

Oct. 3: Gilmore at University, 2

Projected lineup

OFFENSE

Position: Name, Year, Ht., Wt.

QB: Solomon Perez, Sr., 5-8, 165

RB: Nick Flowers*, Sr., 6-0, 175

WR: Bryce Hodge, Jr., 6-1, 170

WR: Jacob Sands, Sr., 6-0, 160

WR: Cooper Mlakar, So., 5-9, 160

TE: Joey Valerio*, Jr., 6-4, 195

LT: Karson Baldwin*, Sr., 6-2, 220

LG: Gavin Ippolito, So., 6-0, 235

C: Jake Mlakar*, Sr., 5-9, 185

RG: Lex Kekic, Fr., 6-0, 205

RT: Gianfranco Calabrese*, Jr., 6-0, 195

K: Evan Weybrecht*, Jr., 5-7, 140



Tidmore

DEFENSE

Position: Name, Year, Ht., Wt.

DL: Mitch Ramage, Jr., 5-11, 180

DL: Sammy Martin, So., 6-0, 180

DL: Khari Tidmore*, Sr., 5-11, 200

DL: Alex Radwancky*, Sr., 6-0, 185

OLB: Alex Weinberg, Jr., 5-10, 170

LB: Jack Novak*, Sr., 5-10, 175

LB: Math Bossick*, Sr., 5-9, 170

OLB: Bobby Ware*, Sr., 6-0, 165

CB: Sam Henry, Jr., 5-11, 155

CB: Javan Cobb, Jr., 5-8, 150

S: George von Zedlitz*, Sr., 5-11, 160

S: Ryan Pattison*, So., 5-11, 160

P: Sean Kerwood, So., 5-9, 145

* — returning starter

Key reserves: Brian Kellon, So., 6-1, 175, Quint Hanna, Jr., 5-8, 160, A.J. Battle, Sr., 6-2, 170

Best in the classroom: Karson Baldwin, 4.02 GPA



Perez

— Chris Lillstrung

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VASJ » Vikings

Just the facts

Conference: Independent
Coach: Elvis Grbac, second year (6-4)
OHSAA: Division IV, Region 13
2019: 6-4
Twitter: @VASJVikingsAD
Home field: Sparky DiBiasio Stadium

Outlook

Elvis Grbac returned to Villa Angela-St. Joseph ahead of the 2019 season and the excitement he brought back to the program translated to the field. The Vikings went 6-4, which marked their first season above .500 since 2015. Good vibes will continue to emanate at VASJ as Grbac's second year will also bring a return to the playoffs, a welcome achievement regardless of circumstance. Numbers have already nearly doubled, with the Vikings' roster checking in with roughly 30 players last year compared to almost 70 in the program in 2020. VASJ returns 10 starters on each side of the ball and the Vikings are primed to continue their development.

Player to watch

Kevin Eiseman joined the program as a junior and ultimately won the starting quarterback job out of camp. Eiseman proceeded to throw for 2,241 yards and 26 touchdowns while scoring another five on the ground. With a full year working under Grbac's tutelage and the addition of offensive coordinator Russ Jacques to the staff, Eiseman should be one of the top signal-callers in Northeast Ohio. He looks the part at 6-foot-4, with a strong arm capable of making all the necessary throws. He has a solid group of skill players to distribute the ball to, highlighted by 6-foot-3 senior Jordan Dean.

Underclassman to watch: Noah Clarke earned a starting job as a sophomore and is a playmaker on both sides of the ball for the Vikings. He's a weapon for Eiseman in



Eiseman

the passing game, as a solid route runner who's reliable over the middle of the field and able to make highlight-reel plays on the outside. Clarke makes an impact in all three facets, as a defensive back and punt returner. He's quiet, but is a hard-working player respected by his teammates and provides leadership.

Bottom line

IF: the Vikings continue their growth from the 2019 season; **THEN:** VASJ will have a chance to compete for one of the higher seeds in its region.

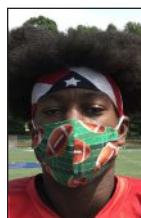
Schedule

Aug. 28: VASJ at Garrettsville, 7
Sept. 5: Lake Catholic at VASJ, 2:30
Sept. 11: VASJ at Chagrin Falls, 7
Sept. 19: Walsh Jesuit at VASJ, 2:30
Sept. 25: VASJ at Padua, 7
Oct. 2: VASJ at NDCL, 7

Projected lineup

OFFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
QB:	Kevin Eiseman*	Sr.	6-4	185
WR:	Jordan Dean*	Sr.	6-3	165
WR:	Noah Clarke*	Jr.	5-10	175
WR:	Andre Terry III*	Jr.	5-10	160
RB:	LaVelle Smith*	Sr.	5-9	185
RB:	Nicholas McClinton*	Sr.	5-0	180
LT:	Jamal Hill*	Sr.	6-0	225
LG:	Isaac Bonner*	Jr.	5-8	210
C:	Eddie Marxen*	Sr.	5-11	210
RG:	Josh Longstreet	Sr.	5-9	205
RT:	Leon Wiley*	Jr.	6-1	255
K:	Apollo Percic*	So.	6-0	160



Clarke

DEFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
DL:	Leon Wiley*	Jr.	6-1	255
DL:	Josh Longstreet	Sr.	5-9	205
DE:	Isaac Bonner*	Jr.	5-8	210
DE:	Nicholas McClinton*	Sr.	5-9	180
LB:	LaVelle Smith*	Sr.	5-9	185
LB:	Jamal Hill*	Sr.	6-0	225
LB:	Eddie Marxen*	Sr.	5-11	210
LB:	Mike Williams	Jr.	5-11	190
CB:	Jordan Dean*	Sr.	6-3	165
CB:	Noah Clarke*	Jr.	5-10	175
CB:	Andre Terry III*	Jr.	5-10	175



Dean

* — returning starter

Key reserves: Vasilius Capouzzo, Sr., 5-10, 165
Best in the classroom: Paul Paciorek, 4.49 GPA, Vasilius Capouzzo, 4.05 GPA, Jord
Best bench press: Jamal Hill, 305 pounds
Best squat: Jamal Hill, 490 pounds
Best 40 time: Jordan Dean, 4.4 seconds

— Nate Barnes

West Geauga » Wolverines

Just the facts

Conference: CVC Chagrin
OHSAA: Division IV, Region TBA
Coach: Adam Sopkovich, third year (9-11)
2019: 5-5
Twitter: @WestGFootball
Home field: Howell Field

Outlook

West G overcame a winless nonconference start with a 5-2 closing stretch in 2019. Obviously with a shortened schedule, the margin for error is not as high, but the pieces are in place to impress. The Wolverines will work in a new QB in Danny Stewart. But having Trae Zimmermann and the entire WR corps back in the fold, including speedster Nick Henry, will aid that cause. Seven two-way starters is unusually high for this program, but West G is always a lunch pail group that will put in the work to render that moot.

Player to watch

RB-SS Trae Zimmermann, a 6-foot-1, 175-pound senior, was limited to six games last fall due to a torn ACL, after rushing for 786 yards and 12 TDs. Coach Adam Sopkovich had initial concern about Zimmermann's explosiveness coming off a major knee injury, but that has been alleviated with a laudable display thus far.

Underclassmen to watch: LT Luca Gasbarrino (6-2, 240) and RT-MLB Luke Sadler (6-4, 250) are highly touted juniors already garnering college interest. Sadler should be an imposing force with that notable MLB size.

Bottom line

IF: a new-look defense can rise to the occasion to complement an offense that could be potent; **THEN:** the Wolverines could turn heads in an abbreviated campaign.



CARRIE GARLAND — FOR THE NEWS-HERALD

West Geauga's Trae Zimmermann carries the ball against NDCL during a 2019 game.

Schedule (subject to change)

Aug. 28: West Geauga at Lakeside, 7
Sept. 4: West Geauga at Conneaut, 7
Sept. 11: Geneva at West Geauga, 7
Sept. 17: Harvey at West Geauga, 7
Sept. 25: Edgewood at West Geauga, 7
Oct. 2: West Geauga at Chagrin Falls, 7

Projected lineup

OFFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
QB:	Danny Stewart	Jr.	5-8	165
RB:	Trae Zimmermann*	Sr.	6-1	175
RB:	Pete Senelli*	Sr.	6-0	185
WR:	Torry Stazzone*	Jr.	6-1	165
WR:	Nick Henry*	Sr.	5-10	160
WR:	Luca Musser*	Sr.	6-1	175
LT:	Luca Gasbarrino*	Jr.	6-2	240
LG:	Ben Navitski	Sr.	6-3	215
C:	Nate Myers	Jr.	6-1	205
RG:	Scott Purchase	So.	6-3	240
RT:	Luke Sadler*	Jr.	6-4	250
K:	Joey DiLalla*	Jr.	5-10	170



Sadler

DEFENSE

Position:	Name	Year	Ht.	Wt.
DE:	Nate Myers	Jr.	6-1	205
DT:	Markos Leonard*	Sr.	5-11	190
DT:	Luke Reed	Sr.	6-1	215
DE:	Ben Weiss	Sr.	6-1	185
LB:	Harrison Wolfhope	Sr.	6-2	180
LB:	Luke Sadler	Jr.	6-4	250
LB:	Pete Senelli*	Sr.	6-0	185
CB:	Torry Stazzone*	Jr.	6-1	165
CB:	Nick Henry	Sr.	5-10	160
FS:	Luca Musser*	Sr.	6-1	175
SS:	Trae Zimmermann*	Sr.	6-1	175



Gasbarrino

* — returning starter

Key reserves: RB Burke Buell, So., 5-11, 180, WR Michael Cavasinni*, Jr., 5-6, 160, DE Gabriel Allen, Sr., 6-2, 175, CB-S Chris Ranallo, Jr., 5-9, 155, S Dillon Mikulski*, Sr., 6-1, 165
Best bench press: Luke Sadler, 255 pounds
Best 40 time: Nick Henry, 4.47 seconds
Best squat: Luke Sadler, 450 pounds

— Chris Lillstrung



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Wickliffe » Blue Devils

Just the facts

Conference: CVC Valley

Coach: Marce Porcello, 10th year (46-48)

OHSAA: Division VI, Region 21

2019: 6-4

Twitter: @wicklifefb

Home field: Memorial Stadium

Outlook

Excitement for the 2020 season runs high within Wickliffe, where the Blue Devils anticipate a legacy-defining season from a deep, talented senior class. Chase Fortkamp headlines coach Marce Porcello's team but many of those in Wickliffe's lineup have held starting roles since their freshman seasons. Mason Bala is taking over quarterback duties after he rushed for 734 yards and scored 10 touchdowns on 111 carries last season. Isaiah Bolon also returns to the backfield, where he averaged almost nine yards per carry last season. In total, Wickliffe brings back starters at every position but one on offense and two on defense.

Player to watch

Chase Fortkamp has started for the Blue Devils since his freshman year and he's one of the area's top two-way impact players. As a junior, Fortkamp carried for 1,043 yards and 18 touchdowns on 132 attempts and was a defensive force a linebacker, too. He holds offers from Kent State and Army. Wickliffe has weapons around him, but Fortkamp is the type of talent that can single-handedly change a game.



Fortkamp



Gargiulo

Underclassman to watch:

Sophomore Vince Gargiulo saw the field as a freshman and will take on a prominent role in 2020. He slides into the running back position vacated by Bala, the new

starting quarterback, and he'll have opportunities to shine in Wickliffe's run-heavy offense. The only underclassmen listed in the projected starting lineup on offense, Gargiulo is the heir apparent to become the next high-caliber running back in Porcello's program.

Bottom line

IF: Wickliffe stays healthy and its talented senior class plays up to its ability; **THEN:** the Blue Devils will have a chance to make a deep run in the post-season.

Schedule (subject to change)

Aug. 28: Wickliffe at Lutheran West, 7

Sept. 4: Wickliffe at Trinity, 7

Sept. 11: Cuyahoga Heights at Wickliffe, 7

Sept. 18: Orange at Wickliffe

Sept. 25: Wickliffe at Independence, 7

Oct. 2: Lutheran East at Wickliffe, 7

Projected lineup

OFFENSE

Position: Name, Year, Ht., Wt.

QB: Mason Bala*, Sr., 6-0, 180

RB: Chase Fortkamp*, Sr., 6-3, 220

RB: Isaiah Bolon*, Sr., 6-1, 195

RB: Vince Gargiulo, So., 5-9, 165

WR: Donell Jackson*, Sr., 5-9, 190

WR: Danny Byrne*, Sr., 6-4, 190

LT: Steve Kulchock*, Sr., 6-0, 250

LG: Mikey Moon*, Sr., 6-0, 225

C: Donovan Liuzzo*, Sr., 6-0, 245

RG: Zak Esteves*, Sr., 6-1, 200

RT: Tyler Fisher*, Sr., 6-0, 220

K: Isaiah Bolon*, Sr., 6-1, 195

DEFENSE

Position: Name, Year, Ht., Wt.

DL: Tyler Fisher*, Sr., 6-0, 220

DL: Zak Esteves*, Sr., 6-1, 200

DL: Thomas Wenz, Jr., 6-2, 220

LB: Jack Bunn*, Sr., 6-5, 230

LB: Chase Fortkamp*, Sr., 6-3, 220

LB: Mikey Moon*, Sr., 6-0, 225

LB: Isaiah Bolon*, Sr., 6-1, 195

LB: Mario Cefaratti, Sr., 5-8, 165

CB: Duke Stanczak*, Sr., 6-3, 180

CB: Donell Jackson*, Sr., 5-9, 190

FS: Mason Bala*, Sr., 6-0, 180

P: Isaiah Bolon*, Sr., 6-1, 195

* — returning starter

Key reserves: Jacob Lewis, Sr., 5-5, 125

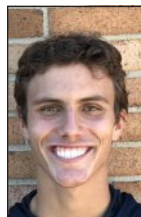
Best in the classroom: Mikey Moon, 4.366 GPA

Best bench press: Tyler Fisher, 375 pounds

Best squat: Mikey Moon, 525 pounds

Best 40 time: Chase Fortkamp, 4.51 seconds

— Nate Barnes



Bala



Moon

HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL

Masked Marvel predicts year of dominance in Way We See 'Em

Staff report

There has been a lot of upheaval and uncertainty this year, but one thing remains constant: The Masked Marvel, Northeast Ohio's affluent and mysterious prognosticator of high school football games is as confident as ever in his abilities to predict the outcomes of area games.

"Six-game season, 10-game season ... It makes no difference to yours truly," the Marvelous One said when reached at his palatial estate this week. "The Masked Marvel is going to outpace The News-Herald sports staff and reclaim his rightful spot atop the mountain in the Way We See 'Em weekly picks."

It has been more than a decade since the Masked Marvel took the crown in the See 'Ems. Last season, he finished 195-47 in 2019, good for a tie for third place.

Still, the Marvel said he's ready for 2020, having spent his social distancing time poring over stats, scouting reports and game film to identify the area's best teams.

He wrapped up his annual phone call with The News-Herald with a parting message: Even if you can't be as independently wealthy with a palatial estate and your own tailored suits from Michael's of Kansas City, it's still a smart play to follow in the Marvel's footsteps by sporting his favorite accessory when you venture out from home, he said.



Masked Marvel

"Take it from someone who knows: Wearing a mask is a marvelous idea," he said. "Let's be smart out there and do our part to make this season happen."

WAY WE SEE 'EM HISTORY

2019: Howard Primer 202-40, John Kampf -2, Mark Podolski -7, Masked Marvel -7, Jay Kron -9, Chris Lillstrung -10, Nate Barnes -20

2018: Howard Primer 192-50, Chris Lillstrung, Mark Podolski, Jay Kron -1, John Kampf, Nate Barnes, Masked Marvel -3

2017: Jay Kron 197-42, Howard Primer -6, Chris Lillstrung -7, John Kampf -8, Mark Podolski -12, Masked Marvel -14, Nate Barnes -18

2016: John Kampf 177-47, Howard Primer -6, Chris Lillstrung -7, Nate Barnes -9, Masked Marvel -9, Jay Kron -9, Mark Podolski -10

2015: Howard Primer 186-44, Jay Kron -6, John Kampf -7, Alex Hooper -9, Masked Marvel -11, Justin Lada -12, Chris Lillstrung -14, Mark Podolski -19

2014: Howard Primer 201-47, Chris Lillstrung -1, John Kampf -4, Jay Kron -6, Alex Hooper -9, Justin Lada -12, Masked Marvel -14, Mark Podolski -16

2013: Guy Cipriano 200-46, Howard Primer -1, Jay Kron -3, Chris Lillstrung -5, John Kampf -6, Mark Podolski -11, Cory Schuett -12, Masked Marvel -13, Theresa Neuhoff Audia -20

2012: Chris Lillstrung 195-47, Howard Primer -3, John Kampf -4, Masked Marvel -5, Cory Schuett -7, Theresa Neuhoff Audia -8, Mark Podolski -9

2011: Theresa Neuhoff Audia 205-37, Howard Primer -4 games, Bill Tilton -6, John Kampf -10, Chris Lillstrung -12, Masked Marvel -14, Mark Podolski -16

2010: Masked Marvel 204-37, Howard Primer -7 games, Theresa Neuhoff Audia -10, Chris Lillstrung -10, Bill Tilton -11, John Kampf -12, Mark Podolski -24

2009: Howard Primer 191-42, John Kampf -1 game, Chris Lillstrung -2, Masked Marvel -6, Bill Tilton -15, Theresa Neuhoff Audia -17, Mark Podolski -17

2008: Masked Marvel 191-42, John Kampf -3, Howard Primer -7, Theresa Neuhoff Audia -9, Bill Tilton -9, Chris Lillstrung -12, Mark Podolski -18

2007: John Kampf 185-54, Howard Primer -1 game, Tom Valentino -2, Chris Lillstrung -6, Bill Tilton -6, Masked Marvel -13, Mark Podolski -14

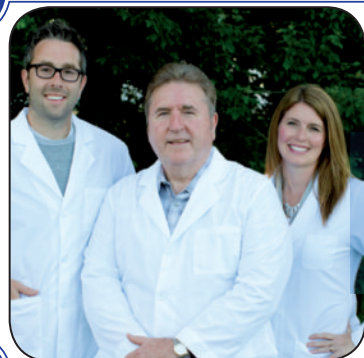
2006: Howard Primer 209-49, John Kampf -3 games, Bill Tilton -8, Tom Valentino -9, Chris Lillstrung -16, Masked Marvel -23, Mark Podolski -29

2005: Howard Primer 203-52, John Kampf -3 games, Chris Lillstrung -3, Bill Tilton -5, Tom Valentino -8, Masked Marvel -13, Mark Podolski -14

2004: Howard Primer 210-46, John Kampf -1 game, Mark Koestner -3, Scott Kendrick -5, Bill Tilton -10, Chris Lillstrung -11, Masked Marvel -22

2003: Mark Koestner, John Kampf 200-54, Bill Tilton -2 games, Chris Lillstrung -5, Scott Kendrick -10, Masked Marvel -15, Mark Podolski -20

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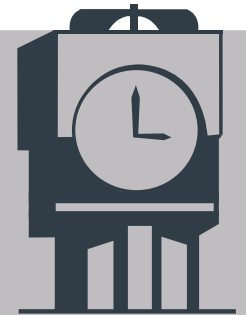
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