

FALL SPORTS PREVIEW

Huskies

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Huskies sure have some big boys up front. And with their style of offense that's not a bad thing.

David Yoder is the lone returning starter from a season ago. The 6-4, 300 pounder will hold down the fort with 280-pound left tackle Phil Rearick. So it wouldn't be a surprise if Mifflin County favors the left side.

Also a problem at that position is depth.

"Right now we have a lot of upperclassmen on the offensive line," Miskinis said. "But we don't really have to many underclassmen to turn to."

Mifflin County will be without standout wide receiver and defensive back Harry Lowber. Lowber had the chance to break any run for a score. The Husky speedster averaged 9.2 yards per carry and scored 14 touchdowns. On defense, Lowber shined — recording

eight interceptions — including two that came in Mifflin County's debut at West Perry.

Also gone in the backfield is David Yale. Yale was Mifflin County's leading rusher despite starting the season injured. He edged out Lowber with 765 yards and also scored 14 touchdowns.

Filling the void with experience will be Tim Beck and Michael Presha. Each of those two backs saw some time last season due to a few injuries to Lowber and Yale.

The defensive losses that Mifflin County will face start with inside linebacker Tyson Searer. Searer was Mifflin County's top defender a year ago. He finished the season with 62 total stops (41 solo).

Everyone knows defense starts with the linebacking corps. Just ask Ted Roof up at Penn State. Mifflin County has only one returner at the position: senior David Monsell. But Monsell was a defensive end last season. Dylan Kauffman will be another starter.

Miskinis knows how this

group progresses will be a sure indication of how the defense will fare against teams like Central Dauphin and Cumberland Valley.

And for teams like that to throw the ball against Mifflin County, they'll have to have time in the pocket.

"Mason Sweitzer, Jesse Rogers and Derek Specht should be able to do that for us," Miskinis said. "There's three kids with experience."

There's no doubt this is a new era for Mifflin County football. Obviously last year had its own headlines, but this season, the Huskies have a chance to make their mark.

With defending state champion Central Dauphin on their schedule, there are no breaks once the season kicks off Friday. But one thing is for sure, the town and the team is ready for battle.

"I really think it's going to be a fun year," Miskinis said. "We just need the support. Some people are saying, 'Really? How are you going to compete with them?'"

"Well, we're going to compete with them."

Trojans

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There's a lot of enthusiasm on the team, and Wertz says that has been evident throughout practice.

"The kids have stayed together and it seems like they have good attitudes, so we're excited about that," he said.

In addition to a great attitude, the team is also fast and athletic — a combination which would make any coach glad.

"We have a little bit of speed this year. And we're athletic. Even across the line we're athletic," Wertz said. "A lot of teams have big lines, but it seems like we're athletic across the line. And that could be a big strength for us."

After losing some strong

players to graduation last year, Mount Union has some spots to fill, but Wertz doesn't seem to think that should be a problem.

"There's five guys who graduated last year that played key roles. Running back, quarterback, tight end, and a couple linemen that we're going to miss," Wertz said. "But I honestly don't think that they're irreplaceable. So we'll just have to have these other guys step up."

Mount Union is in the Inter-County Conference, and Wertz expects that Bellwood and Northern Bedford, two teams that are traditionally strong, will be tough competitors. But so far Wertz's focus seems more directed towards his own team's strengths, rather than on the competition.

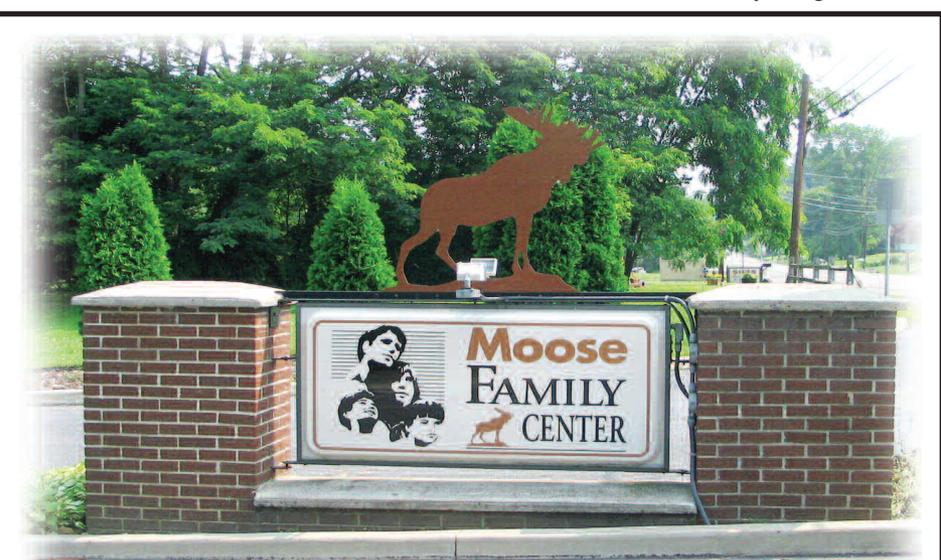
One of these strengths in particular that Wertz pointed out was the fact that there's a pretty even spread of talent across the team.

"Some teams have three or four players that you know are going to stand out every game," Wertz said. "But what I think with this team is that we have 11 guys that are going to play together, whereas no one or two people are going to stand out. I think that's a strength."

As the season approaches, Wertz looks forward to seeing what his team will do. In particular, he thinks that his seniors will be expecting a lot from the season.

"They know what it's like to win, and they expect to win at this level too," he said.

Time will only tell if this expectation will turn into reality.



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BINGO!

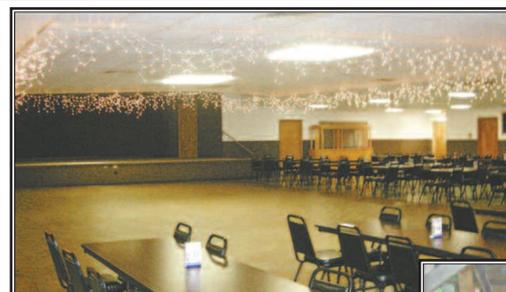
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