MIFFLIN COUNTY FOOTBALL

Reducing turnovers key to Huskies' turnaround

By **BRIAN CARSON**
Sentinel correspondent

LEWISTOWN – You can forgive Mifflin County football coach George Miskinis if he developed a severe case of numerophobia – – the fear of certain numbers, during the offseason.

Specifically, minus-22.

That number was the Huskies' turnover differential during the 2012 season and it was the main reason for a 4-6 finish and a missed opportunity at a Districts 6-9 Class AAAA playoff berth.

As Mifflin County faces year two in the Mid-Penn Conference – where they went 2-5 last season – Miskinis knows his squad must cut down on the turnovers if the Huskies want to experience playoff bliss in 2013.

"We need to improve the way we finish games. We feel if we cut down on turnovers we can actually have a very successful season," Miskinis said. "Last year we were minus-22 in turnovers and 11 came in the last two games. We had five against State College and six against Chambersburg when we entered those games with a 4-4 record.

"The turnover margin is a big difference because we really didn't have anybody consistently drive the ball on us. We feel good about what we can do. The idea is to play good on special teams, not give up the explosive plays and keep on improving. If we get a one percent improvement every day in practice then we are getting better."

The offense lost quarterback Shane Whalen and three key lineman, but Miskinis believes he has the people needed to fill the gaps left by the departed seniors.

"The key players who are gone are the guys who played multiple positions for us last year. Those seniors really had an impact on our team. Up front on the offensive line we're going to miss three of our starters; Dakota Smeltz at center; the big guy (Derek) Yoder at tackle and of course guard Caleb Rhodes," Miskinis remarked. "We will miss

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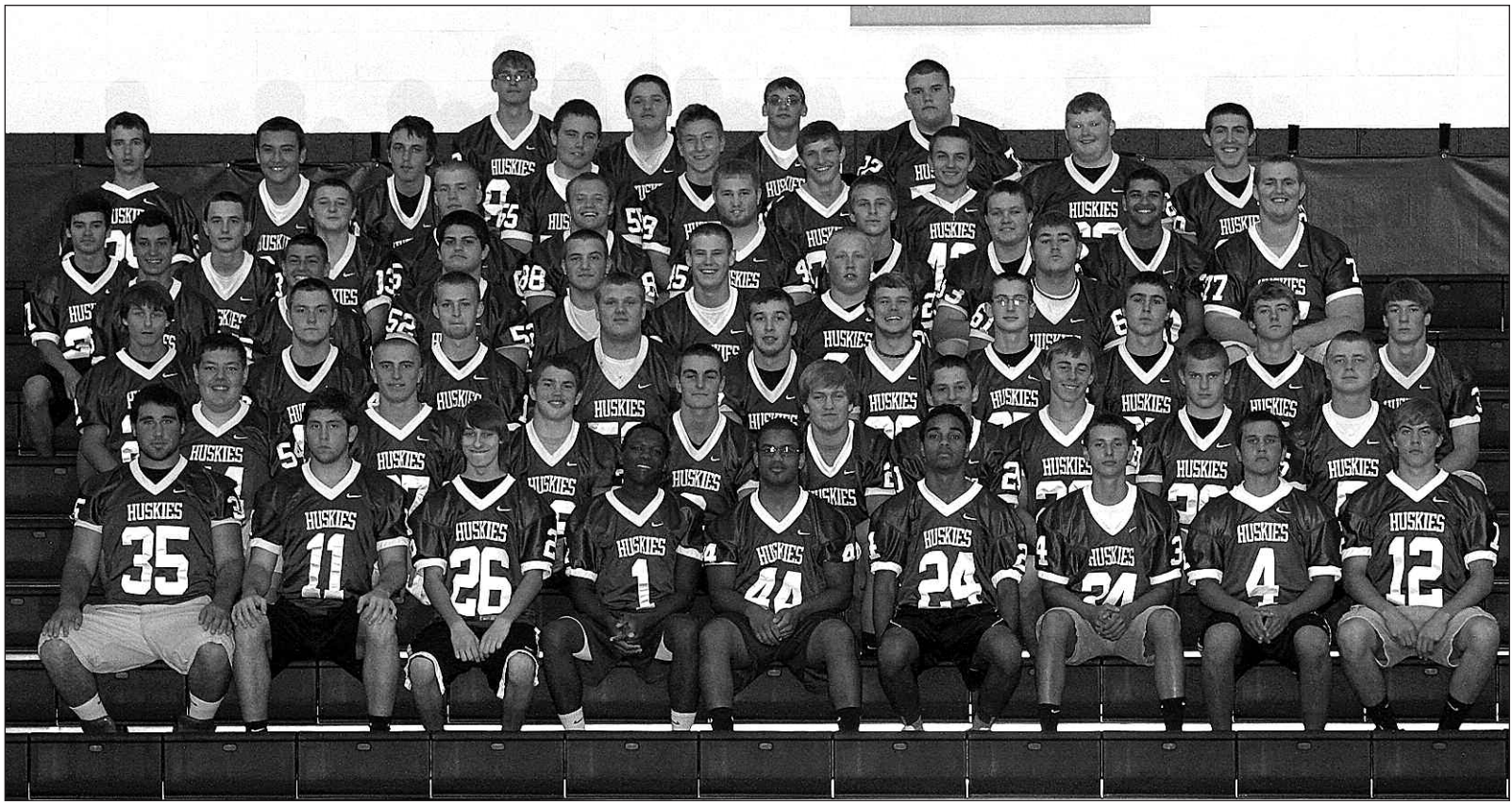

Sentinel photo by MATT STRICKER

Members of the Mifflin County football team are, from left, front, Kyle Kahley, Curtis Jerzerick, Hunter Deavor, Jason Ciccolini, Kahlyl Carrington, Kyle Bodtorf, Campbell Miller, Evan Dudick and Isaac Strohecker; second row, Zack Zimmerman, Jared Michaels, Daniel Miller, Christian Smith, Trey Hartsock, Brandon Boyd, Chase Pittsa, Carter Saxton and Heath Hidlay; third row, Brenden Spickler, Caleb Smith, Andrew Traxler, Jesse Rodgers, Brice Christine, Kieth Corson, Derrick Kepner, John Michael Maclay, Hunter Walker and Gage Reeseman; fourth row, Dylan Dietz, Gage Capouillez, Kyle Bargo, Christian Hagans, Jodon Boyer, Blake Yale and Colton Craig; fifth row, Jakob Stine, Nathan Earnest, Austin Snook, Nathan Loudenslager, Colton Coppenhaver, Jared Pennepacker, Dalton Hildebrandt, Barron Vogt, Sam White and Matt Wagoner; sixth row, David Galbraith, Derrick Fellows, Jayson Sheaffer, Phillip Rearick, Cody Fryer, Austin Emel, Zach Dolin, Ryan Marshall and Brandon Phillips; seventh row, Will Duncan, Matt Lash, Garrett Walters and Lane Kuhns.

AT A GLANCE

MIFFLIN COUNTY
HUSKIES
District 6, Class AAAA

Coach: George Miskinis, assisted by Al Hepner, Bob Douglas, Brian Rodgers, Steve Himes, Seth O'Donnell, J.B. Baker, Jerry Schnell, Brian Heckert, Chip Yoder, Ray Klinger Jr., Jim Drayer, Vince Inzirello and Jeff Weikel.

2012: 4-6, 2-5 Mid-Penn Commonwealth Division

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