

Mountaineer Newsletter

September 2023

Vol. 1

Ephrata Football Fans,

The 2023 season is off to a great start for your Mountaineers. The Mounts currently sit at 4-0 for the first time since 1995. The team continues to strive to live by our "Win All Day" motto by focusing on improving themselves on the field, in the classroom, and in the community. We are hoping that this newsletter will keep you updated on the happenings around the Mountaineer football program. Our program is blessed to have the support of an outstanding District Administration, the Ephrata Gridiron Club, our Parent Booster Club, student body, and the entire Ephrata community. I would like to thank Ethan Brinser for the efforts he has put in as the Sports Marketing Intern for our football program. He has done an excellent job putting together this newsletter and has improved our social media presence. We hope that you are able to come out and show your support at one of our games over the remainder of the season.

Go Mounts!!



2023 Schedule

[8/25 vs. Red Lion](#)

9/29 @ Garden Spot

[9/1 @ Warwick](#)

10/7 @ Fleetwood

[9/9 vs. Lebanon](#)

10/13 vs. Twin Valley

[9/15 @ Solanco](#)

10/20 @ Muhlenberg

9/22 vs. Daniel Boone

10/27 vs. Elizabethtown

Special Games

Battle For the Male Trophy (9/1 @ Warwick)

Hall of Fame Night (9/9 vs. Lebanon)

Youth Football Night (9/22 vs. Daniel Boone)

Homecoming (10/13 vs. Twin Valley)

Senior Night (10/27 vs. Elizabethtown)

Game Reviews

On August 25, the Red Lion Lions traveled to the War Memorial field to challenge the Mounts. However, the Mounts were ready, scoring three touchdowns in the first quarter, two receiving and one rushing. The passes were caught by TE Quintin Pfautz and WR Nick Keller, and the rush was from RB Brayden Brown. In the second quarter, the momentum went back to the Lions, being able to score three of their own touchdowns. The Mounts were able to score one of their own, being a touchdown pass to WR Angel Collazo. At halftime the score was 27-20, but the Mounts were able to score right away in the second half with a rushing touchdown from QB Sam McCracken. Nearing the end of the quarter, the Lions were able to respond with a touchdown, but missing the crucial extra point to make it a seven-point game. Going into the fourth, it was a 34-26 game. The Lions were able to score a touchdown at the halfway point of the quarter. Needing a two-point conversion to tie the game, the Mounts defense held them, keeping them up 34-32. After punting the ball back to the Lions, the Mounts needed a huge stop, and they got one. On the first play of the drive, Keller picked off the Lions and let the Mounts offense run the clock out to win the game 34-32. McCracken ended with 225 passing yards with three touchdowns. Brown led the Mounts rushing with 205 yards and one touchdown. Collazo had the most receiving yards with 123 and one touchdown. The Mounts defense ended with two sacks, one interception, and five pass deflections. The Mounts will travel to Lititz for their next game to take on Warwick in the battle for the George Male trophy.

On September 1, the Mounts fought against the Warwick Warriors for the George Male trophy. The first quarter ended up being very slow for both teams, combining for three punts and a turnover on downs. The score was scoreless through the first, and it looked like it was going to be the same through the second. However, by the end of the quarter, the Warriors started to gain some momentum, getting the ball to the Mounts one yard line with four chances to score. But the Mounts defense didn't let down, stopping the Warriors drive and not letting them score on an incredible goal line stand, keeping the score 0-0 at halftime. The third quarter was like the first two, but the Mounts ended the third quarter in the red zone ready to score. And they did almost immediately with a

rushing touchdown from RB Brayden Brown. Then on the first play of the Warriors drive, DB Jeremiah Knowles got an interception down the field. After giving the ball back to the Warriors, the Mounts defense continued to dominate with a pick six by Brown giving the mounts a 14-0 lead. As the Warriors tried to drive down the field, Knowles intercepted them again, giving the Mounts the ball back with about two minutes to go. And although the Mounts punted the ball back to the Warriors, they did not have enough time to do anything with it. The Mounts won 14-0 and brought back the George Male trophy. QB Sam McCracken finished with 58 passing yards. Brown led the Mounts in rushing yards with 134, and Knowles led receiving yards with 36. The defense finished with one sack, three interceptions, two pass deflections, and one field goal block. The Mounts go back home next week to host Lebanon.

On September 9, the Mounts played the Lebanon Cedars at the War. After the game was postponed to the next day due to weather, the Mounts were excited to play some football. WR Angel Collazo caught a touchdown pass from QB Sam McCracken less than two minutes into the game. After securing the ball back. K Evan Honberger kicked a 29-yard field goal. Soon after, RB Brayden Brown ran a 15-yard touchdown, making the score 17-0 at the end of the first. Near the start of the second quarter, Collazo had an 8-yard touchdown run, making the score 24-0. The next Cedars drive, Brown caught a 53-yard pick six. Nearing the end of the second quarter, RB Chase Prange caught a screen pass near the line of scrimmage and was able to run 63 yards for the touchdown. Going into halftime, the Mounts were leading 38-0. However, the Mounts weren't done there, as WR Nick Keller took another screen pass to the house from 50 yards out. The next Cedars drive resulted in another pick six, this time by DL Alex Ortiz, putting the Mounts up 51-0. Nearing the end of the end of the third, the Cedars would score their first touchdown of the game but would miss the extra point. Going into the fourth, the score was 51-6, and the Cedars would add to their total with another touchdown. The Mounts would be able to stop their two-point attempt. QB Caleb Grant led passers for the mounts with 128 yards and two touchdowns. The leading rusher was Brown with 85 yards. The Mounts' leading receiver was Prange with 63 yards. The Mounts' defense totaled for five sacks, two interceptions, and two pass deflections. The Mounts will travel to Solanco for their next game.

On September 15 the Mounts traveled to Solanco to take on the Golden Mules. The Mounts were able to score quick with a 35-yard run from RB Brayden Brown. However, the Mules responded quickly with a touchdown of their own, tying the game with about half of the quarter to go. The Mounts then had a long drive of their own, capping it off with another Brown touchdown. And despite the bad snap on the extra point, Jeremiah Knowles was able to throw it to WR Nick Keller in the end zone for the two-point conversion. The score going into the second was 15-7, but the Mules were eyeing another touchdown early. The Mounts, however, had other ideas, forcing a turnover on downs, and then lobbing the ball up for Keller, who caught it on the Solanco 18-yard line. Not being able to find the end zone, the Mounts settled for a 32 yd field goal by K Evan Honberger. With under a minute in the half left, the Mules were able to score and get the two-point conversion. But Keller

took the Mules' kickoff to the house putting the score at 25-15. With the remaining time left in the half, the Mounts were able to force a fumble in the Mules' territory and kick another field goal. Leading 28-15 coming out of the half, the Mounts forced another fumble on the Mules' first drive, and immediately scored on a TD run by WR Angel Collazo. After forcing a punt, the Mounts offence was able to find the end zone again, this time by QB Sam McCracken running in to score. Entering the fourth trailing 15-41, the Mules needed a score, but once again turned the ball over on downs. McCracken would then run in for another touchdown. The Mules would eventually score their first touchdown since the second quarter, and this time the Mounts would not be able to respond. After giving up another touchdown, the Mounts had enough, and found the end zone again on a 53-yard rush by Collazo. Late in the game, Solanco failed to convert on fourth down once again, letting the Mounts kneel to end the game. McCracken went 7/10 with 108 yards passing. Brown led rushers with 114 yards and two touchdowns. The leading receiver was Keller with 70 yards. The Mounts defense totaled three ta

Summer Activities

The Mounts were very busy this summer. Monday through Thursday, many of the players got up at seven in the morning to lift together as a team. This is possible by the renovation of the schools weightroom, which was financed by the Ephrata Gridiron Club. After about an hour of hard work, the players went up to the War Memorial Field to do an hour of conditioning. Practices were also held on Tuesday nights to give the players some work during the offseason. And instead of having a practice on Thursdays, the Mounts would have an interaction with another team, being able to practice concepts against someone other than themselves and giving the players some extra work. Players that consistently attended these workouts were awarded a purple "Win All Day" sticker, which would go on the back of their helmets.

Team Camp

From July 8-10, the Mounts traveled to Millersville University to attend their team camp. During this time, everyone who attended was able to get eight practices and seven interactions with other teams. This gave players extra opportunities to work with coaches and improve their game. It also allowed players to play against someone other than themselves for extra practice. This was the great opportunity for the players to bond as a team. The Mounts had a great time at Millersville this summer and are excited to attend camp next year.



Flag Football

This past spring, we held the 1st Inaugural Ephrata Youth Flag Football League. 130 of our youth players came out to compete against each other in games of flag football to get ready for the fall. 30 of our varsity players came out to coach the kids. Both the youth and varsity players had a great time attending, and we are excited to run this league again next spring.

Youth Camp

From July 25-26, we held our annual free youth camp. Kids from grades two through seven had an opportunity to learn from our coaches and varsity players for two hours per day. The kids get great experiences and learn the fundamentals of football, as well as get them ready for the upcoming season. The kids finished off camp with some Rita's Italian Ice, which was provided by the Ephrata Gridiron Club. The kids also heard from some of our varsity players what it means to be a Mountaineer Football Player.

Refreshing Mountain

During the first week of two-a-days, our players took a trip to Refreshing Mountain to do some team building. This activity run by Refreshing Mountain teaches the players how to work together as a team. After one activity with the whole team, they split up into smaller groups and worked together to complete various tasks. The players always enjoy going to Refreshing Mountain, and it always ends up being beneficial to the team.

