



BACKYARD FOOTBALL NEWS

FULL PREVIEWS FOR 41 AREA TEAMS

HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL

2022 SEASON PREVIEW

PRESENTED BY PA FOOTBALL NEWS

BIG SEVEN

AREA RUNNING BACKS TAKE CENTER STAGE FOR UPCOMING WPIAL SEASON



BIG SEVEN

2021 Champion: Belle Vernon

WPIAL 4A

CONFERENCE AT A GLANCE



THOMAS JEFFERSON JAGUARS

The Thomas Jefferson Jaguars enter 2022 with everything to prove. Depth up front, a dynamic RB, and a QB prospect that could upstage the whole conference mean TJ will once again be in the WPIAL title conversation.



MCKEESPORT TIGERS

Once again the Tigers bring back tons of talent in the backfield. Under center is a mystery for the Tigers. If the right guy is there, the Tigers might be an interesting to consider winning the whole thing at Heinz.



GREATER LATROBE WILDCATS

The biggest mystery in the whole conference. There's talent on the roster, but probably not enough to compete with the establishment of 4A. The Wildcats will likely be in the mix to make the playoffs, but not a favorite.



LAUREL HIGHLANDS MUSTANGS

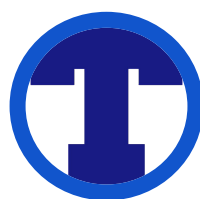
Rodney Gallagher is in his final season, and you better believe that the Mustangs are at least making the playoffs. Competing beyond that might be a tall task.

RINGGOLD RAMS



The Ringgold Rams have skill and talent, it's just about it all coming together. The Rams will have a new coach that will try to take advantage of the roster.

TRINITY HILLERS



The Hillers are in full rebuild mode after a ton of losses and a new coach coming into the fray

CONNELLSVILLE FALCONS



The worst 5A team drops down a class. How good will they be against new opponents?

2021 Final Standings

Rnk	Team	Record(Overall)
1	Belle Vernon	7-0 (10-1)
2	McKeesport	5-1 (9-3)
3	Thomas Jefferson	4-3 (8-3)
4	Laurel Highlands	3-3 (8-4)
5	Trinity	2-4 (3-7)
6	West Mifflin	1-5 (2-8)
7	Ringgold	0-6 (3-7)

PRESEASON SUPER 17

OL	Tucker Blum	Connlsv.
TE	Corey Boerio	Latrobe
RB	Alex Tetsch	Latrobe
QB	Rodney Gallagher	Laurel H.
WR	Keondre Deshields	Laurel H.
RB	Bobbie Boyd Jr.	McKees.
RB	Jahmil Perryman	McKees.
OL	Jaymere Carter	McKees.
OL	Dimitri Brooks	McKees.
LB	Kevin Willis	Ringgold
RB	Elias Lippincott	T. Jefferson
WR	Sean Sullivan	T. Jefferson
DE	Jordan Mayer	T. Jefferson
OL	Peyton Krueger	T. Jefferson
OL	Nick Florian	T. Jefferson
OL	Ty Banco	Trinity
OL	Mason Kraer	Trinity

BIGGEST GAMES OF 2022

8/26	Thomas Jefferson vs Millvale
9/2	McKeesport @ Penn Trafford
9/9	Belle Vernon @ McKeesport
9/16	Connellsville @ Trinity
9/23	Belle Vernon @ T. Jefferson
9/30	Greater Latrobe @ Trinity
10/7	Ringgold @ Greater Latrobe
10/14	Gateway @ McKeesport
10/21	Ringgold @ Laurel Highlands
10/28	T. Jefferson @ McKeesport



THOMAS JEFFERSON JAGUARS

Big Seven

RECORD: 6-2

JAGUARS AT A GLANCE

LOCATION: Jefferson Hills, PA

COACH: Bill Cherpak



JORDAN MAYER

2021 RECAP

The Jaguars enter the 2022 season in a very unusual position for them. The Jaguars only losses in 2021 came to the cream of the crop at the 4A level in division rivals in McKeesport and Belle Vernon. It's amazing to think that last years team might have been the worst of the past 5 seasons. Now with more playmakers back than lost, the Jaguars are ready to reclaim their throne.

OFFENSE

Joey Lekse continued the tradition of elite QB play in Jefferson Hills, however, the hype is already there about a new face in BRODY EVANS. He'll have his weapons in top runner ELIAS LIPPINCOTT and SEAN SULLIVAN. Along with JORDAN MAYER at TE this will be a fun offense to watch. The Jaguars pride themselves on top tier offensive line play and 2022 will be no exception. PEYTON KRUEGER and NICK FLORIAN return to lead another senior laden line.

DEFENSE

The best thing about what Thomas Jefferson does on defense is their ability to work guys in in the middle of seasons so it seems as though there are barely any losses from season to season. JORDAN MAYER is a D1 defensive talent and 2022 will bw his year to show just how dominating a TJ defense can be.

OVERVIEW

Just a year out of winning back to back state titles, the Jaguars are back and building for another deep playoff run. All the tools are in the shed. If BRODY EVANS plays like advertised the Jaguars will be favorites to make it to Heinz. The only possible obstacle in their way will come down to the final game of the year in an away game against McKeesport. Belle Vernon in the out of conference might pose challenges as well, but after last season's difficult losses, expect Thomas Jefferson to find a way to win over their hated rivals. The Jaguars will also participate in Ocean City for Week Zero against Millvale (NJ) for what should be a good game to represent WPIAL Football at the national level. For the first time in a long time the Jaguars might have the most talented team that no one is talking about.

KEY GRADUATES

QB	Joey Lekse
RB	Conner Murga
DB	Isaac Eckley
WR	McClain Flinn
OL	Nick Bryan
OL	Logan Timko

TOP RETURNERS

RB	12	Elias Lippincott	JR.
DB	4	Aldan Whalen	JR.
WR	11	Sean Sullivan	JR.
DE	33	Jordan Mayer	SR.
LB	34	Kam Eggerton	JR.
OL	73	Peyton Krueger	SR.
C	58	Nick Florian	SR.
OL	74	Nathan Everley	SR.

FRESH FACES

QB	10	Brody Evans	JR.
RB	21	Dom Donatelli	SR.
WR	2	Joseph Mendyk	JR.
DB	1	Ryan Lawry	SR.
DL	53	Michael Hutchinson	JR.

2022 SCHEDULE

8/26	vs Millvale (NJ)
9/2	@ Baldwin Highlanders
9/9	@ West Mifflin Titans
9/16	Greater Latrobe Wilcats
9/23	Belle Vernon Leopards
9/30	@ Laurel Highlands Mustangs
10/7	Trinity Hillers
10/14	@ Ringgold Rams
10/21	Connellsville Falcons
10/28	@ McKeesport Tigers

2021 RESULTS

8/27	Clairton	SCR
9/3	@ Gateway	21-16
9/10	South Fayette	27-0
9/17	Trinity	49-7
9/24	@ Belle Vernon	21-28
10/1	OPEN DATE	
10/8	@ Laurel Highlands	42-3
10/15	Ringgold	42-6
10/22	@ McKeesport	28-42
10/29	West Mifflin	49-0

MUST WATCH: Oct. 28th- @ McKeesport



MCKEESPORT TIGERS

Big Seven

RECORD: 8-2

TIGERS AT A GLANCE

LOCATION: McKeesport, PA

COACH: Matt Martin

2021 RECAP

The McKeesport Tigers were a play away from heading to Heinz. That doesn't take away from the Tigers memorable season. Taking down Thomas Jefferson at home handily was the highlight of the year. The Tigers offense exploded behind three talented backs. Now two of them are back including one that could set all sorts of records.

OFFENSE

BOBBIE BOYD JR., JAHMIL PERRYMAN and Kanye Thompson were the RB unit of the classification. Now with Thompson gone, but the former two back, get ready for more fireworks. BOYD JR. might even be the best RB at the 4A level not named Tikwai Hayes. Two key linemen graduate, but there's still plenty of depth back for the Tigers. QB is the biggest question mark with both of the guys who got time graduate. It looks like Perryman will be getting the initial start under center, meaning that this offense may be even more explosive than in recent years.

DEFENSE

The McKeesport defense was dominant and then some in 2021. The highlight was only giving up 14 to one of the top offenses in the WPIAL in Armstrong. DIMITRI BROOKS is the big name back up front, he'll be joined by several talented young prospects. Every position group elsewhere is loaded.



BOBBIE BOYD JR.

OVERVIEW

One of the biggest problems with ranking McKeesport in 2021 was the fact they scheduled Canisius (NY) to play while other teams in their conference took the bye week. McKeesport lost which not only hurt their state and WPIAL ranking, but even their playoff seed compared with TJ and BV. The Tigers didn't learn the lesson and come back with another incredibly difficult schedule. This time the Tigers visit 5A champions Penn Trafford, host 5A semi playoff team Gateway and 4A silver medalist Belle Vernon. Those out of conference games combined with the home finale against Thomas Jefferson will make this season the most interesting in McKeesport history. The Tigers have the talent to win the 4A WPIAL title, but also the schedule to watch it all fall apart.

KEY GRADUATES

QB	Caleb Reist
RB	Kanye Thompson
WR	Dajour Chaffin
LB	Colin Scharritter
DT	Tyre Demery
DE	Exavier Green

TOP RETURNERS

RB	12	Bobbie Boyd Jr.	SR.
QB	22	Jahmil Perryman	SR.
WR	15	Jimeer Brown	SR.
LB	16	Shayne McGrew	SR.
T	61	Brady Boyle	JR.
G	63	J. Daniels-Keys	JR.
G	64	Jaymere Carter	SR.
DT	79	Dimitri Brooks	SR.

FRESH FACES

QB	23	Caiden Holtzmann	SR.
TE	44	Courtney Dunn	JR.
LB	17	Ahmir Culmer	SR.
OL	51	Keith Spell	JR.
OL	62	Nicholas Winowitch	JR.

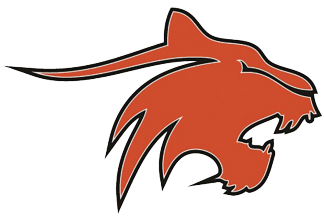
2022 SCHEDULE

8/26	@ West Mifflin Titans
9/2	@ Penn Trafford Warriors
9/9	Belle Vernon Leopards
9/16	@ Laurel Highlands Mustangs
9/23	Trinity Hillers
9/30	@ Ringgold Rams
10/7	Connellsville Falcons
10/14	Gateway Gators
10/21	@ Greater Latrobe Wildcats
10/28	Thomas Jefferson Jaguars

2021 RESULTS

8/27	Baldwin	48-7
9/3	Woodland Hills	7-6
9/10	@ Armstrong	24-14
9/17	Canisius (NY)	14-35
9/24	@ Trinity	49-14
10/1	Ringgold	41-0
10/8	@ West Mifflin	41-0
10/15	@ Laurel Highlands	42-7
10/22	Thomas Jefferson	42-28
10/29	@ Belle Vernon	14-46

MUST WATCH: Oct. 28th- vs Thomas Jefferson



GREATER LATROBE WILDCATS

Big Seven

RECORD: 3-7

WILDCATS AT A GLANCE

LOCATION: Latrobe, PA

COACH: Ronald Prady



COREY BOERIO

OVERVIEW

The Wildcats might be the biggest wildcard in the entire division. They don't have the top end talent to beat a Thomas Jefferson or a McKeesport, but they have enough depth and talent across the board to compete with everyone else. The Wildcats have a stretch in the middle of the season starting with Laurel Highlands and ending with Connellsville that will decide if Latrobe will be in the playoffs or not. There's a more than better chance that the Wildcats can sweep all four of those games and enter the playoffs as the second best team in the conference. At the worst, the Wildcats just barely miss the playoffs as the 5th best team in the Big Eight. Latrobe will find quickly enough that Trinity, Ringgold and Connellsville aren't the on the level of Gateway and Penn Trafford.

KEY GRADUATES

QB	Bobby Fetter
RB	Drake Clayton
RB	Kyle Brewer
WR	Marco Mongelluzzo
DL	Tom Lynch
DL	Josh Brown

TOP RETURNERS

RB	25	Alex Tetsch	SO.
RB	9	Conner Lakin	SR.
WR	11	Kollin Stevens	SR.
QB	4	Corey Boerio	SR.
OL	72	Wyatt Held	SR.
SB	18	Dominik Flenniken	SR.
QB	3	John Wetzle	SO.
DE	14	Ben Stratton	JR.

FRESH FACES

WR	13	Aiden Butina	SR.
DL	71	Cody Krall	SO.
WR	21	Jatwan Williams	SO.
LB		Robert Fulton	JR.
CB	35	Tyler Bauer	SO.

2022 SCHEDULE

8/26	@ Derry Trojans
9/2	@ Franklin Regional Panthers
9/9	Hempfield Spartans
9/16	@ Thomas Jefferson Jaguars
9/23	Laurel Highlands Mustangs
9/30	@ Trinity Hillers
10/7	Ringgold Rams
10/14	@ Connellsville Falcons
10/21	McKeesport Tigers
10/28	OPEN

2021 RESULTS

8/27	Derry	61-0
9/3	@ Norwin	28-31
9/10	Kiski	27-34
9/17	Mt. Pleasant	35-0
9/24	@ South Fayette	7-35
10/1	@ Gateway	7-53
10/8	Connellsville	55-13
10/15	Franklin Regional	40-41
10/22	@ Woodland Hills	17-26
10/29	Penn Trafford	0-42

2021 RECAP

Greater Latrobe experienced a 2021 season full of close losses and blowouts. In the end, a 40-41 loss to Franklin Regional kept the Wildcats out of the 5A WPIAL playoffs. Now the Wildcats drop down a classification, and although there will be plenty of attrition from last season to this one, there's plenty of optimism that Latrobe can find their footing in the Big Eight.

OFFENSE

The Wildcats lose their top player in QB Bobby Fetter. COREY BOERIO looks to be the top candidate to move from TE to his natural position at QB, JOHN WETZLE will be in the mix as well. ALEX TETSCH emerged as a viable weapon in the ground game for the Wildcats. The receiving corps is nearly completely intact from a year ago. STEVENS, BUTINA and FLENNIKEN will all play a key role for the Wildcats. The Line is where there will be the most gaps that need to be filled in.

DEFENSE

Greater Latrobe struggled to get off of the field to even middling teams in 5A a season ago. Now in a new classification, this is the time for drastic improvement. There's young talent across the board. CODY KRALL on the defensive line will emerge as a top pass rusher. RILEY SMITH at LB will look to emerge as well.

MUST WATCH: Sep. 23rd- vs Laurel Highlands



LAUREL HIGHLANDS MUSTANGS

Big Seven

RECORD: 7-3

MUSTANGS AT A GLANCE

LOCATION: Uniontown, PA

COACH: Rich Kolesar



RODNEY GALLAGHER

OVERVIEW

One again, the Mustangs will have the most talented player on the field in most of the games they played. Their out of conference lines up with two likely wins with Belle Vernon between. In the conference play, the toughest test not named McKeesport or Thomas Jefferson will be a road matchup with Greater Latrobe. That game will likely decide the third best team in the conference. Just like last season there's still a big gap in talent between the Mustangs and the top tier teams in the conference, but the gap is getting smaller. Instead of looking like a fish out of water against the Jaguars and the Tigers, it would be a huge step in the right direction to be competitive in those games. It might also show a hope for the future after GALLAGHER's senior season.

KEY GRADUATES

WR	Jayden Pratt
WR	Joe Chambers
RB	Eric Allen II
WR	Matt Lucas
WR	Demonte Kiss
T	Kaleb Glebis

TOP RETURNERS

QB	1	Rodney Gallagher	SR.
WR	9	Keondre DeShields	SR.
WR	8	Hunter Kooser	JR.
LB	54	Billy Barton	JR.
RB	5	Jaiden Tucker	JR.
LB	59	Cam Bradley	SR.
NG	68	Brad Smith	JR.
		John Pletcher	

FRESH FACES

QB	16	CJ Soltis	SR.
WR		Antwan Black	SR.
WR	6	Khaleb Rafail	SR.
CB	11	Leland Layhue	SR.
WR	7	Ben Wilson	SR.

2022 SCHEDULE

8/26	Uniontown Red Raiders
9/2	@ Belle Vernon Leopards
9/9	Kiski Cavaliers
9/16	McKeesport Tigers
9/23	@ Greater Latrobe Wildcats
9/30	Thomas Jefferson Jaguars
10/7	OPEN
10/14	@ Trinity Hillers
10/21	Ringgold Rams
10/28	@ Connellsville Falcons

2021 RESULTS

8/27	Connellsville	44-14
9/3	Southmoreland	28-21
9/10	@ Brownsville	65-0
9/17	@ Ringgold	32-29
9/24	West Mifflin	27-7
10/1	@ Belle Vernon	14-56
10/8	Thomas Jefferson	3-42
10/15	McKeesport	7-42
10/22	@ Trinity	39-34
10/29	@ Uniontown	42-14

MUST WATCH: Sep. 16th- vs McKeesport

2021 RECAP

2021. The season where it all came together. Rodney Gallagher leading the Mustangs down the field in the first round of the playoffs for the Mustangs first playoff victory. It couldn't have been scripted any better aside from a deep WPIAL playoff run. Now some of the best pieces are back, and in a much weaker conference than a year ago, what are the Mustangs capable of?

OFFENSE

Expect RODNEY GALLAGHER to continue where he left off and then some. After last season he now has a capable counterpart in KEONDRE DESHIELDS to throw to. Eric Allen will be a big loss for the Mustangs offense and another weapon will need to be found- watch for JAIDEN TUCKER to fill the void. The line experienced normal attrition but several key pieces are back like BRAD SMITH and CAM BRADLEY.

DEFENSE

The Mustangs defense was less impressive in 2021, but made stops when they need to against Ringgold and Trinity. With a weaker conference all they need is to not be a liability. Junior nose guard BRAD SMITH will be the standout in the trenches. The secondary is stacked too with GALLAGHER, DESHIELDS and HUNTER KOOSER.



RINGGOLD RAMS

Big Seven

RECORD: 3-7

RAMS AT A GLANCE

LOCATION: Monongahela, PA

COACH: Marcus McCullough

2021 RECAP

Once again, Ringgold continues to be the doormat in the Big Eight. The Rams brought in a boatload of transfers before the 2021 season, which kept the Rams competitive in some games. However, the record didn't really change. Now with a new coach, and a large graduating class, Ringgold finds themselves in the same position they were in last offseason.

OFFENSE

The Rams graduate all sorts of playmakers from last seasons offense including star RB Landon Oslowski. Look for a combination of back sled by MADDUX SUKEL to fill the void. At QB it will either be ALEX COCCAGNA or Freshman MATTHEW BEHANNA. The strong point once again for the Rams is up front with JERRY MEASE and ZACH CHEPLIC.

DEFENSE

The good news for the Rams is that they bring back continuity at LB in KEVIN WILLIS. He'll be the leader of a senior laden Front 7. In the secondary there are more gaps that need to be filled. Watch for JABAREE AGOSTONI to be a standout. EVAN PARSONS will also continue to be a key playmaker for the Rams on the outside. Ringgold's defense was not that bad from what their record was in 2021 and that should continue.



DONTE NEWTON

OVERVIEW

It really seems like under the Darwin Manges tenure in Monongahela that the Rams have had enough talent to be competitive in this conference, they just haven't been able to put it all together. If McCullough can build a team without a hitch, Ringgold could be a hop, skip and a jump from playoff contention. It won't happen this season though. Ringgold should be right in the game with Connellsville, Greater Latrobe and Trinity. They might even compete with Elizabeth Forward and McGuffey. A 5-5 season does not seem so impossible. The biggest questions all lie on the offensive side of the ball and finding capable athletes to generate points and yards. If the Rams can click, there will be plenty to be excited about and hope on the horizon.

KEY GRADUATES

QB	Deondre Dotson
RB	Landon Oslowski
RB	John Polefko
WR	Donte Kinds
DB	Braydon Fine
NG	Dante Compagni

TOP RETURNERS

RB	27	Maddox Sukel	JR.
TE	44	Kevin Willis	SR.
WR	3	Evan Parsons	SR.
LB	50	Bobby Taylor	SR.
TE	81	Jacob Pehowic	SR.
WR	6	Braydon Campbell	JR.
DE	68	Logan Simko	SR.
NG	76	Jerry Mease	SR.

FRESH FACES

QB	2	Alex Coccagna	SR.
CB	10	Jabaree Agostoni	JR.
LB	23	Jamar Bathea	SR.
OL	55	Zach Cheplic	JR.
RB	25	Donte Newton	JR.

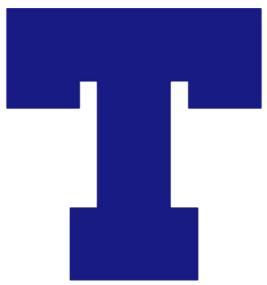
2022 SCHEDULE

8/26	Elizabeth Forward Warriors
9/2	@ McGuffey Highlanders
9/9	West Allegheny Indians
9/16	West Mifflin Titans
9/23	@ Connellsville Falcons
9/30	McKeesport Tigers
10/7	@ Greater Latrobe Wildcats
10/14	Thomas Jefferson Jaguars
10/21	@ Laurel Highlands Mustangs
10/28	Trinity Hillers

2021 RESULTS

8/27	Elizabeth Forward	0-12
9/3	Yough	40-0
9/10	@ South Allegheny	12-10
9/17	Laurel Highlands	29-32
9/24	@ Uniontown	42-0
10/1	@ McKeesport	0-41
10/8	Belle Vernon	14-35
10/15	@ Thomas Jefferson	6-42
10/22	@ West Mifflin	8-24
10/29	Trinity	7-28

MUST WATCH: Oct. 28th- vs Trinity



TRINITY HILLERS

Big Seven

RECORD: 3-7

HILLERS AT A GLANCE

LOCATION: Washington , PA

COACH: Dan Knause



TY BANCO

KEY GRADUATES

QB Connor Roberts

DE Gio Cipoletti

S Braydon May

WR Jeremy Sikora

RB Hunter Strickland

WR Steven Stewart

TOP RETURNERS

RB 25 Andrew Durig JR.

RB 6 Joey Hello SR.

WR Landen Hendrix SR.

RB 9 Blake Bedillion SR.

OL 52 Ty Banco SR.

OL 57 Jase Banco JR.

OL 69 Mason Kraeer SR.

OL 66 Braeden Helmkamp JR.

FRESH FACES

QB 17 Luke Lacock JR.

4 Dom DeRubbo JR.

TE 15 Tony Cipoletti JR.

OL 65 Dominic Zenkovich JR.

OL 70 James Lafferty JR.

2022 SCHEDULE

8/26 @ Central Valley Warriors

9/2 Chartiers Valley Colts

9/9 @ Peters Township Indians

9/16 Connellsville Falcons

9/23 @ McKeesport Tigers

9/30 Greater Latrobe Wildcats

10/7 @ Thomas Jefferson Jaguars

10/14 Laurel Highlands Mustangs

10/21 Carrick Raiders

10/28 @ Ringgold Rams

2021 RESULTS

8/27 Canon McMillan 0-48

9/3 West Allegheny 34-43

9/10 @ Yough 41-6

9/17 @ Thomas Jefferson 7-49

9/24 McKeesport 14-49

10/1 @ West Mifflin 20-19

10/8 @ Clearfield 0-30

10/15 @ Belle Vernon 0-49

10/22 Laurel Highlands 34-39

10/29 @ Ringgold 28-7

OVERVIEW

This is Dan Knause first season with the Hillers. That newness will be felt throughout the season as Trinity tries to find an identity. They'll have to find it while going through a gauntlet of a schedule. The Hillers open up as the unfortunate team set to face in Central Valley's 4A opener. After that will be an intriguing matchup against Knause's former Chartiers Valley Colts. The conference is just as difficult as it always been, although they should fare a little better against Greater Latrobe than Belle Vernon. Another benefit for the Hillers is the addition of former rival Connellsville. Trinity will also host Carrick before heading to Ringgold to wrap up the season, meaning if the Knause administration finds an identity, those final two games will be the perfect opportunity to showcase it.

2021 RECAP

Trinity ended the season on a high note. A win for the Hillers over Ringgold ended a season full of disappointment and missed expectations. Dan Knause takes over the struggling program after rebuilding CHarters Valley into a competitive program over the past years. With a large senior class out the door, he'll have to build from the ground up.

OFFENSE

A Trinity offense that struggled to score in 2021 will have to be built for the ground up. Fortunately for the new regime, the ground has a firm foundation in a veteran offensive line. The BANCO brothers will be the standouts along with MASON KRAEER. ANDREW DURIG is the best returning playmaker at RB. The biggest question remains under center and LUKE LACOCK may be the leading answer. There are some pieces, but overall this is going to be a raw unit.

DEFENSE

Trinity comes back in to 2022 with a very young defense. There's depth in the trenches, but not one standout. With the whole unit working together, there will be plenty of consistent pressure. With the loss of both Roberts and Braydon May, there will also be big shoes to fill in the secondary.

MUST WATCH: Sep. 16th- vs Connellsville



CONNELLSVILLE FALCONS

Big Seven

RECORD: 0-10

FALCONS AT A GLANCE

LOCATION: Connellsville, PA
COACH: Lembo/McClean/Lilley



TUCKER BLUM

OVERVIEW

This team is still a significant rebuild away from relevance. The drop down will help though, as Connellsville swaps out Penn Trafford and Gateway with Ringgold and Trinity. The Falcons get both of those teams early in the season and could possibly catch either of those teams looking ahead to the back half of the schedule. Connellsville shouldn't pose a significant challenge to any team after Week 4. Like any struggling program, 2022 will be about finding an offensive identity and being competitive in games. If Connellsville is competitive in the season finale at home against Laurel Highlands it will show a positive direction compared to what they showed to the same team on the road in the opener a year ago.

KEY GRADUATES

QB Zakary David
WR Jason McBride
S Jared Hough
OL JT Barnes
DT Cullen Lynch
WR Josh Marietta

TOP RETURNERS

K 13 Benjamin Zavatchan SR.
LB 55 Michael Lancaster SR.
OL 67 Tucker Blum SR.
WR 2 Anthony Mickens JR.
QB 5 Anthony Piasecki JR.
OL 69 Kenny Schultz JR.
DE 78 Deuce Miller JR.
OL 60 Spencer Shaffer SR.

FRESH FACES

LB Wyatt Hall FR.
WR 14 Ben Metzger SO.
RB 21 Xavier Malone SO.
WR 4 Jayden McBride JR.
WR 16 Austin Elstner SO.

2022 SCHEDULE

8/26 @ Albert Gallatin Colonials
9/2 @ Hempfield Spartans
9/9 Franklin Regional Panthers
9/16 @ Trinity Hillers
9/23 Ringgold Rams
9/30 Hampton Talbots
10/7 @ McKeesport Tigers
10/14 Greater Latrobe Wildcats
10/21 @ Thomas Jefferson Jaguars
10/28 Laurel Highlands Mustangs

2021 RESULTS

8/27 @ Laurel Highlands 14-44
9/3 @ Greensburg Salem 19-36
9/10 Norwin 0-37
9/17 @ Kiski 7-41
9/24 @ Peters Twp. 7-47
10/1 Franklin Regional 0-36
10/8 @ Greater Latrobe 13-55
10/15 Penn Trafford 6-45
10/22 @ Gateway 0-55
10/29 Woodland Hills 7-42

2021 RECAP

In Bill Maczo's first season as the head man of the Falcons football program, the Falcons went winless for the second straight season. Now Maczko is out and in step not one but three head coaches in Chad Lembo, Jace McClean and Mick Lilley. Not only did the Falcons not win a game, but they only came within three touchdowns of their opponent once. Now the Falcons will drop down a classification and hope to get some wins on the board out of it with a young roster returning.

OFFENSE

The Falcons lose contributors at every position. ANTHONY PIASECKI should fill in at QB and he'll have a talented young runner beside him in XAVIER MALONE. ANTHONY MICKENS might be the best athlete the offense has. The o-line has the best continuity coming back with KENNY SCHULTZ, SPENCER SHAFFER and TUCKER BLUM.

DEFENSE

The Falcons defense was appalling in 2021, never giving up less than 36 points to an opponent. They'll lose their top defender in Cullen Lynch, but nearly everyone is back. MICHAEL LANCASTER will be the best defensive athlete and the leader at the second level. The secondary will have plenty of bodies as well and possibly the strongest unit.

MUST WATCH: Sep. 23rd- vs Ringgold Rams