



BACKYARD FOOTBALL NEWS

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HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL

# 2022 SEASON PREVIEW

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# ALLEGHENY SIX

AREA RUNNING BACKS TAKE CENTER STAGE FOR UPCOMING WPIAL SEASON



# ALLEGHENY SIX

2021 Champion: Moon

WPIAL 5A

## CONFERENCE AT A GLANCE



### UPPER ST. CLAIR PANTHERS

The Panthers lose their top star from a year ago, but might be a better team. The defense is loaded, and they might have the best overall player in the conference at QB. They'll be the favorites to take the final step.



### BETHEL PARK BLACKHAWKS

The Blackhawks turned growth into promise in 2021. Now they'll try to turn promise into talent in 2022. They might have enough to even capture the conference title. The Blackhawks will certainly be in the mix.



### PETERS TOWNSHIP INDIANS

The Peters Township Indians bring a couple guys back. They might have the best RB in the conference back, but will it be enough to recapture the conference title? If not the Indians will be in the narrative come playoffs.



### MOON TIGERS

Moon takes a team that went to Heinz Field in 2021 and graduates everyone. One of the best coaches in the WPIAL will look to find answers for gaps all over the field in this tough conference.

### SOUTH FAYETTE LIONS



The Lions bring back a very young roster from a year ago. They lose their QB, but hope to be much more competitive in conference play in 2022.

### BALDWIN HIGHLANDERS



The Baldwin Highlanders drop down from 6A where they just missed the playoffs. There's plenty of coming back, but will probably be on the outside again.

## 2021 Final Standings

Rnk	Team	Record(Overall)
1	Moon	5-0 (12-1)
2	Upper St. Clair	4-1 (6-5)
3	Bethel Park	3-2 (5-6)
4	Peters Twp	2-3 (7-5)
5	West Allegheny	1-4 (4-5)
6	South Fayette	0-5 (4-6)

## PRESEASON SUPER 17

RB	Keith Mincin	Baldwin
OL	Bobby Benton	Baldwin
WR	Ryan Petras	Bethel
TE	Sam Scullio	Bethel
OL	Braedon Del Duca	Bethel
WR	Anth. Antoniades	Moon
OL	Tom Dry	Moon
DB	Cole Newhouse	Moon
RB	Richie Woods	Peters Twp
DL	Tanner Mindach	Peters Twp
OL	Roman Costanza	Peters Twp
RB	Nathaniel Deanes	S. Fayette
OL	Cam Rosinsky	S. Fayette
QB	Brody Erdos	U.S.C
RB	Jamaal Brown	U.S.C
SB	Aidan Besselman	U.S.C
DL	Zach Ehasz	U.S.C

## BIGGEST GAMES OF 2022

8/26	North Hills @ Bethel Park
9/2	Peters Township @ Seneca V.
9/9	Mt. Lebanon @ Moon
9/16	Upper St. Clair @ Fox Chapel
9/23	Peters Township @ U.S.C
9/30	Penn Hills @ Bethel Park
10/7	Bethel Park @ Upper St. Clair
10/14	Moon @ Bethel Park
10/21	Peters Twp @ Canon Mac
10/28	Peters Twp @ Bethel Park



# UPPER ST. CLAIR PANTHERS

Allegheny Six

RECORD: 6-4

## PANTHERS AT A GLANCE

**LOCATION:** Upper St. Clair, PA  
**COACH:** Mike Junko

## 2021 RECAP

Upper St Clair rode an established identity of grit and grind to a second place finish in the Allegheny Six. Only three points separated the Panthers from an undefeated conference season and a title. Ethan Heister was the Panthers do it all star, from torching defenses in the ground game to leveling quarterbacks on defense. A disappointing playoff run ended the Panthers season in 2021, and although the Panthers lose their best player over the offseason, there's plenty more to be excited about for 2022.

## OFFENSE

Although the Panthers lose Heister there's depth everywhere else. BRODY ERDOS returns at QB and he'll have a much larger role than last year. AIDAN BESSELMAN is a dynamic talent that will eat defenses alive. JAMAAL BROWN could be the heir apparent to the punishing style of running Heister showed. If the line play stays consistent watch for the Panthers offense to take a huge step.

## DEFENSE

The Panthers defense was punishing down the back half of last season. With most of the D-Line coming back with ZACH EHASZ and MARK BANBURY, the Panthers will once again have a strong unit, maybe the best in the classification.



**BRODY ERDOS**

## OVERVIEW

This might be their year. Aside from a mid season road matchup with the 6A state champs, there's isn't a game on the schedule the Panthers won't have a solid chance to win. A road non conference game against Fox Chapel will also be a fun test to see two of the up and coming programs in the classification face off. Peters Township, Moon and Bethel Park will be the primary competition for the conference title, and they'll have two of those at home. As one of the only returning QBs in the conference, BRODY ERDOS has the chance to be the best and most talented if he's given a longer leash. Just like in 2021, the defense will win the Panthers games all season. If the offense can truly transform, the Panthers may not just have a conference title team on their hands.

## KEY GRADUATES

WR	Mateo Cepullo
RB	Ethan Heister
LB	Brady Bartusiak
OL	Wyatt Kovell
DE	Nick Chimento
WR	Nick Derubeis

## TOP RETURNERS

QB	9	Brady Erdos	SR.
RB	7	Jamaal Brown	SR.
SB	4	Aidan Besselman	SR.
RB	33	Aidan Conn	SR.
LB	11	Ivory Travers	SR.
S	17	Timothy Speer	SR.
DE	52	Zach Ehasz	SR.
DT	55	Mark Banbury	SR.

## FRESH FACES

LB	50	Shea Moorehead	
WR	10	Jacob Hufnagel	SR.
DE	78	Marco Carone	JR.
LB	44	Cam Phillips	JR.
	5	Cody Marn	SR.

## 2022 SCHEDULE

8/26	@ Norwin Knights
9/2	@ North Hills Indians
9/9	Baldwin Highlanders
9/16	@ Fox Chapel Foxes
9/23	Peters Township Indians
9/30	@ Mt. Lebanon Blue Devils
10/7	Bethel Park Blackhawks
10/14	Canon McMillan Big Macs
10/21	@ Moon Tigers
10/28	South Fayette Lions

## 2021 RESULTS

8/27	Greensburg Cent. Cath.	38-0
9/3	@ Mt. Lebanon	13-36
9/10	Baldwin	48-14
9/17	@ Pine Richland	14-35
9/24	Penn Hills	14-21
10/1	Peters Twp.	31-3
10/8	@ West Allegheny	17-3
10/15	@ Moon	13-16
10/22	South Fayette	31-28
10/29	@ Bethel Park	21-14

**MUST WATCH: Sep. 23rd- vs Peters Township**



# BETHEL PARK BLACKHAWKS

Allegheny Six

RECORD: 5-5

## HAWKS AT A GLANCE

**LOCATION:** Bethel Park, PA  
**COACH:** Brian DeLallo

## 2021 RECAP

Bethel Park found their identity in 2021. The Blackhawks followed up a winless 2020 season with a memorable regular season and a playoff berth. Going into the following two games of the year, the Blackhawks even had a chance to win the whole conference. This easo, they'll have a team ready to make that goal a reality.

## OFFENSE

The Blackhawks will have to fight through the losses of QB Maxwell Blanc and top athlete Troy Volpatti on offense. At QB, there's a big question mark and not a clear replacement. Whoever the QB will be, he will have a full assortment of weapons. Chief of those will be receiver duo RYAN PETRAS and JASON NUTTRIDGE. The offensive line is almost entirely intact as well. This offense is a short retool away from being one of the most complete in 5A.

## DEFENSE

The Blackhawks had a sneakily good defense in 2021, that should continue. GAVIN MOUL will be the name to watch as a top college prospect. TYLER STEWART will be a good complement to make a top 5A LB tandem. The lines stocked with seniors and the secondary brings back AUSTIN CAYE. Watch out for Bethel Park to be one of the toughest teams to score against in the classification.



**RYAN PETRAS**

## OVERVIEW

Bethel Park will be a better team than people give them credit for going into this season. Everything will rely on finding the right QB to go with on offense. The early season schedule won't give the Blackhawks a good chance to break him in, a 5A playoff team and then a back to back against the two 6A championship participants. In conference, however, everything really sets up for the Blackhawks. Three of the last four will be key. Bethel park will take on Upper St. Clair, Moon and Peters Township in a stretch that will determine if Bethel Park will be a low rung playoff team or a conference champion. In this crazy conference where it could be anyone's year, there's no reason why the Bethel Park Blackhawks can't be the last team standing, however they might be one or two key pieces away from the top.

## KEY GRADUATES

QB	Maxwell Blanc
RB	Troy Volpatti
OL	Anthony Celletti
S	Cody Geddes
WR	Jack Kirchner
DE	Joe Thimons

## TOP RETURNERS

WR	1	Ryan Petras	SO.
TE	11	Aidan Currie	SR.
SS	24	Austin Caye	SR.
OL	65	Toby D'Andrea	SR.
OL	55	Braedon Del Duca	SR.
LB	35	Gavin Moul	SR.
WR	5	Dinari Clacks	SR.
LB	13	Tyler Stewart	SR.

## FRESH FACES

WR	9	Jason Nuttridge	SR.
OL	52	Coby Goelz	SR.
OL	74	Dom Capone	SR.
CB	21	Jack Reilly	SR.
LB	89	Sam Scullio	SR.

## 2022 SCHEDULE

8/26	North Hills Indians
9/2	@ Mt. Lebanon Blue Devils
9/9	Central Catholic Vikings
9/16	@ Canon McMillan Big Macs
9/23	@ Baldwin Highlanders
9/30	Penn Hills Indians
10/7	@ Upper St. Clair Panthers
10/14	Moon Tigers
10/21	@ South Fayette Lions
10/28	Peters Township Indians

## 2021 RESULTS

8/27	Mt. Lebanon	0-28
9/3	@ Baldwin	35-0
9/10	Canon McMillan	27-34
9/17	Gateway	13-49
9/24	@ Franklin Regional	28-13
10/1	West Allegheny	26-10
10/8	@ South Fayette	27-7
10/15	Peters Twp.	38-8
10/22	@ Moon	0-30
10/29	Upper St. Clair	14-21

**MUST WATCH: Oct. 28th- vs Peters Township**



# PETERS TOWNSHIP INDIANS

Allegheny Six

RECORD: 6-4

## INDIANS AT A GLANCE

**LOCATION:** McMurray, PA  
**COACH:** TJ Plack

## 2021 RECAP

Peters Township had one of the hottest and coldest seasons in recent memory. The Indians started off the year on a tear with big wins over Fox Chapel, Canon McMillan, and the eventual 5A champs in Penn Trafford. The Indians dropped their first three games in conference play, only to win out and make it to the 2nd round of the WPIAL playoffs. Now Peters might have all the pieces to go on deep run once again.

## OFFENSE

Sam Miller shined at QB in 2022, and the Indians are hopeful that CHRIS CIBRONE will be a suitable replacement. The biggest name back on offense will be RICHIE WOODS, who had a breakout season at RB. There will be plenty of options at receiver with SHANAFELT, SCHRATZ, MILLER and MCCULLOUGH. The O-Line comes back with 3 starters and several depth pieces to be excited about as well.

## DEFENSE

The Peters Township defense was dangerous in 2021, but they'll have to replace several key pass rushers. A name that could emerge is JAKE VELGICH. Across the defense there will be spots to fill in, but on the whole expect the same consistency and talent from Peters that one has come to expect.



**RICHIE WOODS**

## OVERVIEW

The Indians battled through injuries in the middle of last season and were just barely able to survive, get healthy, and advance through the playoffs. Key players and position groups got experience in that stretch, which is something to be confident. Peters will have to travel to Moon, Upper St. Clair, and Bethel Park. The fortunate thing is that they won't all be in once stretch of games as they were a season ago. That stretch of games will be the difference between their season result from 2020 vs 2021. The Indians have all the pieces to reclaim the same dominance they showed in 2020. A complete team with a dynamic offensive talent. If the QB play continues to be a strength in McMurray, the Indians will have a very dangerous team in November.

## KEY GRADUATES

TE	Luke Petrarca
QB	Sam Miller
OL	Dante Lahet
OL	Anthony Brunette
OL	Luke Cortes
WR	Brycin Yackuboskey

## TOP RETURNERS

RB	22	Richie Woods	SR.
WR	2	Nate Miller	JR.
WR	21	Eliot Schratz	JR.
OL	66	Tanner Mindach	JR.
WR	5	Carter Shanafelt	JR.
DE	55	Jake Velgich	JR.
WR	25	B. McCullough	SR.
OL	64	Roman Costanza	SR.

## FRESH FACES

QB	12	Chris Cibrone	JR.
OL	74	Paris Fishell	JR.
CB	4	Ethan Wertman	JR.
WR	8	Thomas Aspinall	JR.
OL	66	Tanner Mindach	JR.

## 2022 SCHEDULE

8/26	@ Fox Chapel Foxes
9/2	@ Seneca Valley Raiders
9/9	Trinity Hillers
9/16	South Fayette Lions
9/23	@ Upper St. Clair Panthers
9/30	Baldwin Highlanders
10/7	@ Moon Tigers
10/14	Mt. Lebanon Blue Devils
10/21	@ Canon McMillan Big Macs
10/28	@ Bethel Park Blackhawks

## 2021 RESULTS

8/27	Fox Chapel	37-0
9/3	@ Canon McMillan	29-7
9/10	Mt. Lebanon	0-31
9/17	@ Penn Trafford	28-14
9/24	Connellsville	47-7
10/1	@ Upper St. Clair	3-31
10/8	Moon	26-29
10/15	@ Bethel Park	8-38
10/22	West Allegheny	30-7
10/29	@ South Fayette	35-7

**MUST WATCH: Sept. 23rd- vs Upper St. Clair**



# MOON TIGERS

Allegheny Six

RECORD: 10-0

## TIGERS AT A GLANCE

**LOCATION:** Moon Twp, PA  
**COACH:** Ryan Linn

## 2021 RECAP

The Moon Tigers were the most experienced, senior laden team heading into the 2021 season and everything almost all came together for a perfect season. Sadly, the Tigers lost in heartbreaking fashion at Heinz Field but it can't be overstated how impressive the Tigers season was. Now Moon will have to defend their top tier 5A status with a roster that almost completely turns over.

## OFFENSE

There were so many senior standouts on offense in 2021 it's impossible to list them all here. In 2022, there will be plenty of gaps to fill. JOSH BLADEL could be a prime candidate to pick up where his older brother left off on offense.

ANTHONY ANTONIADES will be the top athlete coming back on offense and will be a help to QB prospect ETHAN KONIECZKA.

## DEFENSE

Moon absolutely dominated on all levels on defense in 2021. The secondary has the chance to be just as dominant in 2022 behind the experienced COLE and CADEN NEWHOUSE brothers. MITCH PARISI could be an emerging pass rusher for the Tigers season as well. The Tigers will have to find several guys to fill in at linebacker, which was the strongest point of the defense last season.



COLE NEWHOUSE

## OVERVIEW

Moon rolled through the competition in 2021. 2022 will be a retooling year for Moon but that doesn't mean they won't be competitive. If Ryan Linn is able to find replacements and depth, Moon could be right back at the mountaintop in 2022. The Tigers have the benefit of almost every difficult game being at home, including possible conference title favorites in Upper St Clair and Peters Township. The Tigers will likely be in contention for a playoff spot, and it might come down to their road matchup against Bethel Park as to whether they will return to the big dance. With the Tigers memorable 2021 season, it's hard to foresee that big of a drop off from season to season. The Tigers will most likely be back in the conversation for another conference title.

## KEY GRADUATES

QB	Tyler McGowan
DE	Ben Bladel
RB	Dylan Sleva
WR	Taite Beachy
OL	Trent Fraley
TE	Dante Docchio

## TOP RETURNERS

WR	13	Anthony Antoniadessr.	SR.
WR	1	Nicky Prozolly	SO.
RB	48	Josh Bladel	JR.
TE	23	Dan Henry	SR.
OL	58	Ryan Lubitz	JR.
OL	79	Tom Dry	SR.
DB	33	Cole Newhouse	SR.
DB	30	Caden Newhouse	SR.

## FRESH FACES

DE	51	Mitch Parisi	JR.
DT	56	Brian Crawford	JR.
OL	62	Caiden Orhn	SR.
OL	75	Nick Hage	SO.
RB	26	Nazir Brookins	SO.

## 2022 SCHEDULE

8/26	West Allegheny Indians
9/2	@ Montour Spartans
9/9	Mt. Lebanon Blue Devils
9/16	Penn Hills Indians
9/23	@ Mars Fightin' Planets
9/30	@ South Fayette Lions
10/7	Peters Township Indians
10/14	@ Bethel Park Blackhawks
10/21	Upper St. Clair Panthers
10/28	@ Baldwin Highlanders

## 2021 RESULTS

8/27	@ Seneca Valley	38-21
9/3	Montour	35-6
9/10	@ Woodland Hills	15-0
9/17	North Hills	38-7
9/24	@ Fox Chapel	42-28
10/1	South Fayette	28-13
10/8	@ Peters Twp.	29-26
10/15	Upper St. Clair	16-13
10/22	Bethel Park	30-0
10/29	@ West Allegheny	46-10

**MUST WATCH: Oct. 21st- vs Upper St. Clair**



# SOUTH FAYETTE LIONS

Allegheny Six

RECORD: 4-6

## LIONS AT A GLANCE

**LOCATION:** McDonald, PA  
**COACH:** Joe Rossi



**NATHANIEL DEANES**

## OVERVIEW

The Lions could have something brewing for the 2022 season. Once again, South Fayette won't just be a cupcake that the conference favorites can just roll through. 2022 might be a season where the Lions become true upsets rather than just a threat. The Lions will be favorites in their first three games which will be a good springboard for the rest of the season.

Matchups against Moon and Bethel Park at home could really give momentum for the Lions program if they are able to pull out the win.

The path is going to be difficult for the Lions to end up making a playoffs, but with a very young team and most of that team coming back in 2023 even, this season will be perfect for the Lions to play the spoiler, and maybe end up making something memorable in the end.

## KEY GRADUATES

QB	Landon Lutz
WR	Logan Yater
WR	Connor Harcarik
DE	Keon Johnson
DB	Sam Rosato
DL	Alex Hall

## TOP RETURNERS

RB	1	Nathaniel Deanes	JR.
RB	11	Christian Brandi	SR.
WR	6	Wesmyrn Wright	SR.
OL	52	Tim Haviland	JR.
OL	55	Cam Rosinsky	SR.
DB	25	Connor Cirra	SR.
LB	7	Spence Hondru	SR.
WR	2	Dom Monz	JR.

## FRESH FACES

RB	21	Talen Mizenko	SO.
LB	54	Matt Boyce	JR.
WR	14	Mike Gimigliano	JR.
QB	13	Nico Lamonde	JR.
LB	20	Morgan Spagnolo	JR.

## 2022 SCHEDULE

8/26	Chartiers Valley Colts
9/2	@ West Allegheny Indians
9/9	Montour Spartans
9/16	@ Peters Township Indians
9/23	Canon McMillan Big Macs
9/30	Moon Tigers
10/7	@ Plum Mustangs
10/14	@ Baldwin Highlanders
10/21	Bethel Park Blackhawks
10/28	@ Upper St. Clair Panthers

## 2021 RESULTS

8/27	@ Montour	35-7
9/3	West Mifflin	42-21
9/10	@ Thomas Jefferson	0-27
9/17	Chartiers Valley	28-14
9/24	Greater Latrobe	35-7
10/1	@ Moon	13-28
10/8	Bethel Park	7-27
10/15	@ West Allegheny	0-28
10/22	@ Upper St. Clair	28-31
10/29	Peters Twp.	7-35

**MUST WATCH: Sept. 30th- vs Moon**

## 2021 RECAP

The Lions experienced another down season in 2021, however things were not as dire as they seemed. The Lions were still in the playoff race entering the final weeks of the season. The Lions ended up going 0-5 in conference play, which kept them out of the playoffs. The Lions are still in the midst of a massive retooling, and after a large senior class graduating, that trend could continue into the following years.

## OFFENSE

The most dynamic and talented player on the offense is back in NATHANIEL DEANES. CHRISTIAN BRANDI is a dynamic number two. They'll both be counted on as the Lions work in a junior QB. The O-Line brings back enough experience to be excited about as well. Watch for WESMYN WRIGHT to be the standout at receiver.

## DEFENSE

Despite the losing record, the South Fayette defense in 2021 kept the Lions in games from week to week, so much so that the Lions nearly upset Upper St Clair in an overtime thriller at the end of the year. SPENCE HONDROU will be the leader at LB. The Lions lose a lot of talent on the defensive line that will need to be replaced, however there's enough depth to where that shouldn't be a big problem.



# BALDWIN HIGHLANDERS

Allegheny Six

RECORD: 2-8

## HIGHLANDERS AT A GLANCE

LOCATION: Pittsburgh, PA

COACH: Tim Sweeney



**BOBBY BENTON**

## OVERVIEW

Baldwin is an oddball in the Allegheny Six conference. If one goes by last years out of conference results, where the Highlanders got blown out by new conference opponents Bethel Park and Upper St. Clair, Baldwin could be a bottom feeder at the 5A level as well. Despite that, there's still optimism around the program and move down a classification. Baldwin's most winnable game all season will be at home against South Fayette late in the year. They could even be competitive with Moon in the home finale. For the rest of the schedule, it's tough to see many wins appearing. Baldwin has a very difficult road schedule, and likely won't win or even be competitive in any of them. For the Highlanders, 2022 is all about coming together as a younger team at the 5A level and showing promise.

## KEY GRADUATES

TE	Evan LaVelle
RB	Kam Allen
LB	Elijah Moore
WR	Ben Tepsic
OL	Aaron Martire
OL	Blaize Richards

## TOP RETURNERS

RB	6	Keith Mincin	JR.
OL	79	Bobby Benton	SR.
WR	1	Davonte Jones	JR.
QB	11	John Kozar	JR.
OL	58	Victor Iaquinta	SR.
OL	67	Logan Murphy	SR.
OL	51	Tyler Carter	JR.
OL	72	Brady Hartman	SR.

## FRESH FACES

QB	2	Jaden Duttine	SO.
QB	5	Amara Sheriff	JR.
OL	52	Cenzo Pacella	SO.
RB	33	Caleb Bartic	SR.
		Andrew Sharp	JR.

## 2022 SCHEDULE

8/26	Brashear Bulls
9/2	Thomas Jefferson Jaguars
9/9	@ Upper St. Clair Panthers
9/16	@ North Allegheny Tigers
9/23	Bethel Park Blackhawks
9/30	@ Peters Township Indians
10/7	Canon McMillan Big Macs
10/14	South Fayette Lions
10/21	@ Mt. Lebanon Blue Devils
10/28	Moon Tigers

## 2021 RESULTS

8/27	@ McKeesport	7-48
9/3	Bethel Park	0-35
9/10	@ Upper St. Clair	14-48
9/17	North Allegheny	14-61
9/24	@ Canon McMillan	7-61
10/1	Norwin	21-10
10/8	@ Hempfield	28-0
10/15	Seneca Valley	12-49
10/22	@ Central Catholic	21-49
10/29	Mt. Lebanon	7-35

**MUST WATCH: Oct. 14th- vs South Fayette**

## 2021 RECAP

2-8 might not be a very good record for any team in high school football, but for the Baldwin Highlanders it was a step in the right direction. The Highlanders took care of both Norwin and Hempfield for each of its wins, and was even in contention for the playoffs as unlikely as the scenario was. Now with a good crop of starters coming back and a move down to 5A, the Highlanders seem poised to be able to take the next step.

## OFFENSE

The Highlanders will likely be rolling with JOHN KOZAR at QB, who took over the job halfway through last season. His skill combined with returning talent KEITH MINCIN could be a dangerous combination. There's plenty of experience on the offensive line with BOBBY BENTON and VICTOR IAQUINTA leading the charge. The biggest question on offense will be if the athletes will be capable of generating consistent offense.

## DEFENSE

The Highlanders didn't give up less than 35 points in any of their losses, meaning their losses weren't even all that close. The Highlanders will hope that a deep returning defensive line will help them stay competitive in more games.