

Black Knights will again rely on hard-nosed pride

By **LEE RICHARDS**
Staff Correspondent

This will be Coach Mark Kirk's third season at the helm of the Lake-Lehman football program and it shapes up as a very interesting season ahead for the Knights. Kirk's previous two teams played with a heap of pride and were notoriously hard losers.

One local coach who has sent teams into combat against the Knights year in and year out describes them 'a team that may be short on manpower, but will lineup and get after you down after down.'

There's a lot of positive and encouraging aspects about the 1984 Lake-Lehman football squad. In talking with the coaches and players, there seems to be more of a commitment by everyone involved.

All-State candidate Chris VanGorder says, "We're a very tight group. We've worked real hard and all of the seniors want to have a winning season. We've got the potential and we've just got to go out and prove it."

One of the chief objectives of the coaching staff is to get into a better flow and be more explosive offensively.

"There were times last year when we'd have good drives going and we weren't able to cash them into touchdowns. We're gearing our offense to be more consistent, especially when we're down in scoring territory," said Kirk.

Up front, the Knights will go with Earl Weidner and Bill Bearde at the receiver slots, while the interior line will have Jeff Ruzicki and Tom Stepanski at the tackles, with Ed Gavlick and Chris Kukosky manning the guard slots and Mike Williams the front runner at center. Keith Kendall will also push for playing time with blocking corps.

"We don't have the size or the muscle up front where we can go out and overpower people. We're going to use a lot of motion out of the Wing-T and hope we can combine finesse and some quick striking plays," added Kirk.

The coaching staff of Kirk and assistants George Clayton, Dwight Barbacci and Jeff Smith are approaching the season with a lot of optimism.

Perhaps the highlight of last year's 3-7-1 campaign was the 6-6 tie with defending champ GAR.

Meanwhile, doing the bulk of the offensive load will be runners VanGorder, Jeff Martin and Bill George. All three can run with power inside and are quick enough to turn the corners, too.

Engineering the offense will be T-Willy Cadwalder, who has the potential to be a good quarterback. He's got a strong arm, but must get into a consistent pattern, which comes from game experience.

Bearde is also working at QB and his speed on option plays could be a real plus somewhere down the line this season.

Kirk says, "We've got some potential on offense. T-Willy has improved by attending camp over the summer and he's gaining the much needed confidence to play that particular position."

"Our three running backs are very competitive youngmen. They can block and run with a lot of abandon. If we can get some balance between run and pass we could move the football more effectively."

Another strong point will be the kicking game. VanGorder is capable of booming some punts with big-league hangtime.

On the other side of the football is where the Knights sparkle. They enjoy playing defense in a crunching style. The stop troups gave a lot of opponents fits last season. There's some concern about the lack of experience in the secondary, but that can be rectified by alertness and aggressiveness.

The Knights will have a multiple set of defensive looks and alignments, but basically they'll operate out of a 5-3-3.

The down five consists of ends VanGorder and Kukosky, tackles Scott Kerkowski, Ruzicki and Stepanski with Gavlick on the nose.

Backing the line is George, Martin and Weidner. All three can deliver a blow to would be runners and can move into the necessary zones on passing downs.

Bill Boyle and P.J. Malak will handle the corners, with Bearde roving at the safety position.

A trademark on the Knights in the past has been rugged and pursuing defense that usually converges on the ball carrier

in a bad mood. This year's contingent fits that mold.

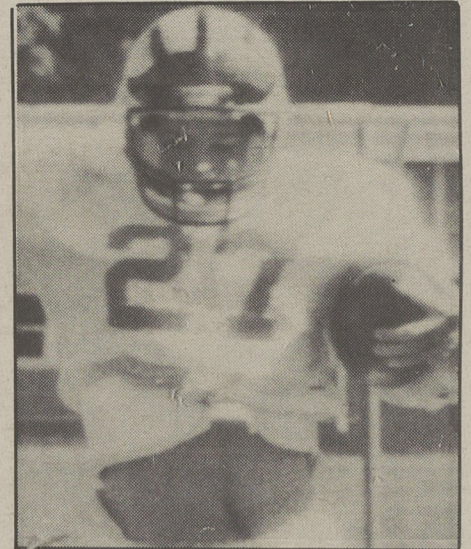
Also expected to make a contribution is Dave Martin, Kevin Gibson and Tip Kipling. Kirk claims these three will get their share of game action.

"We've still some areas in need of immediate attention," he said. There's a few holes to be filled. We've got some youngsters that haven't been in actual game conditions on this level. However, they just could surprise."

Depth is the chief concern again in the Lake-Lehman camp. While there's some solid front-line performers, they all must stay injury-free to enjoy a successful season.

In closing, Kirk added, "There's a certain chemistry developing with this team. They seem more self-assured and enthusiastic which could have a very positive reaction once the season starts."

One thing is certain, when you lineup to play the Knights, you'd better have your chinstrap snapped to your helmet.



Lake-Lehman's Jeff Martin gains yardage in a recent scrimmage game. (Photo by Ed Campbell)

Lake-Lehman 1984 roster

T. WILLY CADWALDER, quarterback, 6'2", 185 pounds, senior
 BILL BEARDE, split end, 5'9", 155 pounds, senior
 CHRIS VANGORDER, fullback, 6'1", 215 pounds, senior
 ED GAVLICK, offensive guard, 5'11", 180 pounds, senior
 TIP KIPLING, fullback, 5'11", 185 pounds, senior
 EARL WEIDNER, tight end, 6'1", 180 pounds, senior
 P.J. MALAK, split end, 5'11", 170 pounds, senior
 STEVE MAZUR, tight end, 5'11", 150 pounds, senior
 BILL BOYLE, defensive back, 5'8", 150 pounds, senior
 DAVE MARTIN, runningback, 5'10", 150 pounds, senior
 CHRIS KUKOSKY, offensive guard, 6'0", 180 pounds, junior
 BILL GEORGE, linebacker, 5'10", 180 pounds, junior
 JEFF MARTIN, runningback, 5'11", 180 pounds, junior
 JEFF RUZICKI, tackle, 6'3", 190 pounds, junior
 TOM STEPANSKI, tackle, 5'10", 180 pounds, junior
 KEITH KENDALL, tackle, 6'6", 195 pounds, tackle
 KEVIN GIBSON, guard, 5'11", 175 pounds, junior
 SCOTT KERKOWSKI, tackle, 5'7", 220 pounds, sophomore
 MIKE WILLIAMS, center, 6'1", 160 pounds, sophomore
 STEVE WHITTAKER, guard, 5'8", 160 pounds, sophomore
 JASON CADWALDER, center, 5'9", 150 pounds, sophomore
 BILL DAVIS, runningback, 5'10", 150 pounds, sophomore
 COREY METZGER, guard, 5'9", 160 pounds, sophomore
 ROCKY LOPASKY, split end, 5'3", 120 pounds, freshman
 ALLAN ANDES, tight end, 5'10", 180 pounds, freshman
 CHRIS FREDERICK, split end, 5'7", 140 pounds, freshman
 SCOTT SHAFFER, fullback, 5'9", 160 pounds, freshman
 MARK BULLOCK, runningback, 5'6", 140 pounds, freshman
 PAUL BULLOCK, runningback, 5'6", 140 pounds, freshman
 TOM MUSHALA, split end, 5'6", 150 pounds, split end
 ERIC MARUCA, split end, 6'0", 150 pounds, freshman
 RICK PERRY, quarterback, 5'8", 150 pounds, freshman
 TED NAUGLE, runningback, 5'8", 150 pounds, freshman



Looking forward to their final season as members of the Lake-Lehman football team are these seniors. From left, first row, Ed Gavlick, P.J. Malak, Dave Martin, Steve Mazur, Bill Bearde. Second row, Bill Boyle, Tim Kipling, Chris VanGorder, Earl Weidner, and T. Willy Cadwalder. (Photo by Ed Campbell)



Lake-Lehman football coach Mark Kirk offers some words of advice to the Black Knights following a recent practice.