

Tom Di Camillo, Sports Information Director  
Office: 610-436-3316; Home: 610-857-1353; Hotline: 610-436-2100  
Fax: 610-436-2966; E-Mail Address: tdicamillo@wcupa.edu  
*Fall Release 10 (Shippensburg Preview) - September 24, 2002*

## **Shippensburg Red Raiders @ West Chester Golden Rams** ***Saturday, September 28, 2002 @ John A. Farrell Stadium (1:30 p.m. kickoff)***

**WEST CHESTER, PA** - The West Chester University Golden Rams football team will host the Red Raiders of Shippensburg University on Saturday, September 28, at 1:30 p.m.

The Golden Rams (1-2) are coming off a solid performance in a loss to NCAA Division I-AA power Delaware Saturday night by the misleading score of 31-10. The Golden Rams trailed the Blue Hens by four (14-10) entering the fourth quarter and held the ball on offense 14:30 longer than Delaware.

The Red Raiders (1-2), meanwhile, are coming off a 31-14 throttling of Kutztown on Saturday in a Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference crossover game.

Saturday will also feature the annual Walk of Champions at WCU during halftime of the contest. The Golden Rams will honor all of its athletes who have earned conference, regional or national honors.

In addition, the 2001-02 WCU Male and Female Athlete and Scholar-Athlete of the Year will be announced.

### ***This Week's Opponent: Shippensburg***

**KUTZTOWN, PA** - Tyler Novak passed for three touchdowns to lead Shippensburg University to a 31-14 win over Kutztown University at KU on Saturday afternoon.

Novak was 10 of 17 for 207 yards and three touchdown passes of more than 40 - one going to Brandon Saner in the first half and two tossed to Will Perry in the second.

The game included 11 turnovers - seven by Kutztown - and saw the Red Raiders capitalize to the tune of 24 points off of miscues.

Shippensburg scored off a Golden Bear interception to start the offense. Brent Grimes' first of two interceptions set the Red Raiders up at the KU 18 before Shippensburg decided to line up for a 27-yard field goal attempt. Holder Richard Henshaw picked up the ball and ran 10 yards for the touchdown on the fake.

After another interception, this one hauled in by Eric Ranieri at the Kutztown 43, the Red Raiders made it 14-0 on a 40-yard strike from Novak to Saner with 5:50 left in the second quarter.

Kutztown (1-2) cut the lead in half on its next possession

when the Golden Bears drove 80 yards on nine plays, capped by a 35-yard pass from Rob Flowers to David Borden with 1:53 to play in the half.

But Shippensburg forced another turnover early in the third quarter, when Dan Walsh caused and recovered a fumble by Steven Gammage at Kutztown's 42. Craig Lough connected on a 42-yard field goal seven plays later to make it 17-7 with 11:04 left in the third.

Another interception set up Ship's next TD when Novak found Perry for a 43-yard score with 6:22 to play in the third.

In the fourth quarter, Kutztown made it 24-14 when Pete Mendez forced a Shippensburg fumble at the KU 25. Andre Davis scooped up the loose ball and scampered 75 yards for KU's first fumble return for a TD since the 2000 season. But the Red Raiders iced the game with 85-yard march that featured Novak's 51-yard pass to Perry with 5:02 to play.

Shippensburg out-gained Kutztown 375-247 as John Kuhn led SU with 63 rushing yards on 10 carries. Saner caught three passes for 70 yards, while Walsh and Ranieri led the defense with eight tackles each.

### ***The Last Meeting: September 25, 1999***

**SHIPPENSBURG, PA** - West Chester University surged back from a 21-0 first-quarter deficit to forge a 24-24 tie in the third quarter, but the Red Raiders of Shippensburg countered with a couple of late touchdowns to defeat the Golden Rams 48-30 at Seth Grove Stadium.

The loss to Shippensburg was the first by WCU since 1982, and it left the Golden Rams 0-3. WCU would win its final eight games to finish 8-3 and capture the PSAC East Championship.

The Golden Ram offense finally became untracked against the Red Raiders as Jason Muchler topped WCU's rushing attack with a career high 147 yards on 24 carries. The attempts and yardage were both career highs for the converted tight end. Muchler also caught one pass for 16 yards and burrowed his way to a two-yard touchdown run.

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Muchler's running was complemented by sophomore Don DeFilipo's quick scampering into the Ship secondary. DeFilipo averaged 9.8 yards per carry, running for 59 yards on just six carries. He had a 17-yard kick return as well.

Quarterback Mike Mitros found his targets all afternoon, including WR Kevin Ingram. Ingram grabbed 10 passes for 125 yards and two touchdowns, helping Mitros finish the day 22 for 44 with 274 yards and three touchdowns.

Ingram wasn't his only receiver however. Adrian Wilkerson scored on a 14-yard delivery from Mitros, ending the day with three catches for 42 yards. Mitros spread the passing around to included eight different receivers.

## ***The Coaches***

Shippensburg head coach Rocky Rees (West Chester '71) is in his 13th season with the Red Raiders and his 18th as a college head coach...he is 70-65-1 at Shippensburg and 106-80-2 all-time...Rees holds the WCU single-game record for rushing touchdowns when he scored five in a game in 1968...Rick Daniels is in his 14th year as the head coach of the Golden Rams...he is 82-59-1 all-time...Daniels is second on the all-time win list behind the legendary Dr. W. Glenn Killinger.

## ***WCU vs. Shippensburg - The History***

WCU leads the series 15-6-1...the last meeting occurred on September 25, 1999, as Shippensburg won 48-30...it was the largest point total WCU had surrendered to a Division II team since falling to New Haven 58-57 in 1990...the last meeting at John A. Farrell Stadium was on September 26, 1998, a 36-21 WCU win...the Golden Rams have won six out of the last seven games dating back to 1983...the Golden Rams first met Shippensburg in 1921 - a 63-7 Red Raider triumph.

## ***Golden Rams hold their own at Delaware***

**NEWARK, DE** - The West Chester University offense held the ball for 14:30 longer than Division I-AA Delaware and junior running back **Mike Eckmeyer (Glendora, NJ/Triton)** rushed for his ninth straight 100-yard game, but Delaware scored 17 points in the fourth quarter to pull away 31-10.

Findora carried the ball 29 times for 170 yards and a 5.9 yards per attempt average. The 170 yards was the third-best total of his career and the second-highest amount by a WCU back vs. Delaware in the history of the series.

Sophomore quarterback **Bob Findora (Downingtown/Coatesville)** completed 17 of 37 passes for 164 yards and a three-yard touchdown to senior TE **Ryan Koch (Muncy/Muncy)**, but four interceptions killed three Golden Rams drives. The fourth was returned 56 yards for a score. Delaware picked off three passes in the end zone and one on the goal line.

Findora found sophomore **Corey DeForrest (Wycombe/Council Rock)** five times for 59 yards in the game as the second-year receiver led all players in both receptions and yards. Sophomore **Bobby DiSands (Prosepect Park/Interboro)** grabbed four catches for 35 yard, while sophomore **Omar Harris (West Chester/Henderson)** had two for 36.

Sophomore kicker **Dan Wilbourne (Doylestown/Central Bucks East)** converted a 30-yard field goal just before intermission to pull WCU within four at 7-3.

Findora helped guide the WCU offense to 367 total yards against Delaware on 84 offensive plays. The Blue Hens ran just 60 plays, while the WCU offensive line permitted just two sacks for -8 yards. In addition, the WCU offense converted 13 of 20 third-down plays for a stellar 65%.

The Golden Rams also could not capitalize on four lost fumbles by the Blue Hens. Sophomore DB **Joe Brooks (Clark Summit/Abington Heights)** tied a school record by recovering three of the loose balls, while junior CB **Calvin Braxton (Philadelphia/Central)** ripped the ball out of Antawn Jenkins' hands at the Delaware five-yard line on what assuredly would have been a Blue Hen score. Brooks tied the record set by Pete Robinson on September 15, 1979, at Delaware when he recovered the three fumbles. Ironically, Robinson was a native of Newark, DE, and graduated from Newark High School.

Braxton finished the game with four solo tackles, while junior LB **Scott Linus (Newcastle, DE/William Penn)** and junior DB **Jim McCullough (Laurel Springs, NJ/Triton)** each had four solo tackles and two assists. Linus also broke up a pass, while senior MLB **Brandon Neely (Willow Grove/Upper Moreland)** four solos, an assist and a forced fumble.

## ***Ramblings***

The Golden Rams need just five wins to reach 500 all-time...WCU is now the second winningest Division II program in the nation behind Texas A&M - Kingsville...the Golden Rams have finished first or second in the PSAC East in 30 of the 36 years they have competed in the league...seniors **Brandon Neeley (Willow Grove/Upper Moreland)** and **Jason Csernyak (Bethlehem/Southern Lehigh)** are the team captains in 2002...WCU was picked to finish fourth in the PSAC East in the league's preseason poll voted on by the head coaches.

## ***Internet Broadcast***

All 11 Golden Ram football games will be broadcast on Red Zone Media this season...fans may access Red Zone Media through the WCU webpage: <http://iws.wcupa.edu/athletics/>...on the main page will be a link to the football games...seniors **Sean Kane (Guthriesville/Bishop Shanahan)** and **Chris Rudolph (Mortonville/Bishop Shanahan)** will handle the broadcast beginning at 1:15 p.m. EDT.

## ***Radio Broadcast***

All seven day games will be broadcast on WCHE 1520 AM...Saturday's game will be simulcast with the internet broadcast and begin at 1:15 p.m.

## ***The Next Game***

The Golden Rams will host Kutztown University on Saturday night, October 5, at 7 p.m...it will be Homecoming 2002 with Golden Bears as the guests for the second straight year.