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Football Release 18 - November 11, 2002

Mansfield Univ. Mountaineers @ West Chester Univ. Golden Rams

Saturday, November 16, 2002 - Kickoff 1:30 p.m. - John A. Farrell Stadium, West Chester, PA

WEST CHESTER, PA - The Golden Rams of West Chester University (4-6/3-2) will host the Mountaineers of Mansfield University (3-6/2-3) on Saturday afternoon in the season finale at John A. Farrell Stadium.

Senior Day kickoff for the Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference Eastern Division contest is set for 1:30 p.m.

The Golden Rams are coming off a heartbreaking 31-24 loss at Millersville on Saturday, while Mansfield hung tough with Bloomsburg in a 17-6 setback.

Golden Rams fall to Millersville 31-24

MILLERSVILLE, PA - West Chester University junior tail back **Mike Eckmeyer** (*Glendora, NJ/Triton*) carried the ball 38 times for a career-best 227 yards, smashing the WCU single-season rushing mark, but Millersville's Chuck Andrew found Ryan Clift with an 11-yard scoring strike with just :38 left in regulation to give the Marauders a 31-24 victory over the Golden Rams.

The loss dipped WCU's record to 4-6 overall and 3-2 in the PSAC East, while Millersville improved to 2-7 and 2-3 in the league.

The Golden Rams had tied the score at 24-24 with 1:32 left in the game when senior TE **Ryan Koch** (*Muncy/Muncy*) grabbed an 11-yard touchdown pass from sophomore **QB Bob Findora** (*Downingtown/Coatesville*), but the Marauders marched down the field to grab the win.

Eckmeyer finished the game with 227 yards on 38 carries, setting career highs with both totals while also scoring a pair of touchdowns. He had a six-yard run in the first quarter and a 37-yard score in the fourth. And, his 39-yard burst set up the Findora-to-Koch TD connection near the end of the game.

Eckmeyer crashed through the single-season rushing record of 1461 yards set by Joe Iacone 40 years ago in 1962. He now has amassed 1470 yards in 2002, while his career mark of 2496 yards ranks seventh all-time.

He jumped from 10th place to seventh in just one game by passing Jim Lindsay (2326, 1993-96), Bert Nye (2333, 1966-68) and Mike Irving (2488, 1981-84), and he needs just 11

carries this Saturday vs. Mansfield to break the single-season record for rushing attempts (Derrick Price - 291 in 1990).

Lost in all the records was Eckmeyer's extension of his 100-yard game streak. He now has rushed for at least 100 yards in 16 straight games, while his 16 total career 100-yard contests is just one short of second place (17 by Jason Sims) all-time on the WCU charts. Derrick Price holds the record of 21. Eckmeyer's 227 yards ranks as the ninth-best single-game total in school history.

Sophomore kicker **Dan Wilbourne** (*Doylestown/Central Bucks East*) converted a 35-yard field goal attempt in the first half to give WCU a 10-7 lead.

Senior MLB **Brandon Neely** (*Willow Grove/Upper Moreland*) led the WCU defense with 11 hits on eight tackles and three assists. Sophomore **Graham Eggleston** (*Mechanicsburg/Mechanicsburg*) forced a fumble, broke up a pass and had five solo tackles, while sophomore **Eric Maynard** (*Camp Hill/East Pennsboro*) registered three tackles, two assists and had 1/2 sack (-1 yard) and one tackle for loss (-2 yards).

Junior DB **Jim McCullough** (*Laurel Springs, NJ/Triton*) broke up one pass and had two tackles, but his biggest play was a 30-yard interception return.

Junior DE **Jake Walker** (*Doylestown/Central Bucks East*) produced a one-yard tackle for loss, two tackles and recovered a fumble.

This Week's Opponent: Mansfield

The Mounties dropped a defensive struggle to Bloomsburg 17-6...QB Travis Motley completed 18 passes for 196 yards and one TD...Motley has thrown a TD pass in all nine games...Arnaldo Santiago caught eight balls for 104 yards...playing in their last home game, seniors Conway Brown had three kickoff returns for 129, including a 79-yarder...Chamell Hampton recorded 11 tackles including four solo, 3.5 tackles for loss and a sack...Dan Holland posted 18 tackles, including eight solo, 1.5 TFLs and one sack.

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The Last Meeting: October 6, 2001

WEST CHESTER, PA - Current senior WR **Brian Bradley** (*Philadelphia/South Philadelphia*) caught a 25-yard touchdown pass from then-rookie starting quarterback **Bob Findora** (*Downingtown/Coatesville*) on the first play of overtime as the West Chester University Golden Rams defeated Mansfield University 14-7 on Saturday, October 6, 2001.

Findora spelled injured starter **George Caroulis** (*Upper Darby/Upper Darby*) who was sidelined.

The Golden Rams defeated the Mounties for the 30th consecutive time, improving their all-time record vs. MU to 30-0. Eckmeyer rushed for a then-career best 129 yards, while Don DeFilipo scored on a one-yard TD dive in the second quarter.

Findora completed 16 of 36 pass attempts for 195 yards and one TD. All were career highs at that point. He hit eight different receivers with passes on the afternoon, including six to current sophomore TE **Joe Bernatowicz** (*Langhorne/Neshaminy*), the Ohio University transfer who started in place of the injured Koch. He finished with 52 receiving yards.

Bradley, who has flipped between wideout and running back for most of his career, finished the game with two catches and a team-best 66 yards. He had a 41-yarder early in the game.

Red-shirt freshman WR **Michael Todd** (*Pottstown/St. Pius X*) recorded a pair of catches for 30 yards, while current sophomore WR **Omar Harris** (*West Chester/Henderson*), who missed the first three games of the season with an injury, snared two for 20 yards.

Mansfield's Joe Bennett tied the game at 7-7 early in the fourth quarter when he caught a 20-yard TD pass from quarterback Travis Motley, capping a 10-play, 80-yard drive. Motley completed 13 of 30 passes for 156 yards and one score.

Findora's passing was augmented by Eckmeyer's running. He was given the ball 20 times vs. the Mounties and produced 129 yards, averaging 6.4 yards on every carry. DeFilipo ran 11 times for 34 yards and a score, while Findora scrambled for 20.

The WCU defense limited the Mounties to 33 yards rushing and 159 yards passing. Brian Kersey had six tackles - three for losses of 14 yards. One of those losses was an eight-yard sack. Shariff Blackwell recorded three tackles, a tackle for loss and four pass breakups, while LeRoy Miller had five solo tackles and one assist. He also broke up a pass with a big hit.

The win for the Golden Rams snapped a four-game losing streak and a six-game home losing string. The overtime game was the first ever played in WCU's John A. Farrell Stadium.

Success when the leaves fall

Much had been made of the Golden Rams lack of victories in late August and September...since 1997, the Golden Rams have produced a 4-19 record during the first full month of the season...however, since 1997, the Golden Rams are 27-12 in the months of October and November...of the 23 games played before October 1, the Golden Rams have competed against NCAA I-AA clubs seven times and NCAA Division II perennial playoff powerhouses IUP, UC-Davis, New Haven and Bloomsburg on 10 different occasions.

The Coaches

Chris Woods is in his second campaign at Mansfield with a 5-14 record...his overall career record is the same (.263)...Rick Daniels is in his 14th year as the head coach of the Golden Rams...he is 85-63-1 all-time (.574)...Daniels is second on the all-time win list behind the legendary Dr. W. Glenn Killinger.

WCU vs. Mansfield - The History

The Golden Rams are undefeated in their 44-year rivalry with Mansfield...WCU leads the series 30-0...the first meeting was in 1958 when WCU shut out the Mounties 19-0...the Golden Rams blanked Mansfield nine times in their first 14 clashes...Mansfield never scored more than eight points in any of those meetings...the Golden Rams posted their 11th shutout of MU in 1998...it was a 39-0 affair in Farrell Stadium...the Mounties almost pulled off the upset in 1994, taking a commanding first-half lead, but Dave MacDonald guided the Golden Rams to a thrilling 30-27 comeback win...this is Mansfield's second straight visit to WCU...WCU won last year's matchup 14-7 in overtime.

Milestones & Honors

Eckmeyer was named the **PSAC East Co-Offensive Player of the Week** for the third time this season...he was also named to the **D2.Com National Division II Honorable Mention** squad...his 38 attempts vs. Millersville was three shy of the school record and his career high...his 227 yards was also his career high and the second time he has amassed over 200 yards in a game in his career...it is the 9th highest single-game total in school history.

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Eckmeyer has extended his consecutive 100-yard game streak record to 16...he is now third all-time in career 100-yard games at WCU with 16...he needs one more to catch Jason Sims (17 from 1985-87)...Derrick Price holds the record of 21 100-yard games in a career...he has jumped from 10th all-time on the career rushing charts to seventh in just one game by passing Jim Lindsay (2326, 1993-96), Bert Nye (2333, 1966-68) and Mike Irving (2488, 1981-84) with 2496 yards...he is just the 12th Golden Ram to rush for over 2000 career yards...next on the career list is Scott Eberly (2809, 1990-93)...Eckmeyer shattered the WCU single-season rushing record by upping his total to 1470 with one game still to play...he is the first Golden Ram to rush for over a 1000 yards since Thomas Fulton did it in 1997...he broke Joe Iacone's (1461 yards in 1962) 40-year-old single-season rushing record vs. Millersville...his 10 straight 100-yard games is a record in a season...his 1617 all-purpose yards 7th all-time in a single-season at WCU.

Ramblings

The Golden Rams entered the season as the second winningest Division II program in the nation behind Texas A&M Kingsville...WCU needs just two wins to reach 500...the Golden Rams have finished first or second in the PSAC East in 30 of the 36 years they have competed in the league...WCU has won 18 PSAC East crowns.

Individual PSAC Leaders

Eckmeyer is - by far - the leading rusher in the PSAC with his 147.0 yards per game average...he is 1st in all-purpose yards (161.7) and scoring (9.2 ppg)...he is 8th in total offense (147.0)...Findora is 3rd in passing yards per game (225.0), 3rd in total offense per game (217.2) and 4th in pass efficiency (127.7 rating)...DeForrest is 7th in receptions per game (4.70) and 9th in receiving yards per game (67.3)...sophomore ***Joe Brooks (Clark Summit/Abington Heights)*** is tied for 2nd in the PSAC in fumble recoveries...he has three...all three came at Delaware to tie a school record for most recovered fumbles in a single game...Neely is tied for 20th in the league in tackles (7.1 per game)...Walker is 6th in the PSAC in sacks per game (0.62), while Eggleston is tied for 5th in TFL's (1.50) and tied for 4th in sacks (0.65).

NCAA II Individual Leaders

Eckmeyer is ranked 6th in the country in rushing, tied for 11th in scoring and is listed 10th in all-purpose yards.

Team PSAC Leaders

West Chester is 3rd in passing offense (228.7 y/g) and 4th in rushing offense (164.8 y/g)...WCU is 1st in total offense (393.5 y/g)...WCU is 5th in scoring offense (27.0 ppg)...WCU's 203 first downs ranks as the 2nd best in the PSAC...WCU is 3rd in pass efficiency (127.4)...WCU is the least penalized team in the league...the Golden Rams are penalized an average of 42.3 yards per game...WCU is the best in the league at converting third downs (71 for 155 for a 45.8% rating)...WCU's defense is third-best in the PSAC at stopping teams in the red zone...opponents only score 69.4% of the time (25 for 36)...WCU leads the league in field goal percentage (5 for 7 - .714).

NCAA II Individual Leaders

West Chester is 35th in the country in total offense.

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 this week's broadcast from Farrell Stadium in West Chester, PA, beginning at 1:15 p.m. EST.

Radio Broadcast in Chester County

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