

WVDN AUG 25, 2021



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Spartan Football Offense Ready to Roll in 2021

By by brandon baker | WVDN AUG 25, 2021



Last year, the Greenbrier East Spartans had one of the better offensive teams in the last decade at the school.

They racked up 43.8 points per game and scored at least 35 points in every game, except the season finale against Princeton. They averaged 422 total yards and 328 on the ground.

Basically, the Spartans were an offensive juggernaut.

To have that same success this season, East will have to replenish numbers without a few graduated seniors that played pivotal roles last year.

Colby Piner—1,000-yard rusher, first team all-state, Fulton Walker award winner—is the biggest loss on the offensive side of the football. He was a threat to score every time he touched the ball and consistently put pressure on opposing defenses. Nate Baker played multiple positions and was one of the better blockers in the area, Quentin Wilson was a second team all-state pick that was second on the team in rushing yards, Christian McNeely was second in catches and Grant Hall was a two-year starter on the offensive line.

However, head coach Ray Lee thinks his 2021 roster is up to the task of moving forward and continuing the offensive show that the Spartan fans have become accustomed to.

“What we lost last year is tough to replace. We had guys who were very dependable and experienced. We

could line Nate up anywhere in the backfield and along with Quentin and Colby, no one knew where or what we were going to do. However, I am very pleased with our skill guys we have now. Each one gets better every day and each one offers their own individual flair to what we are trying to accomplish," Lee said.

A good offense starts up front and fortunately for the Spartans, one of the best linemen in the state suits up for the green and gold.

Jacob Wickline is a three-year starter and has multiple Division 1 scholarship offers and even more interest from other D-1 schools also. The 6-foot-five-inch senior right guard will anchor that unit. Left tackle Landon Hayes is a two-year starter that brings enormous potential and left guard JT Spencer has started since he was a freshman and is as impressive on both sides of the ball as you are going to see. Right tackle Seth Fogus will be the other starter in his first year. Garrett Bennett and Garon Wiseman will be available to provide depth as well.

"Our offensive line is very experienced and very physical. These guys are going to have to carry us throughout the season. We are happy with where they are mentally and physically right now and look forward to using their speed and size to our advantage," Lee stated.

Monquelle Davis is back for his third season at quarterback. As a sophomore last season, Davis threw for 770 yards and 10 touchdowns, and rushed for 682 yards and nine more touchdowns. Davis is an electric player, but it's his leadership that has gotten gradually better each year that has caught Coach Lee's eye.

"Monquelle has a ton of experience under his belt taking snaps for three years, while also lining up at receiver at times, which throws teams off. Monquelle has turned into a great leader for our offense and has a great football mind," Lee said.

Davis will turn and handoff a lot to Ian Cline (SO) this season and when he decides to pass, will have a plethora of options there as well with Bryson Ormsbee (SR), Lucas McCallister (JR) and Ethan Holliday (SO) ready to step in and catch balls.

Cline is a speedster that had a 50-yard run in last weeks scrimmage and another big gainer on the third possession too. McCallister had a couple big gains as well.

Braden Bragg will be the tight end and has taken a solid grasp on that spot.

"Our receiving corps is very talented and speedy. Each one of those guys can stretch the field on any given play. Cline has the ability to really change the game on any carry. He has plenty of game experience having started on defense last season as a freshman. We are extremely excited to see what he can do behind our guys up front," Lee said.

"Bragg has also been a very pleasant surprise taking over the TE spot. He has the ability to run our short routes with good technique and is very dependable on his receptions," the coach concluded.

Gavin Bennett, Jarrett McHale, Craig Barnhouse and Levi Wagner are other players who will see the field on offense.

Dear Abby: Wednesday, August 25

By Abigail Van Buren | WVDN AUG 25, 2021

Young Woman Feels Pressure To Be 'Perfect'

DEAR ABBY: My name is "Lucia," I am 15 and I live in Santa Catarina, Brazil. My high school classmates and I saw a letter from "Needs a Direction, Atlanta" online. That's why I'm asking for some advice from you. Here in my country, there is a lot of awareness about female power and body positivity, however, we also have a standard of beauty that many girls can't or don't want to follow. On social media we see a lot of perfect girls with thousands of followers on Instagram. I don't let myself be shaken by my appearance or my defects, but sometimes I feel "excluded" because I'm not like the "amazing girl on social media." I like the way I look, but I feel out of place in relation to what is expected of teenage beauty. What advice would you give me to avoid feeling inferior to the "amazing girls on social media"? — COPING WITH BEING ME

DEAR COPING: Understand that outward appearance is only one aspect of a person. Looking like they were stamped out of a cookie cutter is a mistake too many girls (and women) make. Please know you are far from the only female who struggles with her self-image. The images and lives displayed on social media are oftentimes not reality. What you must remember is the importance of being YOUR AUTHENTIC SELF. Be neat, clean and well-groomed in your daily life. Be friendly to others. What are your talents, qualities and goals? Concentrate on developing them because they not only won't fade with time, they will continue to improve. If you do this, others will find you attractive, and it won't require cosmetic surgery, regardless of how popular it may be in your country. (And mine.)

DEAR ABBY: A large neighborhood group, social and friendly, has been invaded by someone with wandering hands. I was the recipient of three incidents. I know of other women who have experienced the same, yet they won't share it with their husbands. My husband saw it happen and was on it. He not only protected me, but made sure the offender knew we would not tolerate it. The result? We are now the outcasts of gatherings! Everyone is trying to convince us to "make up" and accept the error of the "drunk." We forgive, yet we have chosen not to be in that group. Our neighbors keep saying we should "forgive and forget" and "get over it" so we can rejoin them. It's not that easy. As much as we initially enjoyed everyone's company, it's no longer the same. Please advise. — AT A CROSSROADS IN THE SOUTH

DEAR AT A CROSSROADS: Tell your well-meaning (and forgiving) neighbors you know they mean well, but that when the person put his hands on you, you felt disrespected and threatened. (I assume "the drunk" never offered you an apology.) If you prefer not to be in that person's company, that is your privilege. Be sure your neighbors know you would be open to socializing with them separately, so they won't feel you are snubbing them. Then direct your energy toward cultivating a different group with whom you feel more comfortable.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Spartan Defense May Surprise Many This Season

By by brandon baker | WVDN AUG 25, 2021



As good as the Greenbrier East Spartans were on offense last season, the defense had their ups and downs consistently from week to week.

That is not to say East was not good, but just inconsistent.

For example, over the first four games of the year, Defensive coordinator Aaron Baker's bunch were as good as they have been in a long time and gave up just an average of 11 points. But the last four contests, East allowed 51 points per game and played shootouts in each one.

The level of competition stepped a notch and was a big component for those large numbers as modern-day football is geared now more towards favoring the offense with all the spread schemes and so forth.

This season, the Spartans defense may actually be a strength and surprise a lot of people as they are very experienced at almost every position.

Luke Carola and JT Spencer will man the defensive tackle positions and Jacob Wickline will play nose tackle. Carola and Wickline are first year starters, but have experience. Wickline is one of the better offensive linemen in the state and Carola is a quick and smart player that will be where he needs to be each play. Spencer will be starting for the third season and has turned into a very good player for the Spartans. Last season he had 65 tackles and five sacks and will look to add even more to both of those columns.

"Our defensive line is quick and agile. Each one of these guys brings a tough, hard-nosed approach to our scheme up front. JT was very solid for us last season on the defensive line and now adding Wickline and Carola in there to help him, we expect big things out of all three of these guys," Coach Ray Lee said.

The linebacking corps will be a huge asset on paper as both inside and outside spots feature multi-year starters.

Braden Bragg and Jarett McHale will be on the outside with Garrett Bennett and Kamon Anderson on the inside. Anderson had 57 tackles and three sacks a year ago. Bennett had 55 tackles and five sacks. McHale also got 38 stops and Bragg had 29 so it is easy to see why Coach Lee lights up when speaking of the position.

“Our linebacking group is very active and all four of these guys play downhill. The group feeds off the energy and enthusiasm that Kamon brings every day in practice. Kamon is our leader on defense and really does a nice job of getting us in the right spots and making great adjustments on the run. All these guys have experience and are athletic for the spot they are in. McHale can run with anyone on the outside and is an excellent pass defender. Bennett makes the move from D-line to linebacker, and we couldn’t be more pleased. Bragg makes great decisions in both protecting the edge as well as dropping into coverage,” Lee stated.

Finally, the secondary is not only loaded with good skill and cover guys, but if they happen to recover a fumble or intercept a pass it may be six points every time.

Levi Wagner and Bryson Ormsbee are the starting cornerbacks, and both are explosive with the ball in their hands as evidenced by the way they play offense. Ian Cline (40 tackles in 2020) is the free safety and Lucas McCallister (team-leading 3 interceptions last year) will man the strong safety spot. Like the corners, these two are also fast and explosive with the football and the Spartans may have one of the more exciting defensive backfields in the area.

“Our secondary has been great so far in the preseason. Each player brings experience, and all these guys can tackle in the open field. All are aggressive and have the ability to take an interception to the end zone when they get their hands on one,” Lee said.

Noah Dotson is back to handle both the kicking and punting duties this season. Last year he connected on 30-of-38 extra points and 2-of-3 field goals. The younger brother of WVU women’s soccer player and East grad, Emma Dotson, Noah naturally works hard at his craft.

“Noah has to be one of the hardest working special teams’ guys I’ve ever had the pleasure of coaching. He works very hard at perfecting his skill set and puts in a ton of time and effort to making sure he is good at what he does. His improvement over the last two seasons has been tremendous and we feel very confident in Noah’s abilities to put the ball through the uprights,” Lee said about his kicker.

WVSP Sergeant John Syner Passes At Age 52

By wv daily news | WVDN AUG 25, 2021



On Saturday, Aug. 21 Sergeant John Syner, 52, detachment commander of the West Virginia State Police Marlinton Detachment, passed away while working on his property in Fayette County. John was loved by so many in the community and worked diligently to serve the community in any way he could. John was a loving husband, father, and pops.

His family, as well as his extended family, the West Virginia State Police, has suffered a great loss. Please keep the family in your thoughts and prayers.

CODID Task Force Summary: August 24

By Sen. Stephen Baldwin | WVDN AUG 25, 2021

AUGUST 24, UPDATE

The Greater Greenbrier COVID-19 Task Force met this morning via conference call and reports the following information.

1. GREENBRIER COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT. County number: 2,093 cases, 1,045 probable, 3 suspect, 2,929 recovered, 146 active, 4 hospitalized, 66 deaths. We've been in the red for several days and expect to stay there for a while. We are in an area of "substantial spread" and everyone

should be wearing masks indoors. Over 90% of the new active cases we have are delta variant cases. We are busy with contact tracing in the office right now.

2. **BREAKTHROUGH CASES.** There have been 85 breakthrough cases in Greenbrier County, out of over 17,200 fully vaccinated Greenbrier County residents. Vaccines are not perfect, but the efficacy rates of the COVID vaccine are exceedingly high. Only 0.49% of local citizens who are fully vaccinated have developed COVID.
3. **GREENBRIER COUNTY SCHOOLS.** All students and staff will mask indoors and on buses through the end of September. Vaccine clinics continue to be available for students who are 12 and above. Our HVAC systems have been updated over the summer. Quarantine guidelines from the CDC are different this year, which will allow us to keep schools open when there are positive cases for students who are vaccinated and/or masked when in close contact with a positive case.
4. **GREENBRIER VALLEY MEDICAL CENTER.** Our facility is closed to visitors right now in order to keep our staff and patients safe. COVID testing for surgical patients has been reinstated as a safety measure. We have six COVID positives in-house currently with 3 patients in the ICU.
5. **ROBERT C BYRD CLINIC.** We had 18 new positive cases come in over the weekend from our testing, which continues on a daily basis. We urge folks to mask, get vaccinated, and take precautions. You can get a vaccine anytime by walking in and we also offer a vaccine clinic each Thursday.
6. **RAINELLE MEDICAL CENTER.** We are doing free COVID testing daily from 10am-12pm and 1pm-4pm. Vaccines continue to be offered every Thursday by appointment only from 9am to 5:30pm. We are doing free sports physicals every day from 8am-6pm at our site (behind Eastern Greenbrier & Greenbrier East). Please call to make an appointment at 304-645-1052. On August 25, from 12-2pm we are hosting an open house at our school-based site for the community.
7. **COMMITTEE ON AGING.** Both of our centers are open for activities and meals (Fairlea and Rupert). We are also continuing to provide all regular services. Masks are required at our facilities.
8. **THE HUB.** Meals will begin again in a few weeks. The cafe, tech express, and dinner specials will be available throughout the 21-22 school year. We are taking a few weeks to make plans right now. Americorps positions are open now if you know folks who are interested.
9. **PFIZER.** The Pfizer vaccine is fully FDA approved. That was announced this week.
10. **WV SENATE.** Statewide, 0.44% percent of West Virginians who have been fully vaccinated have experienced a breakthrough case of the virus, while 0.007% of those fully vaccinated have died from the coronavirus. Where are the breakthrough cases occurring? In all sectors of society, but 53% of breakthrough cases are among those in nursing homes. Those who are fully vaccinated are less likely to contract COVID, less likely to be hospitalized, and far less likely to die from it.
11. **WEEKLY MEETING.** Since we are in the midst of a surge, our Task Force meets weekly to stay on top of the situation.