

I believe that I have found the score of Walton's first ever football game. The earliest game I had previously been able to find was a 19-0 loss to the Wirt JV on October 12, 1938, which the Wirt County yearbook referred to as Walton's "second ever game." I looked for an earlier game in the Roane County papers but found nothing, and didn't bother to look in any other papers because I assumed they played a JV team and it wouldn't have been reported. By luck, last night I was sifting through old copies of the Parkersburg News when I found a Walton score in the AP report: Walton lost to Sissonville 39-0 on October 7, 1938. I wish it could have been a win, but at least now we know who Walton's first game was against.

I was poking around old copies of the Parkersburg News yesterday looking for All-State teams, when I found a writeup of a Spencer-Williamstown basketball game. According to the News, SHS beat Williamstown 229-9 on December 18, 1920. I assumed this was a typo, and while they didn't provide a boxscore, they repeated the score in the game writeup. Apparently Coach Alleman and two players (Goff and Every) were sick, but it didn't seem to slow SHS down.

I spent the last couple of days auditing the LKC records I compiled, checking each school's results against all opponents to find errors and omissions. I found two that concern Spencer, one game that was left out and another with a contradictory score.

9/27/1957: Spencer lost to Wirt 7-0. That puts them at 2-7 for the year.

9/14/1973: The Rupicola claims Spencer won 13-7, while the Jackson Herald claims Ripley won by the same score. I'll have to eventually check to see what the Roane papers say as it may have been a misprint in the yearbook.

This has me worried that we are missing other games. There are several years in the 1950s and 1960s (1951, 1953, 1956, 1957, 1959, 1960, 1962, 1965-68) in which I only have record of 8 or 9 games per year. I am certain that 1956, 1959, 1967 and 1968 are complete, because I looked those years up in the Roane papers. I'm beginning to wonder if I shouldn't check those other seasons too just to be sure. I am certain now that I have a record of all Spencer's LKC games, though.

Here is an update of the winningest coaches in the LKC:

Fred Taylor, 210 (Walton and Ravenswood, 1962-1996)
Kenny Wright, 193 (Pennsboro and Ritchie, 1965-2000)
Danny Tennant, 177 (Parkersburg Catholic, 1984-2008)
Jim Hamric, 160 (Walton, Spencer and Roane, 1969-1996)
Cline Stansberry, 128 (Doddridge, 1958-1980)
Mike Lucas, 111 (Catholic, Harrisville, Wirt and Ritchie, 1978-2007)
John Stender, 109 (Tyler County, 1978-1992)
Wayne Underwood, 105 (Calhoun, 1947-1961)
Lou Nocida, 104 (Sistersville, 1977-1986)
Dick Sturm, 81 (Ravenswood, 1997-2008)
Ron Sirk, 81 (Clay, 1993-2005)

Please note that I have only counted wins for years in which the individual coached at a school that was a member of the LKC. Nocida coached at other non-LKC schools and Hamric, Stansberry, Stender, Underwood and Sirk all coached at their respective schools prior to the school joining the LKC (or after leaving, as in the case of Hamric and Stender)

I also found that a Spencer player made the All-State team in 1922. His name was Johnson and he made the team as an end.

The Times Record
Thursday October 15, 1936
Spencer, W. Va.

LOCALS TAKE DEDICATION GAME BY 8-0

GRANTSVILLE DOWNED HERE IN FIRST NIGHT GAME FOR ROANE COUNTY

STIFF STRUGGLE

TRICKY OFFENCE FINALLY SOLVED; JACKETS SCORE POINTS IN FIRST QUARTER

Spencer high's fighting Yellow Jackets eleven continued its march towards an undefeated season by downing their neighboring county rivals from Calhoun county, Friday night by a score of 8-0, in the first night football game ever played at Spencer.

The victory was a fitting climax to exercises dedicating the recently installed lighting system, and a crowd conservatively estimated at 3,000 people was on hand for the opening kick-off at 8 p. m. However, rain started falling in torrents before the end of the first quarter, and a large percentage of the fans were forced to seek shelter.

HARD BATTLE

The victory was won only after a bitter struggle, as coach Hick Hamrick sent a heavy, fast charging and smart team onto the field and in Clyton and Heffner, presented two of the finest backs that have performed on the local field in several seasons. These two youngsters kept Spencer in terror throughout the contest, as ones in the open, it was nearly impossible to bring them down. The heavy going seemed to hamper these youngsters very little, and Heffer delighted the fans on more than one occasion by his clever handling of the slippery ball on punts and returning them for substantial gains on most occasions.

SPENCER SCORES EARLY

Spencer accounted for its eight points early in the game and then held on grimly to their ultimate margin of victory. Making a slow start the locals were completely bewildered by the tricky offence presented by the visitors, and were on the defensive for more than half of the first period. Clayton, Heffner and Stump made repeated gains on single and double reverses, until the Yellow Jackets finally gained possession of the ball, about midfield. Unable to gain consistently,

Mace punted the ball talking a bad bounce and striking Heffner going on over the goal line. The speedy back went back and got the pigskin and attempted to run it out into safe territory but was downed back of the goal line by Otis Buckhannon, giving Spencer two points through the medium of a safety. The ball was brought out to the twenty yard line where Grantsville was given a free kick, the ball going back to the Spencer forty yard line, from which point the Yellow Jackets started a drive that culminated a few minutes later in the only touchdown of the game.

ANDERSON SHINES

Standing out prominently in the touchdown march was the smashing of “Blondy” Anderson, who crashed the center of the Calhoun line for repeated gains. Mace and Cooper also contributed to the ground gaining with Kincaid doing a nice job of blocking for his mates. Getting the ball on the twenty yard marker Mace then crossed up the visitors by heaving a nifty pass which was gobbled in by Otis Buckhannon on the six yard marker, for a first down. On the next play Grantsville was off side and penalized to within one yard of the goal line. Spencer lined up for action and on a quarterback sneak Kincaid went through his own right guard to score. Mace passed to Cooper for the extra point, but officials ruled that he was less than five yards back of the scrimmage line when he passed the ball and disallowed the point, making the score 8-0.

Throughout the three remaining periods, with the rain coming down in torrents, and the field as slippery as grease, the two teams battled on practically on even terms. Late in the second period the visitors got steam up and carries the ball to the Spencer nine yard line for a first down, but at this point the Yellow Jackets defense tightened, and in four tries, the Big Red warriors gained but two yards, Spencer taking the ball and kicking out of danger.

The entire second half was a merry battle in the mud with neither team having any advantage. Spencer was able to make three first downs in the entire quarter. The final quarter was but a repetition, with Calhoun making one first down to none by the Yellow Jackets.

The double wing back system used by the invaders caused the Yellow Jackets plenty of trouble during the first half, but once the linemen solved the attack, the visiting ball carriers were thrown for repeated losses.

Penalties marred the play to some extent, with the Calhoun eleven receiving set-backs totaling 70 yards, while Spencer was penalized a total of 60 yards during the play. First downs favored Spencer 7-6.

CONSISTENT WORK

It would be difficult to pick out-standing players for Spencer, as the entire team played consistent ball after once getting started. Anderson was probably the best ground gainer, but much credit must go to Otis Buckhannon and Cooper for two great catches made on passes by Rex Mace. The execution of the passes as good as ordinarily made on dry fields, the passer due as much credit as the receivers. Kincaid played a great blocking game and in the line, each player contributed his share to the victory. Buckhannon and Garrett performed notably at the terminals, and Roberts and Charles Buckhannon took good care of the tackle post. McCrosky and

Alexander left little to be desired in their play at guards, and “Mustachio” Looney’s play at center was the best of the season. Not only did he play an exceptional defensive game, but his accurate passing of the mud covered ball was mainly responsible for the gains made by his mates in the backfield.

The line ups:

Spencer	Pos.	Grantsville
Garrett	LE	Duskey
C. Buckhannon	LT	Poling
McCroskey	LG	McDonald
Looney	C	Cunningham
Alexander	RG	Vanoy
Roberts	RT	Nitz
O. Buckhannon	RE	Ayers
Kincaid	QB	Heffner
Mace	LH	O. Clayton
Cooper	RH	Stump
Anderson	FB	Johnson

Substitutions: Spencer Vineyard-----Grantsville Downs, B. Clayton, M. Stump, Haymaker, Knight, Stemple

Officials: Deem Glenville State , referee; Curtis, D E.; umpire; Rogers Glenville State , head linesman.

I should have known that Calhoun would have been Spencer's first night opponent.

I can't believe how many schools had lights before Parkersburg. From what I can tell, at least five area schools (St. Marys c. 1930, Harrisville c. 1931, Sistersville 1933, Spencer 1936 and Wirt County 1939) installed lights before PHS did in 1940. Calhoun (1948) and Walton (c. 1958) installed theirs later.

I thought you'd be interested to see who the winningest coaches in the LKC are. I have only included years in which schools were members of the LKC, so parts of some coaches' careers are not included. Also, I don't have any records for Doddridge right now, so Cline Stansberry's name is absent from the lists for now.

Overall Wins

1. Fred Taylor, 210 (Walton, Ravenswood) 2 state championships
2. Kenny Wright, 194 (Pennsboro, Ritchie)
3. Danny Tennant, 171 (Parkersburg Catholic)
4. Jim Hamric, 158* (Walton, Spencer, Roane) 1 state championship
5. John Stender, 109 (Tyler County) 1 state championship

6. Wayne Underwood, 105 (Calhoun)
7. Lou Nocida, 104 (Sistersville) 5 state championships
8. Mike Lucas, 98** (Catholic, Wirt, Ritchie)
9. Ron Sirk, 81 (Clay)
10. Dick Sturm, 72 (Ravenswood)

* I am not sure if Hamric coached 1969 at Walton, so that year is not included.

** Lucas's record does not include his brief tenure at Harrisville.

Overall Win % (minimum five years coaching experience)

1. Lou Nocida, .852 (104-18) Sistersville
2. Wayne Underwood, .778 (105-30-6) Calhoun
3. Bill Hanlin, .705 (62-26-2) Saint Marys
4. Jodi More, .676 (46-22) Saint Marys
5. John Stender, .665 (109-55) Tyler County
6. Danny Tennant, .653 (171-91) Parkersburg Catholic
7. George Strager, .651 (41-22-3) Sistersville
8. Charles Kupfner, .643 (45-25-1) Wirt County
9. Jarrett Tawney, .622* (46-28-2) Spencer
10. Dick Simmons, .621 (41-25-2) Spencer

* Jarrett Tawney's record does not include his years at Walton, which will likely lower his overall percentage.

LKC Wins

1. Kenny Wright*
2. Jim Hamric, 89
3. Fred Taylor, 85
4. Wayne Underwood, 79
5. Mike Lucas, 70**
6. Danny Tennant, 55
7. Steve Deem, 49 (Saint Marys)
8. Marcus McPhail, 45 (Ripley, St. Marys, Calhoun)
9. Lou Nocida, 44
Bill Hanlin, 44

* Wright had 75 LKC wins at Ritchie County; totals for Pennsboro not available at this time but more than enough to put him first on the list.

I think it's interesting to see what coaches from the overall top 10 drop in the number of conference wins. For instance, Catholic has only played about 25% of their games against LKC schools during Danny Tennant's tenure. You can see, though, that coaches from Roane, Calhoun, Ritchie, etc. maintain a high standing in conference wins because their schools were committed to LKC schedules.

I have one favor to ask you. Could you take a look at the following list of Spencer football coaches and see if you have any information to fill in the holes (and to see if I made any errors. Sometimes it's hard to tell who the head coach is from a team photo!)? I am 90% positive that

the coach wasn't listed in the Rupicola for the years I'm missing, and I wondered if the Alumni Association had a listing for coaches as they did with faculty members:

Jimmie Riddle: 1914-1915
Dan Pendleton: 1916-1917
Braden Alleman: 1920
R.W. Shumaker: 1921-1924
?????: 1925
George Hill: 1926
Luther Poling: 1927-1928
J.B. Bullington: 1929-1933
?????: 1934-1936
Lionel Heron: 1937
William P. Hahn: 1938
?????: 1939
Bud Shelton: 1940
?????: 1941-1942
Dick Simmons: 1943-1953
?????: 1954-1955 (I have Jarrett Tawney listed)
Rector Brown: 1956-1960
Jarrett Tawney: 1961-1966
Joe Evans: 1967-1969
Paul Adams: 1970-1971
Jim Bailey: 1972
Jim Hamric: 1973-1992

Spencer's game against Ripley on 9/14/1973 resulted in a 13-6 win for Ripley, as documented in the Jackson Herald and Parkersburg News. The Rupicola, however, recorded it as a win for Spencer, so SHS's record that year was actually 7-3, not the 8-2 that the yearbook indicated.

Do you remember the 1944 game against Gilmore that I found, the one that wasn't listed in the sports section of the 1945 Rupicola but was in the calendar at the back? I found out a little more information on that from the Parkersburg News. 1944 was Gilmore's first year supporting football, and they apparently threw together a team quite late. Spencer naturally didn't have them on their schedule, but wanted to accommodate their new conference member. So, Spencer scheduled them on a Monday and played their freshmen and sophomores against them. I guess we'd consider this a JV game today, and since it was left out of the team record in the Rupicola it's obvious they didn't consider it a varsity win. However, I think it's best left in SHS's varsity record, because it counted as a league game and the conference included the win for Spencer in the league standings. What do you think?

I also have a question for you: do you know when Spencer's field was first equipped with lights? I have been amazed at the number of smaller schools (including St. Marys, Harrisville, Sistersville, and even Wirt County) who had light prior to Stadium Field in Parkersburg (1940) and wondered if Spencer had beaten PHS to the punch too.