Quarterback Mike Box hopes to build off last season’s success and lead the Crimson Hawks to the national championship.

Eye on the HAWKS

A preview of the 2013 IUP football season
## THE CRIMSON HAWKS

### By The Numbers

1. The final ranking for the Crimson Hawks in total defense last season, among 158 schools in Division II.

2. Shutouts pitched by the IUP defense last season, against Cheyney (56-0), Lock Haven (42-0) and Clarion (45-0).

3. Number of 100-yard rushing games last season for tailback De’Antwan “Rocket” Williams.

4. Number of states from which members of the 2013 team hail. They come from: Pennsylvania, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, New Jersey, Ohio and Virginia.

5. Number of returning players who earned all-PSAC honors last season: offensive linemen Byron Dovales and Nick Carnicella, linebackers Carl Fleming and Alexander Berdahl, running back De’Antwan Williams, kicker Brett Ullman, wide receiver Pat Brewer, defensive linemen Akeem Smith and cornerbacks Jerrell McFadden.

6. Wins in the 15 games since 2000 in which IUP has returned a fumble for a touchdown. The Crimson Hawks are 14-1 in the same span in games in which they return an interception for a score.


8. Wins, since 2000, in the 54 games in which the Crimson Hawks rushed for at least 200 yards. Their only loss among those 54 games came last season, when IUP gained 284 yards on the ground in a 26-24 loss at California. IUP gained at least 200 rushing yards in 12 of its 14 games last year.

9. Seasons as a coach for assistant Bernie McQuown. He joined the staff in 1987 and has been a mainstay since. Prior to being hired at IUP, McQuown, 77, was a longtime high school coach.

### 2013 SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Southern Connecticut State</td>
<td>1 p.m., Sept. 7</td>
<td>Cheyney</td>
<td>4 p.m., Sept. 14</td>
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<tr>
<td>IUP</td>
<td>6 p.m., Sept. 21</td>
<td>Offutt Field</td>
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<td>Seton Hill</td>
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<td>George P. Miller Stadium</td>
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<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>2 p.m., Oct. 5</td>
<td>Thompson-Mihalik Stadium</td>
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<tr>
<td>Millersville</td>
<td>2 p.m., Oct. 5</td>
<td>George P. Miller Stadium</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slippery Rock</td>
<td>2 p.m., Oct. 12</td>
<td>Tullio Field</td>
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<tr>
<td>Edinboro</td>
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<td>George P. Miller Stadium</td>
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<td>Mercyhurst</td>
<td>1 p.m., Oct. 26</td>
<td>Tulio Field</td>
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<td>Clarion</td>
<td>1 p.m., Nov. 2</td>
<td>Memorial Stadium</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gannon</td>
<td>1 p.m., Nov. 9</td>
<td>George P. Miller Stadium</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shippensburg</td>
<td>1 p.m., Nov. 16</td>
<td>Seth Grove Stadium</td>
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### 2012 RECAP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 1</td>
<td>Southern Conn. 6, IUP 33</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 8</td>
<td>IUP 56, Cheyney 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 15</td>
<td>Lock Haven 0, IUP 42</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 22</td>
<td>IUP 24, California 26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 29</td>
<td>IUP 41, Millersville 7</td>
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<td>Oct. 6</td>
<td>Slippery Rock 16, IUP 33</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 13</td>
<td>Slippery Rock 16, IUP 33</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 20</td>
<td>Mercyhurst 13, IUP 31</td>
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<td>Oct. 27</td>
<td>Clarion 0, IUP 45</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 3</td>
<td>IUP 38, Gannon 35</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 10</td>
<td>Shippensburg 10, IUP 41</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 17</td>
<td>NCAA playoffs, Shepherd 17, IUP 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 24</td>
<td>NCAA playoffs, IUP 17, New Haven 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1</td>
<td>NCAA playoffs, IUP 17, Winston-Salem State 21</td>
</tr>
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### COACHING STAFF

- **Head Coach:** Curt Cignetti (Third season, 19-5)
- **Offensive Coordinator/QBs:** Tyler Haines
- **Offensive Line:** Mike Campolo
- **W Rs/Recruiting:** Rod Rutherford
- **Running Backs:** Jim Chapin
- **Defensive Coordinator:** Paul Tortorella
- **Linebackers/Academics:** Jim Smith
- **DTs/Conditioning:** Adam Schmidt
- **Special Teams/DEs:** Bernie McQuown
- **Defensive Backs:** Tim Cortazzo

### Photo credits:
- Teri M. Enciso (Cignetti)
- Jamie Empfield (McQuown)
Cignetti’s goal for 2013 IUP team: Don’t rest on laurels

By MATTHEW BURGLUND
mburglund@indianagazette.net

Curt Cignetti is a branch of the Nick Saban coaching tree, and in a lot of ways this apple certainly didn’t fall from that tree.

Three years after leaving Saban and Alabama for IUP, Cignetti has used the blueprint he learned with the Crimson Tide to turn the Crimson Hawks into a Top 10 Division II program with designs on a national championship.

Cignetti says a lot of things that Saban reportedly says, and that’s no coincidence.

“I did this for 28 years as an assistant in Division I,” said Cignetti, IUP’s third-year head coach. “But I really thought the last four, at Alabama, I learned a lot — I mean, a lot from Nick. We had a plan for everything. There were no loose ends. Everything in the program was defined.”

And he means everything. The way the team practices, how it watches film, how the roster is assembled. It’s all done for a reason.

Even further, there are intangible ideas that Cignetti preaches day in and day out, much like Saban does to the wildly successful Alabama teams he coaches. One of those ideals is that there is no use in looking back. The past can’t be changed. It has no impact on today, so let it go. It’s an idea that comes across as kind of gruff, as Cignetti dispatches questions about last year with the same usual six words: “The past is in the past.”

So if you’re wondering how Cignetti and his 2013 Crimson Hawks will follow the achievements of his 2012 Crimson Hawks, he has six words for you, and you can guess at what they are.

Nonetheless, 2012 was a banner year for the IUP program, which two years prior was 6-5 and out of the national spotlight. In the team’s best season in more than a decade, IUP went 12-2, won the PSAC West and the State Game, advanced to the playoffs for the first time since 2007 and finished ranked No. 7 in the AFCA Top 25.

IUP’s season ended with a heartbreaking 21-17 loss at Winston-Salem State in the Super Region One final, two steps shy of the NCAA Division II championship.

Those are achievements Cignetti is proud of, for sure. But his training being what it is, the Crimson Hawks have been taught to avoid using 2012 as any kind of stepping stone for 2013.

“We have to focus on this year,” said senior linebacker Alexander Berdahl. “If we focus on the past, we’ll never get to where we need to be.”

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TIGHT END Tyler Dummermuth is one of several returning starters the IUP Crimson Hawks will count on as they try to take another step toward the school’s first national championship.

PASSING GRADE QB Mike Box has grown into a team leader and accurate passer. But what he wants to be known most as is a winner.

WALK-ON WONDER Linebacker Alexander Berdahl came to IUP as a lightly touted walk-on. He’ll leave as one of the top defenders to ever play his position.

LUCKY NO. 7? Mike Kellar and California are aiming to be the first team to ever beat IUP seven straight years.
EYE ON THE HAWKS: Offense

Hawks hope to be soaring right away

By MATTHEW BURGLUND
mburglund@indianagazette.net

When your offense averages 33.5 points per game, it’s not like you’re struggling. But last season, the IUP Crimson Hawks needed a few weeks to gain their footing before taking flight.

The hope this season, according to quarterback Mike Box, is to be flying high when the season kicks off Saturday at Southern Connecticut State.

“We, as a whole unit, started to jell as the season went on,” he said. “Now we’ve got that already. We’ve hit the ground running this year.”

Box exudes confidence when he talks about this year’s offense because he knows there is a lot of talent and experience at most of the positions.

On paper, the 2013 IUP offense appears to be capable of being more efficient and productive than last year’s, which ought to frighten opposing teams’ defensive coordinators.

The Crimson Hawks return seven players on offense who started their final game last season, including four who earned all-conference honors: linemen Byron Dovales and Nick Carnicella, running back De’Antwan “Rocket” Williams and wide receiver Pat Brewer.

Throw in emerging star Terrill Barnes at receiver; senior Mike Charmo, who has started the past 24 games, at right guard; and Box, who has shown steady improvement from spring until preseason camp, and it’s easy to see why the IUP coaching staff is excited about things.

THE BEST OF 2012

Highs and lows for the IUP offense last season:

**Rushing Yards**
- High: Slippery Rock, 388
- Low: Winston-Salem State, 133
- Average: 259.3

**Passing Yards**
- High: Millersville, 346
- Low: Lock Haven, 80
- Average: 158.2

**Total Yards**
- High: Millersville, 552
- Low: New Haven, 252
- Average: 417.5

He ended up completing 111 of 214 attempts for 1,747 yards and 13 touchdowns with only four interceptions.

Box said he is making strides with Tyler Haines, IUP’s offensive coordinator, who was hired in the spring to replace Luke Getsy.

“We have a good chemistry together,” Box said. “There’s a lot of communication going on. I’m a direct reflection of the offensive coordinator on the field, and that’s because we make it so.”

The backup quarterback is expected to be Steve Franco, a redshirt freshman who transferred from Akron.

Indiana High School graduate Logan Weaver was the No. 2 quarterback when preseason camp opened, but he missed a lot of practice time with an illness.

True freshman Ed Stockett is expected to learn the system by taking a redshirt this fall.

RUNNING BACK

During preseason camp, there were as many as seven tailbacks working through drills, which created some tough decisions for head coach Curt Cignetti.

Williams practiced with the team, but his future is uncertain at press time because he is still awaiting word from the NCAA about his eligibility.

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Hawks hope to be soaring

Continued from Page 4

He played two full seasons at Rutgers before leaving the team two games into the 2011 season. He transferred to IUP last year and rushed for 1,325 yards despite splitting carries with senior Harvie Tuck all season.

Knowing Williams’ status would be uncertain, Cignetti brought in some new players to help carry the load, led by senior Erik Finklea, a transfer from Miami (Ohio), and true freshmen Isaac Green and Patrick Ferguson. Those three took most of the reps in camp, but another freshman, Jay Watkins, was moved from defense to tailback and he blossomed. Sophomore Montay Green, who rushed for 399 yards last season, is also expected to get some carries.

“We do have a lot of running backs,” Cignetti said, “and we have to make a decision about who we’re going to work.”

At fullback, two-year starter Dom Maggio is back in the fold, with three others pushing for playing time: junior Lance Windish and freshmen Rex Pearce and Nick Dubowski.

WIDE RECEIVER/TIGHT END

This is possibly the deepest position on the team, and Box will have a lot of options when it comes to delivering the football.

Leading the group are two seniors, Brewer and Barnes. Brewer is a speedy deep threat who averaged 16.8 yards per catch last season, but he missed some time dealing with injuries. Barnes came on strong toward the end of the season, and he finished with team highs of 43 catches, 764 yards and eight touchdowns.

After those two, there are several other receivers on the roster who could probably start for other teams. There’s senior Ben Simmen, who also has been counted on as a punt returner; former Pitt transfer Salath Williams (14 catches, 207 yards last year); redshirt freshman Rashard Hendricks, who is a big target on the outside; program veteran Sean McVay, who could be a good possession receiver if he stays healthy; and Drew Carswell, another Pitt transfer who could be another deep threat.

“I like that we have some depth there,” Barnes said. “I think a lot of the young guys have potential.”

Cignetti said the passing game depends on Box and the receivers to flourish.

“It’s hard to have a great receiving corps without a guy who can get them the ball,” he said, “and it’s hard to be a great quarterback if you don’t have guys who can catch and separate and make great plays. So they work hand in hand.

We’ve got good talent at receiver and we’ve got good talent at quarterback. So our passing game probably should be better than it’s been the last two years.”

At tight end, senior Tyler Dunmurmuth has returned to the team after sitting out spring drills, and he is expected to be pushed for playing time by redshirt freshman Khaliq Coleman. Two true freshmen — C.J. Jackson and Kevin Edwards — are also in the mix.

OFFENSIVE LINE

The glue that holds it all together is the front line, which features Dovaless, Carnicella and Charmo, who have a combined 93 career starts among them. Add Matt Sason, who started 10 games as a true freshman in 2011, and you have a veteran line that has been through a lot of battles.

The fifth member of the line is likely to be either Bruce Atkins, a junior who has played a lot the past two years as a backup, or Jorge Vicioso, a 6-foot-6, 305-pound recent transfer from Rutgers.

“We’ve got a group of guys on the line that has played a lot of football,” Cignetti said.

There are concerns, though, about the depth of the offensive line. Should something happen to one of the starters, the next man in line would likely be a freshman or inexperienced sophomore.

Redshirt freshmen Tony Morgan and Matt Reams, and true freshman Ed Bier, lead that group of linemen.
Steady Box aims to keep Hawks in gear

By MATTHEW BURGLUND
mburglund@indianagazette.net

Not a day goes by when Mike Box doesn’t think about the final pass he threw in 2012. “It haunts me,” said the IUP fifth-year senior quarterback.

With the clock ticking down and the Crimson Hawks trailing Winston-Salem State by four points in the NCAA Division II quarterfinals, Box had one last gasp, a pass on fourth down, to steal a win.

Just as he spotted an open receiver in the end zone, Box was hit from behind by a Rams defender and the ball squirted up in the air and fell harmlessly to the turf. IUP’s season was over.

Nine months later, Box thinks about that pass every day, but not in the context you might expect. For him, it’s not about what went wrong on that final play, but what went wrong on some of the others before it that put the Crimson Hawks in the unenviable position of needing a last-second touchdown to win the game.

“We should never let a game get that close again,” Box said, admitting the wounds haven’t quite healed. “You should never leave it up to one single play. We trained for that, so that if it came down to that, we would be ready. But you never want to leave it down to one pass or one kick. You want to leave no doubt.”

That’s precisely why Box has worked so hard since last season ended to make sure the Crimson Hawks return to the national stage this season. The Crimson Hawks, who went 12-2 last year, are ranked No. 10 in the American Football Coaches Association preseason Top 25 national poll.

Last year, Box completed 52 percent (111 of 214) of his attempts for 1,747 yards and 13 touchdowns with only four interceptions.

He battled with incumbent starter Pat Smith for the job throughout preseason camp and the first few games of the year, and then he was named the starter after the fourth game.

Box held the spot the rest of the way, as Smith was relegated to a backup role, and the Crimson Hawks went 9-1 in games that Box was the starter.

“I thought Mike really finished the year well,” said IUP head coach Curt Cignetti, “and I think he took another step in the spring. I’m excited for him to compete against these young quarterbacks,” Box said. “Just because they’re young doesn’t mean that they can’t push me.”

Box expects to have a better season that last year, and Cignetti also thinks good things are ahead for the Crimson Hawks.

Part of the reason Cignetti expects big things is that Box has steadily improved with the cadence. As a team we started to jell.”

Smith has since graduated, leaving only Box and three freshmen quarterbacks on the roster: Logan Weaver, Steve Franco and Eddie Stockett.

But being the unquestioned starter doesn’t mean Box hasn’t spent portions of preseason camp looking over his shoulder.

“Every day, I’m competing against myself and I’m competing against these young quarterbacks,” Box said. “Just because they’re young doesn’t mean that they can’t push me.”

Box expects to have a better season that last year, and Cignetti also thinks good things are ahead for the Crimson Hawks.
Another reason is the cast of receivers that Box will be working with. “He’s a senior, and we haven’t had that kind of luxury since I’ve been here,” Cignetti said. “But he ought to be surrounded by some pretty good weapons at wide receiver.”

Among the talented wide receivers that the Crimson Hawks will be counting on this fall is Terrill Barnes, another senior, who probably spends more time with Box than anyone else on the team. That’s because they’re roommates.

“I’m in his ear every night,” said Barnes, a Gettysburg native. “We watch film and we just point out the things we can do better and improve. I always tell him that I want the ball.”

Late last season, Barnes became Box’s favorite target (he had 20 catches for 349 yards and five touchdowns in the Crimson Hawks’ final four games), and his size and big-play ability makes him a tough matchup for most cornerbacks.

But the 6-foot-4, 230-pound Box said he won’t be sending the ball his roommate’s way just because they’re friends. “I tell him all the time that ‘if you’re open, I will throw you the ball. But I’m not going to throw into double or triple coverage,’” Box said. “But he’s a freak, and I think he will see a lot of (double coverage) this season.”

But considering IUP’s style on offense of using a potent ground game to set up the pass, it’s unlikely opposing defenses will face many opportunities to double-cover Barnes because they’ll have to worry about running backs like De’Antwan Williams and Erik Finklea.

That sets up Box for a big year. The pressure won’t be on him to win games, just to do his job so the team can win.

An exciting time to be the IUP starting quarterback? Box thinks so. “Oh it is, very much so,” he said with a smile. “I’m getting antsy.”
EYE ON THE HAWKS: Defense

Hawks believe they’ll be better after great ’12

By MATTHEW BURGLUND
mburglund@indianagazette.net

Carl Fleming might sound like a crazy man, but he firmly believes that the IUP defense can be better this year than it was last year.

If you’re an opposing offensive coordinator, that really isn’t good news at all. In fact, that’s an idea that might keep you up at night.

“I really think we can better than last year,” said Fleming, IUP’s all-conference linebacker. “Every year is a new year, with new leaders and new challenges. But we can definitely get better than we were.”

As a refresher, here’s how good the Crimson Hawks were last season on defense:

- IUP led all of NCAA Division II in total defense (257.9 yards per game allowed) and scoring defense (12.5 points per game allowed). The Crimson Hawks were also in the top 5 in rushing defense and turnover margin.
- The Crimson Hawks held three opponents scoreless: Cheyney, Clarion and Lock Haven. They held two other opponents to fewer than 10 points (Southern Connecticut State and Millersville).
- Only four opponents gained more than 300 total yards against the IUP defense.
- In the PSAC, IUP was ranked No. 1 in total defense, rushing defense, scoring defense, pass efficiency defense, sacks and first downs allowed.
- After the season, defensive coordinator Paul Tortorella was named the footballscoop.com Division II Assistant Coach of the Year.

Statistics like that are nice for conversation, but linebacker Alexander Berdahl, who led the Crimson Hawks in tackles last year, with 103, said he and his teammates don’t worry about numbers.

“Our main motto is “DYJ — Do Your Job,” he said. “As long as everyone does their job, we’ll be in the right spot and we’ll make the right plays. We play at a certain level. We just go out and do our jobs. We don’t look at statistics.”

On paper, maybe Fleming is right that this year’s defense can be better. IUP lost only four seniors from last season’s unit, and head coach Curt Cignetti brought in a wave of transfers and young recruits who have the potential to be better than the players they’re going to replace.

“There’s a plan for success and hopefully we can do the things offensively to protect our defense and not put it in a bad situation,” Cignetti said. “But if our defense’s backs are up against the wall, they can respond the way they did last year.”

And if that happens, this could be a great season for the IUP defense, maybe even better than last year.

“We’re reaching to be better,” Fleming said. “We’re trying to get the national championship.”

DEFENSIVE LINE

The Crimson Hawks’ stingy defense begins with the four guys up front who do a combination of things. Some plug holes, others take on two blockers to free up linebackers to make tackles, and others become disruptive forces in the backfield.

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Hawks believe they’ll be better

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IUP returns two starters from last season in end Shane Meisner (team high 16 tackles for loss and eight sacks in 2012) and tackle Akeem Smith (10 tackles for loss, three sacks). They’ll likely be joined by two transfers: end Michael Larrow (Rutgers) and nose guard James Price (Akron). Also in the mix for playing time are ends Ali Muhammed (a Rhode Island transfer) and Jordan Batts, and tackle Jeff Palmer.

There’s no entitlement in this program, but they’ve got to earn it. They are told that when they come in, that they’ll have to earn it. There’s no entitlement in this program. We have guys in this program who have worked hard and have been with us for a while. So meshing the new kids with the gram who have worked hard and

Akeem Smith, shown here chasing Shepherd quarterback Bobby Cooper during last year’s playoff game, is back this year and is expected to start at defensive tackle.

DEFENSIVE BACK

If there’s one area of the defense where there is a little bit of consternation, it’s here. But it’s not because there aren’t good players available, it’s just that there’s likely to be three new starters in the five positions.

All-conference cornerback Jerrell McFadden is back, as is three-year starter Terrell Holloway, who has been solid at Tortorella’s “star” position, a hybrid of linebacker and safety.

Redshirt sophomore Jeremiah McPherson is likely to start at the cornerback slot opposite McFadden, although James Griffin and Mike Meriwether Jr. should also see some time in the secondary.

At safety, Pitt transfers Eric Williams and Marco Pecora have shined in preseason camp, and could be the starting duo come Saturday when the season begins. Other players vying for playing time at safety include Kole Kraut, Chris Brown and Jake Campbell.

Brown was a part-time starter last season. Kraut was penciled in to be a starter but suffered a sea-son-ending knee injury on the opening kickoff of the first game.

Another player to watch is Mike Scott, who started for the Crimson Hawks in 2010 as a true freshman before leaving the team for two seasons. Scott is back on the roster and working his way back into playing shape and could contribute quite a bit.

There’s no entitlement in this program, but they’ve got to earn it. They are told that when they come in, that they’ll have to earn it. There’s no entitlement in this program. We have guys in this program who have worked hard and
Alexander Berdahl is the kind of football player they make movies about. He's a heck of a linebacker, and he's a lesson in perseverance and dedication.

Once a walk-on who seemed lost in the shuffle with the IUP Crimson Hawks, the 5-foot-11, 210-pound Berdahl is has blossomed over the years into a standout linebacker who led the team in tackles last season despite oftentimes being blocked by linemen 100 pounds heavier than him.

"Berdahl is such a great player," said fellow linebacker Carl Fleming, "he really is. He helps me out a lot. He helps all of us out."

Berdahl was a walk-on in 2010, which was Lou Tepper's final season as the program's coach. He wasn't expected to do much, but he ended up making quite an impact that season.

Rather than take a redshirt and learn the team's schemes like most of the other freshmen, Berdahl quickly worked his way into the rotation at linebacker, and when an injury took out the two linebackers ahead of him on the depth chart, Berdahl was thrust into a starting role.

He really hasn't looked back. Berdahl has played in 34 games since coming to Indiana, and last season he gained all-PSAC West honors as he lead the team in tackles (103) and was third in sacks (6). He also intercepted three passes, including one in the fourth quarter that sealed

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LB Berdahl: Walk-on to star

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the Crimson Hawks’ 27-17 win over Shepherd in the first round of the playoffs.

No longer a walk-on, Berdahl has become one of the best linebackers in the Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference, if not in all of NCAA Division II.

Fleming said he can appreciate the journey Berdahl has made in the past three seasons, and he thinks the rest of the IUP defense can learn from it.

“He was a walk-on and I heard about the struggle he had just to make this team,” said Fleming, a former transfer from Pitt who has played 14 games alongside Berdahl. “But look at him now. He’s come a long ways and he’s making plays all the time. He’s a smart guy who knows what he’s doing.”

The Ashburn, Va., native understands the feel-good part of his IUP story, but he says he doesn’t dwell on it.

Instead, he’s trying to help the Crimson Hawks’ defense get better and lead the entire team back to the NCAA Division II playoffs.

“I was a walk-on my freshman year,” he said. “Now I’m here and I’m expected to lead the team. It’s completely different.”

It’s different in a lot of ways, that’s for sure.

When Berdahl was a true freshman, the Crimson Hawks were coming off their first losing season in three decades. IUP went 6-5 in 2010 with Berdahl playing in 11 games, with one start. But then Tepper was fired and Curt Cignetti came in.

During the past two seasons, the Crimson Hawks have gone 19-5 and returned to a perch on the national stage.

Much like Berdahl did, the Crimson Hawks overcame adversity to soar, and the senior linebacker wants his career to end with a trip to Florence, Ala., for the NCAA Division II championship game.

“The thing here is that we really are a family,” Berdahl said. “And we improved over the years. Coach Cignetti brought winning back to IUP. It’s a great thing to be a part of, to bring winning back to the community and the campus. I love it here.”

Carl Fleming, IUP linebacker, on Alexander Berdahl

“HE WAS a walk-on and I heard about the struggle he had just to make this team. But look at him now. He’s come a long ways and he’s making plays all the time. He’s a smart guy who knows what he’s doing.”

Carl Fleming, IUP linebacker, on Alexander Berdahl

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Jim Mentch,
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Karen Duhala
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EYE ON THE HAWKS: Special Teams

Ullman expects rebound

By MATTHEW BURGLUND
mburglund@indianagazette.net

Brett Ullman became a victim of his own success last season.

A year after putting up sparkling numbers as the kicker for the IUP Crimson Hawks, Ullman came back down to earth a little bit in 2012 as a sophomore. It’s not that his second season was bad; it’s just that it wasn’t as good as his freshman campaign, when he missed only two kicks all season.

Last year, Ullman made 56 of 58 extra-point kicks and 19 of 29 field goals for 113 points, the fifth-highest point total among all kickers in NCAA Division II. As a freshman in 2011, Ullman booted 33 of 34 extra-points and 10 of 11 field goal tries.

The low point for Ullman probably was the Crimson Hawks’ fourth game of the season, at California. He missed two field goals, one from 20 and another from 30 yards, and IUP eventually lost, 26-24.

He did have some highlights, though, including a 48-yard field goal against Shippensburg that now stands as the second-longest in school history.

But IUP head coach Curt Cignetti said he isn’t worried about Ullman.

“He hasn’t been kicking like he was when he was a freshman,” Cignetti said, “but I still have total confidence in him.”

There is no other kicker on the roster, so the job is Ullman’s, no matter what. The same can be said for the punter position, as sophomore Matt Spegal returns after splitting time last season with Pat Smith.

Spegal, a native of Bethel Park, averaged 38.7 yards on 11 punts last season.

The long snapper job is expected to go to either sophomore Connor Jackson or true freshman Rex Pearce. Return duties are likely to be split up among a handful of players, including wide receivers Ben Simmons and Pat Brewer, and running backs De’Antwan Williams and Isaac Green.

BRETT ULLMAN has made 29 of 40 field goal tries and 89 of 92 extra-point kicks in his first two years at IUP.
**INDIVIDUAL**

**Rushing**

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* — Returning player
OPPONENT CAPSULES

SOUTHERN CONN. STATE
1 p.m., Sept. 7
Jess Dow Field

Nickname: Owls
Head coach: Rich Cavanaugh (29th season, 167-123-1)
2012 record: 3-8 (2-6 Northeast 10)
Starters returning: 4 offense, 6 defense
Returning all-conference players: DB
Malcolm Crosson, DL Jamie Holbrook, RB
Dequane June, RB Vaughn Magee, DL
Kameron Tedder, DL Mwamba Williams
Series vs. IUP: Crimson Hawks lead, 7-0
Last meeting: 2012: IUP won, 33-6
Of note: The Owls’ streak of 11 consecutive winning seasons was snapped last season with a sub-par 3-8 mark. … Last year, Southern Connecticut State did not rank in the top 100 in any of the 17 major statistical categories in which the NCAA compiles national rankings. There are 158 schools in Division II. … Only one of the Owls’ losses last season was by fewer than 10 points.

CHEYNEY
4 p.m., Sept. 14
Miller Stadium

Nickname: Wolves
Head coach: Kenneth Lockard (third season, 2-20)
2012 record: 1-10 (0-7 PSAC East)
Starters returning: 8 offense, 8 defense
Returning all-conference players: LB
Isaiah Fleming
Series vs. IUP: Crimson Hawks lead, 5-0
Last meeting: 2012: IUP won, 56-0
Of note: Cheyney is in the midst of a 33-year losing skid, with the Wolves going without a winning season since 1979, when they won the PSAC East. … Since 1980, Cheyney is 16-182 in divisional play, and the Wolves have not won more than one game in any single season since 2003. … IUP has outscored the Wolves 272-26 in the all-time series, including an 80-14 thrashing at Miller Stadium in 2007 that stands as IUP’s single-game scoring record.

SETON HILL
6 p.m., Sept. 21
Offutt Field

Nickname: Griffins
Head coach: Issac Collins (first season)
2012 record: 0-11 (0-8 WVIAC)
Starters returning: 5 offense, 7 defense
Returning all-conference players: DB
Josh Falatovich, QB Andrew Jackson, LB
Tyler Zimmer
Series vs. IUP: First meeting
Of note: This is Seton Hill’s first season in the PSAC. Prior to this, the Greensburg-based private school played in the West Virginia Conference. … Created in 2005, the program has a combined record of 20-68, with half of those wins coming in 2008, when the Griffins went 10-3 and advanced to the NCAA Division II playoffs. … Last season, the Griffins were last in all of Division II in rushing yardage, with an average of 42.2 yards per game. … On defense, Seton Hill held only one opponent under 29 points in a game.

CALIFORNIA
1 p.m., Sept. 28
Miller Stadium

Nickname: Vulcans
Head coach: Mike Kellar (second season, 8-3)
2012 record: 8-3 (5-2 PSAC West)
Starters returning: 5 offense, 7 defense
Returning all-conference players: OL Jack Abercrombie, P Andrew Cerett, DE Darnell Harding, DE B.J. Stevens, WR Mike Williams
Series vs. IUP: Crimson Hawks lead, 55-23-2
Last meeting: 2012: California won, 26-24
Of note: IUP has lost the past six meetings with California. … The Vulcans’ win streak in the series is tied with Clarion’s (1948-53) for the longest against IUP since World War II. No team has ever beaten IUP seven straight times. … Last year was the first season since 2004 that the Vulcans did not win at least a share of the PSAC West title. … DE B.J. Stevens led the nation in sacks per game last season, at 1.32 sacks per game.
THE IUP CRIMSON HAWKS went a perfect 7-0 at home last season. They have five home games scheduled this year, with the opener slated for Sept. 14, against Cheyney.

OPPONENT CAPSULES

MILLERSVILLE
2 p.m., Oct. 5
Miller Stadium
Nickname: Marauders
Head coach: Greg Breitbach
(first season)
2012 record: 2-9 (1-6 PSAC East)
Starters returning: 5 offense, 4 defense
Returning all-conference player: RB David Coates
Series vs. IUP: Crimson Hawks lead, 12-5
Last meeting: 2012: IUP won, 41-7
Of note: Breitbach, a former assistant at Division I-FCS powerhouse North Dakota, is the fourth coach since 2001 to take the Marauders’ reins with hopes of putting together a winner. His three predecessors went a combined 39-91 without a single winning season. … Only two Division II teams in the entire country gave up more rushing yards per game last season than the Marauders, who allowed 262.3 yards per game on the ground. … The Marauders have five QBs on their preseason roster: four freshmen and a sophomore. … The Marauders haven’t won the PSAC East since 1998.

SLIPPERY ROCK
2 p.m., Oct. 12
Thompson-Mihalik Stadium
Nickname: The Rock
Head coach: George Mihalik
(26th season, 167-103-4)
2012 record: 6-5 (5-2 PSAC West)
Starters returning: 9 offense, 9 defense
Returning all-conference players:
 Series vs. IUP: Crimson Hawks lead, 45-34-2
Last meeting: 2012: IUP won, 33-16
Of note: Senior QB Cody Harris has completed just 46 percent (36 of 79) of his passes in three games against IUP (all losses) for 292 yards, four interceptions and just one touchdown. Otherwise, Harris has completed 68 percent of his career attempts for 6,595 yards and 47 touchdowns. … The Fighting Scots had three losses last season of 10 points or fewer. … Edinboro is seventh in the 16-team PSAC in scholarships, but next-to-last in the PSAC West, with only Lock Haven giving out fewer scholarships. … Edinboro has not had consecutive losing seasons since 2001-02.

EDINBORO
1 p.m., Oct. 19
Miller Stadium
Nickname: Fighting Scots
Head coach: Scott Browning
(seventh season, 49-29)
2012 record: 5-6 (3-4 PSAC West)
Starters returning: 8 offense, 7 defense
Returning all-conference players:
 Series vs. IUP: Crimson Hawks lead, 55-21-4
Last meeting: 2012: IUP won, 26-10
Of note: Senior QB Cody Harris has completed just 46 percent (36 of 79) of his passes in three games against IUP (all losses) for 292 yards, four interceptions and just one touchdown. Otherwise, Harris has completed 68 percent of his career attempts for 6,595 yards and 47 touchdowns. … The Fighting Scots had three losses last season of 10 points or fewer. … Edinboro is seventh in the 16-team PSAC in scholarships, but next-to-last in the PSAC West, with only Lock Haven giving out fewer scholarships. … Edinboro has not had consecutive losing seasons since 2001-02.
MERCYHURST
Noon, Oct. 26
Tullio Field
Nickname: Lakers
Head coach: Marty Schaetzle (12th season, 55-66)
2012 record: 9-2 (6-1 PSAC West)
Starters returning: 5 offense, 5 defense
Returning all-conference players: RB Brandon Brown-Dukes, DL Dustin Galich, RB Allen Jones, LB Aaron McGee, K/P Steven Wakefield
Series vs. IUP: Crimson Hawks lead, 3-2
Last meeting: 2012: IUP won, 31-13
Of note: Mercyhurst has not had a winning season in an odd-numbered year since 1997, when the Lakers went 6-3 as an independent. ... Since joining the PSAC in 2008, Mercyhurst is 26-9 in even-numbered seasons and 8-14 in odd-numbered years. ... RB Brandon Brown-Dukes was the only player to rush for more than 100 yards in a game against IUP last season, when he gained 134 in a 31-13 Crimson Hawks win on Oct. 20.

CLARION
1 p.m., Nov. 2
Memorial Stadium
Nickname: Golden Eagles
Head coach: Jay Foster (eighth season, 23-54)
2012 record: 4-7 (2-5 PSAC West)
Starters returning: 8 offense, 10 defense
Returning all-conference players: OL Mike Felker, QB Ben Fiscus, DL Julian Howsare
Series vs. IUP: Crimson Hawks lead, 57-23-3
Last meeting: 2012: IUP won, 45-0
Of note: The Golden Eagles’ four wins last season came by an average of just 4.8 points, while their seven losses came by an average of 22.3 points per game. ... QB Ben Fiscus, an Indiana native, gained 74 percent (3,158) of the Golden Eagles’ total offense last season (4,264 yards). ... Clarion has lost to IUP the last two years by a combined score of 83-7. ... Clarion has had only three winning seasons since its last NCAA Division II playoffs appearance, in 1996.

GANNON
1 p.m., Nov. 9
Miller Stadium
Nickname: Golden Knights
Head coach: Brad Rzyczycki (second season, 3-8)
2012 record: 3-8 (1-6 PSAC West)
Starters returning: 9 offense, 6 defense
Returning all-conference players: WR Justin Caliste, WR Abraham Ocasio
Series vs. IUP: Crimson Hawks lead, 3-2
Last meeting: 2012: IUP won, 38-35
Of note: Despite finishing the season ranked 38th in all of NCAA Division II in passing offense (264.4 yards per game), the Golden Knights were 121st in total offense out of 158 teams. ... RB Jansen Jones (692 yards) was the only player on the team to finish the season with more than 100 rushing yards. ... Last year Gannon had three losses by six points or fewer. ... Since joining the PSAC in 2008, Gannon is 23-32 overall, and has had two winning seasons: The Golden Knights went 6-5 in 2009 and 2010.

SHIPPENSBURG*
1 p.m., Nov. 16
Seth Grove Stadium
Nickname: Red Raiders
Head coach: Mark Maciejewski (third season, 18-6)
2012 record: 11-2 (7-0 PSAC East)
Starters returning: 5 offense, 8 defense
Returning all-conference players: DB Avery Coleman, DB Mike Goode, WR Abrahm Ocasio
Series vs. IUP: Crimson Hawks lead, 43-16-4
Last meeting: 2012: IUP won, 41-10
Of note: Last season, the Red Raiders led all of Division II in total offense and were second in passing offense and scoring offense. ... Mike Yurkich, the architect of that offense, left the program over the winter to be the offensive coordinator at Oklahoma State. ... Shippensburg was held under 36 points twice last season, and the Red Raiders lost both games.
* — Or PSAC championship game
THE IUP CRIMSON HAWKS, who went 12-2 and won the PSAC championship last season, are picked No. 10 in this year’s American Football Coaches Association preseason Top 25 poll.
Everybody’s Doing It

Once a gimmick offense, the spread is now everywhere

So much for three yards and a cloud of dust.

Most college football offenses these days prefer to get in the shotgun, spread the opponent and scan the defensive line for blocking cues in a hurry-up, fast-break scheme that makes nearly everyone dizzy.

About a decade after the Spread offense was first introduced as a zany gimmick, college teams across the land have adopted it for a number of reasons. It’s fun for the fans to watch, it takes the pressure off a defense to keep the game close, and it makes recruiting big, burly linemen and bruising running backs an antiquated philosophy.

In the NCAA Division II level, and specifically the Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference, some version of the Spread or a shotgun offense can be seen in the vast majority of teams, so it’s not so much of a trick anymore.

“Think people now are starting to want to use the entire width of the football field,” said Edinboro coach Scott Browning. “They want to spread the field out. A lot of people describe it as basketball on grass. You’re trying to create mismatches out there. ... It’s not like the old days when you had to line up and knock people off the football.”

College football tends to follow fads, with offenses such as the Wing-T and Run-and-Shoot coming and going in a short number of years. But the Spread Option has lasted maybe longer than most would have thought, and evidence points to its popularity growing rapidly.

California coach Mike Kellar said the Spread hasn’t changed what teams do, only how they do it.

“The philosophy is always the same,” he said. “It’s just a matter of how you achieve that philosophy.”

KELLAR SUGGESTS that the game plan most teams hope to use involves running the ball effectively enough that the other team’s offense is kept off the field. And for Browning, the Spread helps do that because its blocking schemes aren’t radically different from another offense of years gone by.

Continued on Page 20
Welcome Aboard
Seton Hill seeks fresh start by joining PSAC

For most of the time they were in the West Virginia Intercollegiate Athletic Conference, the Seton Hill Griffins were little more than a pushover. So leaving the traditionally weak WVIAC to join the parody-filled Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference might not seem like a good fit. But with a rookie head coach, the Griffins are hoping to finally find a place they fit in.

“I THINK that it will be a big change from playing in the WVIAC.”

Isaac Collins, Seton Hill coach

But Collins says he is not deterred by the uphill climb his team faces. The PSAC will be a tough nut to crack, and the immediate results might not be too pretty.

But Collins believes that over time, the Griffins will be able to compete in the rugged PSAC, and maybe someday they’ll be a championship contender.

“We’re going into a league where the last-place team, if they’re healthy, they could win this thing,” Collins said. “There are no schools that you know you can just show up and play and expect to beat. Week in and week out, it’s going to be tough. This is a very physical, grind-it-out kind of conference. I think that it will be a big change from playing in the WVIAC.”

PREVIEWING THE PSAC

HEADED TO THE TOP

Bloomsburg’s Franklyn Quiteh isn’t the leading rusher in the history of the PSAC. Well, at least not yet. But it won’t be long until the 5-foot-10, 206-pound running back has his name atop the all-time rushing list.

The Huskies’ star needs only 362 yards to pass the all-time conference rushing mark. Quiteh enters his senior season with 5,689 yards from 2004 to 2007. Quiteh enters his senior season with 5,328 yards, including two 2,000-yard seasons, in 2010 and 2012.

Another big year could put the record way out of reach for generations to come.

QUARTERBACK ANDREW JACKSON
is one of several returning starters this season for Seton Hill.

MEET THE NEW BOSS

There are four new head coaches in the Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference:

• Greg Breitbach, Millersville: A former assistant at Division I FCS powerhouse North Dakota, Breitbach will have his hands full with this project.

• Issac Collins, Seton Hill: New league, new coach for the traditionally challenged Griffins.

• Paul Darragh, Bloomsburg: A former assistant for Frank Cignetti at IUP, Darragh must fill the shoes of another legend, Danny Hale, who retired at the end of last season.

• Drew Folmar, Kutztown: Once a standout QB at Millersville, Folmar replaces Ray Monica, who left for Arkansas Tech.

AREA PLAYERS IN THE PSAC

Clarion
Kwaku Asamoah, DB, So, Indiana
Ben Fiscus, QB, Sr., Indiana
Zach Newquist, DL, Jr., Indiana
Gary Parenish, DB, Fr., N.Cambria

IUP
Logan Weaver, QB, Fr., Indiana
Slippery Rock
Tyler Matusak, K, Fr., Derry

PRESEASON COACHES POLL

West
1. IUP (7)
2. Mercyhurst (1)
3. Slippery Rock
4. California
5. Gannon
6. Edinboro
7. Clarion
8. Seton Hill

East
1. Shipp. (6)
2. Bloom. (1)
3. W.Chester (1)
4. Kutztown
5. Gannon
6. E.Stroudsburg
7. Clarion
8. Cheyney

Note: First-place votes in parentheses

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* — No longer a member of the PSAC

Note: Mercyhurst, Gannon and LIU-Post are private schools. The rest are state-owned universities that cannot use tax dollars for scholarships. They must gain the money through their own fundraising. The NCAA maximum is 36 scholarships. Figures for the 2013 season will be released next June.

Source: PSAC
Once a gimmick, the spread is everywhere

Continued from Page 18

“It’s triple-option football, just out of the shotgun,” Browning said. “If you really look at it, we’re back to running the triple option.”

Browning said his team will veer a little bit away from the Spread this year. There will still be shotgun concepts that Edinboro has run the last few years, but he wants to get more back to basics, which is an interesting idea because the team that won the PSAC last season did it without running a single play from the Spread.

When Curt Cignetti was lured away from Alabama to coach at IUP in 2011, where he had been the wide receivers coach for four seasons, he brought with him the philosophy of winning games by bludgeoning teams with a physical traditional I-formation offense that featured tight ends and fullbacks. It wasn’t a new concept, just one Cignetti had seen work first-hand.

“(Alabama) had a 29-game winning streak and we won a national championship with our offense,” Cignetti said. “So when things make sense to you, and you see the plan and the results, it’s hard not to do it the same way. It made a lot of sense to me, and that’s what I had to do.”

OTHER TEAMS have noticed what the Crimson Hawks are doing.

“It’s a great way of playing,” Kellar said. “I want to play that way. It’s their niche.”

“I guarantee you that a lot of teams have been looking at a lot of IUP tape this offsea-son,” Cignetti said. “We’ve got a big bull’s-eye on us.”

Seton Hill coach Isaac Collins wishes he could run an offense similar to IUP’s. But he and his staff will use some Spread concepts because his background as a defensive coordinator opened his eyes to the possibilities.

“If I had my choice, we’d be just like IUP,” he said. “We’d line up with a fullback and pound you. But I’m a realist and I’ve been a defensive coordinator for a long time. So I know the problems you can put a good defense in by spreading them out.”

The reason that more teams don’t model themselves after a program like IUP is that I-formation power football relies on big, physical linemen, tough running backs and a group of receivers who can block downfield. Those are three things that are in short supply at the Division II level.

And because a lot of high school programs have begun running concepts of the Spread, recruiting players has changed to the point where it’s easier to find an athletic quarterback who can run the ball than it is to find a 6-foot-5 gunslinger with a cannon for an arm.

“You quarterback has got to be athletic,” Browning said. “He’s got to be intelligent. He’s got to be able to do it all. But I don’t think you necessarily need a big arm. It helps, but it isn’t necessary.”

Cignetti views recruiting a quarterback differently, but that’s because he doesn’t use the Spread.

Continued on Page 22
## 2012 PSAC TEAM STATISTICS

### SCORING DEFENSE

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Once a gimmick, the spread is everywhere

Continued from Page 20

“What you’re looking for in a quarterback is a guy who can get the ball from Point A to Point B as quickly and as accurately as possible,” he said, suggesting things haven’t changed that much over the years. “He needs to be able to make good decisions and have enough athleticism to escape some pressure. And he needs those quarterback intangibles, too.”

What can be difficult is finding a quarterback who can run your scout team and emulate an opposing offense that does not run some aspect of the Spread. Browning knows this first-hand. Last year, he saw it in practice, when he asked his scout-team quarterback to get under center to take a snap.

“He looked at me and said, “I have never taken a snap from center in my life,” Browning said. “That’s what you’re getting now.”

FOR THE teams that do run the Spread, there has been one important factor that has caught a lot of coaches’ attention.

“I think the biggest change in college football the last eight or 10 years is the number of plays people are running,” said California’s Kellar. “That’s why numbers are getting more and more skewed. It used to be that when we’d play fast, the other team would play slow. But now, both teams are playing fast. It’s like watching an NBA Finals game between the Lakers and the Celtics in the 1980s. … So we all play fast and we all get more plays and the numbers get skewed that way. You get more yards per game because there are more reps.”

For evidence of that idea, just look at PSAC statistics from the past 10 years.

In 2012, Shippensburg led the league in yards per game, at an astounding 529.9. That figure was also good enough to be tops in all of NCAA Division II. What’s odd about it is that the Raiders managed to average more yards per game than anyone else while running 1,033 plays, by far the most in the league.

The 529.9 yards per game and 1,033 plays run are the most in the PSAC in the past decade.

That’s enough to make Collins shake his head. In his team’s first year in the league, the defensive-minded Collins must find a way to slow down the likes of California, Edinboro, Gannon and Clarion, four schools that like to spread out defenses.

“You still win the same way,” Kellar said. “For all that stuff that teams do, a lot of it is (garbage) because you win games by running the ball and by stopping the run. If you look at a team like Oregon, what they do is they really run the hell out of the ball.”

That’s what Cignetti likes about the simplified approach, and that’s why IUP won’t be using the Spread anytime soon. “When you can have the quarterback hand the ball to the running back, and he runs into the end zone, well, that’s the easiest way to do it,” he said. “It’s pretty easy to call plays then.”
Quarterback Mike Box agreed with Berdahl’s statement, but said the Crimson Hawks can use last year’s playoff loss as momentum. “You come that close, and for it to end the way it did … that was a hit below the belt,” Box said. “But it has been a fuel for everyone on this team, especially the old heads. We’re redshirt seniors, and for most of us, this is our last ride. To come that close, we’re not going to let it slip away again.”

So while some teams talk about using momentum from last year, Cignetti and the Crimson Hawks are only talking about one thing: today. “You always have dreams and ambitions,” Cignetti said, “but what I’ve learned is the best way to take care of business is to stay focused on today and the process of getting better. That’s what we do. That’s what I’ve learned.”

The only downside to Cignetti’s plan is that expectations are largely built on the past, and that has put the Crimson Hawks in the sights for every other team in the PSAC: In the preseason coaches poll, the Crimson Hawks were a near-unanimous pick to win the West Division.

Those lofty expectations come because IUP has a large group of starters coming back this season, including nine players who earned all-conference honors last year. Cignetti has also filled the holes left by last year’s graduation with a number of transfers and incoming freshmen who showed a lot of promise in preseason camp. “We’ve got a lot of football players who have played a lot of successful football for us, and we have some incoming players who look like they’ll be pretty good football players,” Cignetti said, “so I’m really excited about this team.”

On paper, this team ought to be every bit as good as last year, or maybe even better. But that’s the kind of talk that Cignetti avoids, instead hoping tomorrow’s team is better than today’s.

And to achieve that goal, the Crimson Hawks are not looking back. “What we did in the past is in the past,” Cignetti said. “This is a new team, this is a different team. Every day, we’re going to have to invest to get the desired results.”
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