

## FOOTBALL

### Bears, Lions ready for close one

Thursday, August 30, 2007 **ANDERS LARSON**  
*ThisWeek Staff Writer*

In one respect, there seems to be a consensus on how Friday's meeting between the Gahanna Lincoln and Upper Arlington high school football teams will play out.

"With a team like UA, it's always going to come down to the last play," Gahanna linebacker Kevin Guthrie said.

"They're never going to quit and we're never going to quit. You have to be prepared for anything."

Guthrie was on the field the last time the two teams faced each other, in 2005, and he expects another battle this year. The Lions won that matchup 21-19 but had to recover an onside kick with just more than a minute left to hold off a late rally from the Golden Bears.

As evenly matched as the teams were then, Friday's game at Gahanna might be even more difficult to predict.

Both teams are coming off lopsided home wins and both are considered to be, as usual, among the top teams in the area. Upper Arlington finished 10-2 last season but lost the bulk of its starting lineup, whereas Gahanna has the majority of its team returning after an 8-4 season. Both teams have new starters at quarterback but have experience at running back.

The teams no longer are in the same OCC division like they were in 2005, but Upper Arlington senior tight end/defensive end Andrew Colosimo said the importance of this game is still there.

"(The Gahanna game) probably will set the tone for the rest of the season for us," Colosimo said.



BY STEVE FRIEND/THISWEEK

Upper Arlington's Alex Drake follows the path set by Travis Calkins last Friday during their non-league game against Westland. The host Golden Bears won 70-0.



BY STEVE FRIEND/THISWEEK

UA's Thomas Sauter (center) celebrates with Danny Nygren (left), Eric Rieser (right) and Nolan Kleinhenz last Friday after scoring a touchdown on a fumble recovery.

Upper Arlington enters at 1-0 after obliterating last year's surprise team, Westland, 70-0 last Friday. Upper Arlington led 49-0 at the half and got 208 yards and two touchdowns on the ground from starting tailback Tommy Farwick.

Farwick (6-foot, 195 pounds) is one of only two starters, along with Colosimo (6-5, 245), who are back from last year's offense.

Colosimo will start at defensive end as well and has verbally committed to Akron.

Defensively, the Golden Bears are no more experienced than they are on offense, with only defensive end Mikel Berry (6-3, 245) returning as a starter. But between Berry and Colosimo, the Golden Bears should be able to apply plenty of pressure off the edges.

However, Gahanna coach Mike Lanza said he doesn't put too much stock into the number of starters that Upper Arlington graduated.

"What's the saying? They just reload," Lanza said.

"Their junior varsity was undefeated last year, so those guys just step up and fill in. When you have a program like their (program), you really don't lose much going from one senior class to another senior class."

Gahanna had even less trouble in its first game as virtually everything went right in a 65-6 rout of Mifflin last Friday. The Lions built a 65-0 lead by halftime and played four quarterbacks over the course of the game.

In fact, Lanza said he could learn plenty about his team even in a blowout win.

"I think you can gain a lot because you get to look at live game film on your other guys, so you can check out your depth and all that kind of stuff," Lanza said.

"I think it's very important. Absolutely (I was pleased), I thought they all played hard. Everybody that went in played hard."

Gahanna returns almost every one of its skill position players from last season, with the exception of quarterback and tight end.

Senior Darius Reeves (6-1, 176) was a ThisWeek Super 25 selection last season as he rushed for more than 1,600 yards, and he is considered to be one of the premier running backs in the area. Senior Elliott Williams (6-1, 170), the backup quarterback behind senior Blake Hickey (5-11, 197), starts at wide receiver and defensive back.

Hickey also showed his ability to run against Mifflin with carries of 17, 20 and 16 yards, and the Lions' running attack is something that concerns Golden.

"They've got really good skilled people and they've got a strong offensive line," Golden said.

"You have to honor the threat of Reeves. Their quarterback is a good, strong runner, too. You have to defend the whole field because they have big-play capability on every play."

Defensively, the Lions have starters back at every linebacker and defensive back position, but the biggest question mark is on the defensive line, with only senior nose tackle Josh McCaskey (5-8, 292) returning as a starter.

Golden said he knows his team will be in for much more of a battle than it had in week one.

"We'll find out more about our team (against Gahanna)," Golden said.

"It will be a good measuring stick. It gets harder from here on out."

### **AT A GLANCE**

UPPER ARLINGTON at GAHANNA

When: 7:30 p.m. Friday

Last meeting: 2005, Gahanna 21-19

Gahanna to date: Defeated Mifflin 65-6

Top Lions: Aaron Breitfeller, Matt Donaldson, Kevin Guthrie, Blake Hickey, Darius Reeves, K.C. Sparks and Elliott Williams