

FOOTBALL

UA looking to run past Findlay

Thursday, September 6, 2007

PATRICK DOLAN

ThisWeek Staff Writer

Given the fact that the Upper Arlington High School football team's running game has been highly effective and Findlay has been almost helpless to stop the run, the matchup between the teams Friday at UA appears to be a mismatch.

But coach Mike Golden has been around the game long enough to know that it is unwise to discount an opponent. Even though Findlay's defense has struggled, particularly against the run, he knows that doesn't mean that the Bears are guaranteed to run all over the Trojans.

Findlay allowed 463 yards rushing in a 40-27 opening loss to Toledo St. John's on Aug. 24 and 439 yards on the ground in a 28-3 loss to Toledo St. Francis last Friday.

"(Stopping the run) looks like a concern for them," said Golden, whose team improved to 2-0 with a 24-21 overtime win over Gahanna last Friday. "It looks like they're trying different (defensive) schemes and I think they're pretty young, but they've played decent running teams, too. That has something to do with it, I'm sure. They've played a tough schedule. They've played two good teams out of Toledo."

Still, Golden feels good about the matchup, particularly because of the way running backs Tommy Farwick and Alex Drake are running with the ball and the way the offensive line has been opening holes for them.

Farwick leads the team in rushing with 356 yards on 33 carries (10.8 yards per carry). He ran for 208 yards and two touchdowns on eight carries in a 70-0 win over Westland on Aug. 24 and had 148 yards and three touchdowns on 25 carries against Gahanna.

Comprised entirely of first-year starters, the line consists of Kacy Yuhás at center, Travis Calkins and Brennan Kurfees at the tackles, Josh Root at one guard position and Charlie Johnson and



BY LORRIE CECIL/THISWEEK

Upper Arlington's Mark Crawford (left), Tommy Tench and Eric Clements celebrate last Friday after defeating Gahanna 24-21 in overtime.

Next game

UPPER ARLINGTON vs.
FINDLAY

When: 7:30 p.m. Friday

Last meeting: 2006, Upper
Arlington 17-10
Findlay to date: Lost to Toledo
St. John's 40-27; lost to Toledo
St. Francis 28-3

Top Trojans: Matt Alexander,
Travis Barnhill, Jimmy Davidson,
Eric Gilbert, Ross Greeno, Travis
Joseph and Garret McQueen

Of note: Findlay finished 4-6
last season. ... The all-time series
is tied at 3.

Nat Kell splitting time at the other guard spot. Tight end Andrew Colosimo, a second-year starter, also plays a key role as a blocker for the running game.

"We think our backs and our line are our strengths," Golden said. "All of the kids on the line are good (weightlifters). They put themselves in position to have a good season because of their offseason work in the weight room.

"What they don't have in size, they make up for in strength and quickness."

Golden also is pleased with the play of his defense. But he said that the Trojans' offense will present a challenge to the defensive unit, which returned only one starter in end Mikel Berry.

"They're a spread (offense) team that runs as much as they throw," said Golden, whose team defeated Findlay 17-10 a year ago. "It will be a change of pace for us because this will be the first time this year that we'll be going against a spread offense."

Findlay lost its starting quarterback from the last two seasons, Chris Schneider, to graduation. The Trojans are utilizing a two-quarterback system with Eric Gilbert and Jimmy Davidson, who also plays wide receiver.

Through scouts and game tape, Golden and his coaching staff are aware of a pattern that the Trojans have displayed.

Against St. Francis, Gilbert completed 15 of 35 passes and Davidson went 1-for-2 as they combined for 157 passing yards. Davidson carried the ball 14 times for 37 yards and Gilbert three times for 12 yards.

Davidson also will line up in the backfield from time to time. Against St. John's, he took a direct snap and ran 75 yards for a touchdown.

Another key player on offense for the Trojans is running back Matt Alexander, who rushed for 55 yards on 16 carries against St. Francis.