

# Blount, Rams should take '96 season as learning experience

from B1

tance each time he touches the ball the Rams will continue to struggle to score points.

If Blount is sincere in assessing the Rams' offensive attack the one thing that he should concern himself with for next season is coming up with a burner on the offense, either at tailback or wideout. The Rams can't afford to continue to expect mediocre offensive talent to provide "blue-chip" plays. Blount is only fooling himself if he continues to think that average players can rise to the occasion against top-quality competition.

The WSSU offensive coaches, and players for that matter, must realize that the program is at a crossroad. It is not what it used to be by any stretch of the imagination. Sure they are capable of rising up on any given weekend and giving the opposing team a battle, but they don't have the guns to lock down with the conference heavyweights game in and game out.

Defensively, the Rams have made strides. There have been few players on the WSSU campus who could dominate on the defensive end like Tori Workman

and Donell McDonald. Those two players are throwbacks to former WSSU players who moved on to the next level. As a unit this year's defensive squad has some talent. However, they, like any other above average defense, can't play the majority of the game and expect to shut the opposition down.

The '96 season will thus go down in history as one of the least productive in the past 20 years at WSSU. Hopefully the Rams' braintrust can learn from it and not allow it to happen again. Everyone is due one bad season, so I guess Blount deserves his. However, the Rams need to finish the year out on a strong note and start critiquing themselves for their next go-round in the CIAA.

Blount and his staff don't have to worry about any post-season possibilities so they can go ahead and start hitting the recruiting trails.

Bill Hayes was able to attract some blue chippers to the Ram program and then mix them in with hard-working athletes. Pete Richardson was able to get a few blue-chip players also. But



Eric Hendly (shown here in action early this season against N.C. A&T) came up with his best performance of the season last week. Hendley rushed for 189 yards on 42 carries to pace the WSSU offense.

Richardson's forte was getting the maximum effort out of every player on the team.

If Kermit Blount can learn something from his two predecessors, something positive

could come out of this abysmal '96 football season. The talent level coming into the program

has to improve. And once they arrive on campus, Blount has to maximize their effort.

# Spartans close in on CPC title with 18-6 win over West Forsyth

from B1

Forsyth turnover to increase its lead to 10-0. The fumble was one of five first-half turnovers committed by the Titans.

Coach Jonathan Hayes of West Forsyth said that his team's miscues were too much to overcome.

"We kept giving the ball up," Hayes said. "You can't do that and win football games. We had too many turnovers to expect to do well against a team like Mount Tabor."

But Hayes said he was pleased with his team's defensive play.

"Our defense played a real strong game," Hayes said. "They gave us a very good effort against a good offensive team."

Mount Tabor, one of the area's most explosive offensive teams, didn't get on the scoreboard again until the fourth period, when it put together its first sustained drive of the game and scored on Wayne Griffin's short touchdown run.

"I have to give credit to West Forsyth for the way they played," Pulley said. "They played a good defensive game. I think they really played a better game defensively than we did offensively. Luckily we prevailed."

The only offensive highlight for West Forsyth came on the final play of the game when Bubba Rosenbaum connected with Kevin Stout on a 76-yard touchdown pass.

"We really didn't do very much on offense in the game," Hayes said. "We had some injuries on the line that really hurt us. We had to move three people around because of injuries to two of our starters. That's not an excuse, but it is something that we had to deal with. I think it was also one big reason for our turnovers. We had to use a new center and the quarterback-center exchange very important. We weren't getting it right. We had to use a lot of people who were inexperienced."

Another key loss for the Titans was at tailback. Oscar Ledbetter, who has rushed for more than 500 yards this season, was injured early in the

game and was unable to return to the lineup. Without him, the Titans couldn't put together any cohesiveness on offense.

The victory allowed Mount Tabor to improve its record to 6-0-1 overall and 3-0 in the Central Piedmont 4-A Conference. The Spartans will travel to South Rowan for an important conference game today (Oct. 24). A victory would keep the Spartans moving toward one of its goals this year - an undefeated season.

"We have travel down there

(China Grove) and we know that's a tough place to play," Pulley said. "But I think if we do the kind of things that we're capable of on both sides of the ball we'll be okay. We handled them last year, but I don't know how we'll react this season. Last year we had tremendous speed and that enabled us to get going early in the game. This year we don't have the same kind of speed, but we have some people who can make things happen."

West Forsyth fell to 2-6

overall and 1-3 in the CPC. The Titans have an open date this week and Hayes said it couldn't come at a better time for his young team.

"It really is a good time for an open date," he said. "With Oscar being hurt and with the kind of injuries we have on the offensive line we can use a break to get some people healthy. It will also give us time to work on some things offensively and defensively to make us a better team."

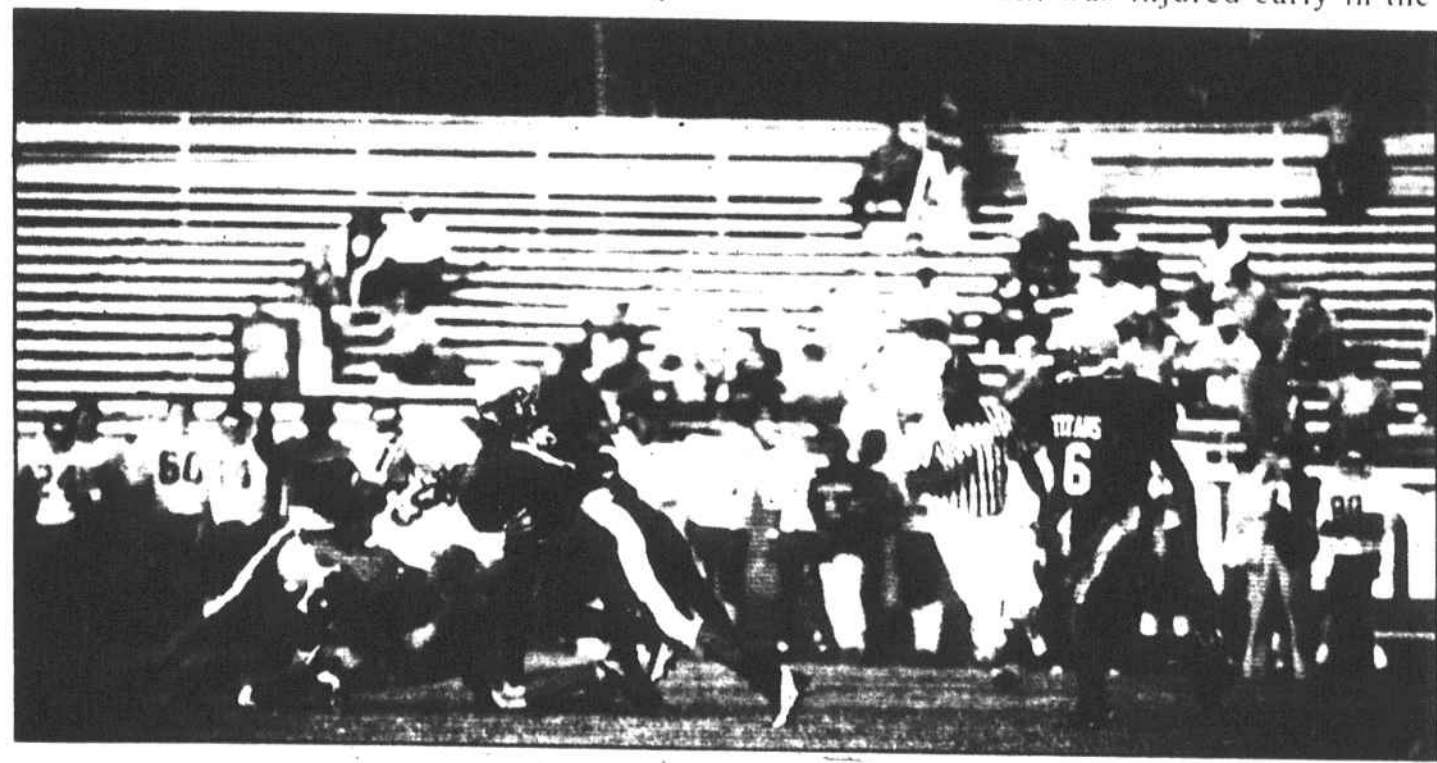


Photo by Reginald Campbell

West Forsyth's defensive unit shut down Mount Tabor's potent offense for most of the game, but came away with a loss.

# East Forsyth JVs defeat Smith, 41-0

from B1

cially after sophomore Courtney Weak's was called up to the varsity after the first game. Brayboy passed for a touchdown and also ran for one in the Eagles victory over Smith.

"Brayboy is really coming along for us," Ellender said. "He will be a good quarterback for us down the road. He's very coachable and he does all the things you want your quarterback to do."

Despite their youth, Ellender said his team has done a good job of adapting to the Wing-T offense.

"Their progress has been great," he said. "It takes a while

to learn the Wing-T but they've done a good job of learning it. We've been able to develop some players who are going to help us in the future."

Ellender said he is also pleased with the way the defensive unit is developing. The unit, paced by noseguard Corey Jones put together its best effort of the season in the win over Smith.

Corey Jones is a defensive threat for us," he said. "He's had one whale of a season. He's been dominating up front. He played some for us last year, but he wasn't a starter. This season he's come out and played well since the first day of practice. He's not

a big kid, but he gives you everything he's got on every play. He has a super attitude - but most of the kids on this team do. They are a pleasure to work with every day."

The Eagles play host to Greensboro Page today (Oct. 24) and that game could have an impact upon the final conference standings. East has an open week next Thursday before finally finishing the season on the road against Eden Morehead in two weeks. Ellender said he won't put any added pressure on his team to win, but a victory would put the Eagles in the chase for a jaycee conference championship.

"It takes a while to learn the Wing-T but they've done a good job of learning it."

—Joe Bill Ellender

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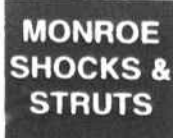
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