

Semi-Pro Football *1947 - 1949*

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Hinton Wildcats Semi-Pro Football Team – 1948

Names provided on next page.

(Photo Courtesy of West Virginia & Regional History Center)



Hinton Wildcats Semi-Pro Football Team – 1948 – Names

**Front Row L-R: John Ratliff (No. 35); "Bud" Maddy (No. 50);
"Tobe" Humphries (No. 31); Jimmy Thompson (No. 49); Tom Clinebell;
"Big Deal" Richmond (No. 45); Sweeney (No. 39); Fred Vass (No. 47);
"Rob" Vass.**

**Back Row L-R: Bobby Jack Crush (No. 44); Maynard Bruce (No. 33);
Big "Poodie" Phillips; "Flop" Osborne; Julian Fredeking (No. 36); and
Charley Johnson**

Hinton Semi-Pro Football Team - 1947–1949

The following slides provide information about a Hinton Semi-Pro Football Team which played in the late 1940s. Aside from a couple dozen or so newspaper clippings, there is very limited information about this team or its players. We know that the first game was in 1947 and the team name was the “Chessies”, then the “Hellcats”. They played in 1948 and 1949 as the “Wildcats”.

Some newspaper clippings have been re-written for improved legibility .

1947

Beckley Sunday-Register
Nov. 2, 1947

Semi-Pro Game At Hinton Today

By Register Staff Writer

HINTON—A group of former Hinton Bobcat footballers, some of them veterans of college gridirons will take over Avis Field this afternoon at 2:30 to meet a similar outfit from Montgomery in a semi-pro game that has brought out a lot of interest locally.

The "Hellcats" are led by Billy Jo Lilly, one time Bobcat quarterback, and number on their squad such former stars as big Poody Phillips who played at Wake Forest, Dick Burdette of Concord, Rob Vass of W. Va. Tech and Arnette Lilly of the West Virginia Mountaineers.

The probable lineups: Hinton—Fredeking and Rob Vass, ends; Ralph Vass and Meadows, tackles; Wheeler and Phipps, guards; Stone, center; Terry, quarterback; Phillips, fullback; Willie and Meadows, halfbacks.

Montgomery — Demark and Waugh, ends; Zickafoose and Montgomery, tackles; Lockman White, guards; Kellman, center; Vargo, quarterback; Machino, fullback; Stevens and Form, halfbacks.

HELLCATS BOW TO HORNETS, SEMIPRO TEAM

HINTON, Nov. 2 — The Hellcats opened the semipro football season here rather belatedly today and took a 13 to 6 beating by the Montgomery Hornets, who had a decided weight advantage along with the experience of having played a few games to date. The local team just secured its uniforms yesterday and had no chance to get into any real hard workouts.

But in the opening quarter Hinton gave the visitors plenty of worry, but after scoring tied from that point. Zickafoose blocked a punt in the second, scooped it up on the 14 and went for the TD that tied the score.

In the third quarter Moschino's long pass to Farmer produced the winning touchdown. Moschino passing to Chaffen for the extra point. A large crowd attended the game, played at Avis Park. The lineup:

| Montgomery | | Hinton | |
|------------|----|------------|---|
| Chaffen | LE | B. Vass | |
| Zickafoose | LT | J. Meadows | |
| Lockman | LG | Wheeler | |
| Kellem | C | Stone | |
| C. White | RG | Phlips | |
| Montgomery | RT | R. Vass | |
| Waugh | RE | Maddy | |
| B. White | QB | Ferry | |
| Carella | LH | N. Meadows | |
| Farmer | RH | Burdette | |
| Moschino | FB | Phillips | |
| Montgomery | | 0 | 6 |
| Hinton | | 6 | 0 |

Points after touchdown—Chaffen.

Referee, Porterfield. Umpire, Beasley. Linesman, Allen. Time, 12 minute quarters.

Hellcats Lose To Montgomery

HINTON, Nov. 2 — The breaks of the game, going against the Hinton Hellcats, Summers County's first semi-professional football team, cost them at least a tied score, of 6-all, in Summers county's first semi-professional game here at Avis Park Sunday afternoon, when a blocked kick, bouncing far back towards their goal line, was picked up by Zickafoose, of the Montgomery Hornets, and carried over for a touchdown late in the third quarter.

Hinton went out in front in the first quarter when "Big Phillips, of Hinton high school Bobcat fame, crashed over the line for the first score of the game. The extra point, good on a run-over play, was nullified by backfield-in-motion penalty, and the Hellcats remained in control of the situation until the third quarter. The final score was Montgomery 13, Hinton 6.

In the third stanza, Corilla, of the Hornets, who was really a hornet to the Hellcats, broke through for a nice run, and the Hornets were able to tie the score, missing the extra point. Many spectators expected to see the touch-downdown run called back on a backfield in motion penalty, but the officials saw it otherwise, and the tiring Hellcats, some of whom were in uniform for the first time in even years, were unable to control the breaks of the game from there out.

The large crowd, comparing favorably with some Bobcat turnouts, was well pleased with the showing made by the Hellcats, and gave them good support.

Officials of the game were Porterfield, Beasley and Allen.



**From Hinton Daily News – Monday, August 30, 1948
Semi Pros To Play**

It looks as if the Hinton semi-pros are going to give football another fling here this season, and such action is certain to meet the approval of local fans.

Hinton was too far away to be accepted in the recently organized West Virginia-Ohio league, but it is probable that the local team can work out some games with teams in the league.

Montgomery will have a team again this year, so that means two games for sure, and an effort will be made to have teams organized in Beckley, Oak Hill and Princeton.

All the games played last year were interesting, and local fans have been looking forward to seeing the games this year, therefore there was much disappointment when it was thought that Hinton would not be able to have a team. There is little doubt but that the locals can turn out a fine team if all the available material shows up. The backfield could be a “dream” with such boys as Charlie Schrader, late of West Virginia, Maynard Bruce, who played with V.P.I. last year, “Flop” Osborne, as sweet a running back as anyone would want to see, “Big Poodie” Phillips, a hard driving fullback, and one of the best ever developed here, “Rit” Burdette, “Morty” Meadows, “Little Poodie” Phillips and several others.

With a group like the above dividing the playing time, the sport would not be quite so hard on the various individuals as it was last year.

From Hinton Daily News – Monday, August 30, 1948 (Continued)

There is also quite a bit of line material available, and the Hinton team could field a forward wall that would average well over the 200-pound mark.

The local team will also have more time to get in condition than they did last year, so we see no reason why the local semi-pros won't attract capacity crowds this year if they get the games.

GOOD SPIRIT

Another good thing about this semi-pro sport as played last year was the sportsmanship shown by all the teams. The boys played hard all the time, but there was never any unnecessary roughness or unsportsmanship conduct on the part of the players.

Everyone seemed to have the proper spirit, and as a result there were no serious injuries of any kind.

From Beckley-Raleigh Register – August 31, 1948
Sports an' Stuff Column by Bob Wills – (rewritten for legibility)

Beckley football fans, always rabid followers of the pigskin sport, may get a looksee at the semi-pro division of the game - if a drive to establish a team here, currently underway, pans out.

The first breath of this possibility came to life yesterday when two former Hinton High athletes dropped in on this department to see how the land lays.

YOU MAY RECALL that Hinton first entered the semi-pro field last year, competing in a makeshift league that consisted of Montgomery, East Bank, South Charleston and Hinton.

East Bank and South Charleston recently became charter members of the newly organized Bi-State League (first games in which are scheduled Friday night) leaving Hinton and Montgomery on the outside looking in temporarily.

The Bi-State League by the way bids fair to become quite a circuit. It consists of, in addition to East Bank and South Charleston, Logan and three Ohio teams, Portsmouth, Ironton and Jackson. The teams have hired capable coaches and plan to make a big time business of it.

From Beckley-Raleigh Register – August 31, 1948
Sports an' Stuff Column by Bob Wills – (rewritten for legibility) (Continued)

LOGAN HAS Rink Hefner, former Morris Harvey star, as mentor; Ironton is tutored by Bob Kales and Glen Presnell, the later a former star at the University of Nebraska; Jackson has Walter Henson, former Marshall back; East Bank has Roy Williams, member of the East Bank High staff; and Portsmouth is tutored by Ray Kornhoff.

The two Hinton envoys, Ray Phipps and Bob Vass, both members of the 1939-49-41 Bobcat teams, hope to get a league of from six to eight teams operating in the southern end of West Virginia, and are thinking in terms of arranging a playoff between Bi-State champion and the winner of their own loop.

They already have two teams, Hinton and Montgomery, ready and rearing to go. They hope to add such teams as Beckley, Princeton, Bluefield, Oak Hill, Mount Hope, maybe Whitesville, and perhaps some others. The Hinton team has scheduled its first workout this week.

IT CAN BE A GOOD venture for some interested party or parties. Here is the picture of how Hinton did in its first chance. Five games were played (on a 50-50 basis of dividing the gate) and in those five games the Hinton team cleared enough (at \$1.00 admission prices) to end the season about \$200 in the red. This was after \$1,500 worth of equipment was paid for, which is not bad for the first season.

Hinton had only two home games, one a spur of the moment affair that drew about 500 cash customers and the other against Montgomery, pulling out a fan turnout of about 800.

From Beckley-Raleigh Register – August 31, 1948
Sports an' Stuff Column by Bob Wills – (rewritten for legibility) (Continued)

The team played on the high school field, which, thanks to the generosity of the Summers County Board of Education, cost the team, only the price of the lights.

IT IS POSSIBLE that some arrangement, at not too prohibitive a cost, could be reached for Woodrow Wilson High School for use of their field at times when it is not in use for scholastic games

The two Hinton representatives tried to contact a couple of men suggested as possible promoters of the game here but had made not report of their progress at the time this article was written.

They asked, however, that anyone wishing more details contact them through this corner as soon as possible. It could become a good thing.

Meanwhile all such prospective backers, and all interested players are requested to call or write this department, so we can get a glimmer of how much interest can be aroused.

IF ENOUGH INTEREST is shown, a meeting of interested parties will be called to see what constructive steps can be taken. Let me know how you feel about it immediately. If any steps are taken they will have to be made soon since all details of preliminary practice, the selection of a coaching staff, and what-not must be ironed out. It is hoped a meeting can be held Thursday or Friday.

From Beckley-Raleigh Register – August 31, 1948
Sports an' Stuff Column by Bob Wills – (rewritten for legibility) (Continued)

Meanwhile, Hinton has lined up quite a team. Just to name a few, they have Poody Phillips, star Hinton back about 1939 and later a squad member at Wake Forest; Maynard Bruce, back, Hinton '42 and VPI; Scott Meadows, end, Hinton, '41; Vass, end, Hinton and W.Va. Tech, '46; Phipps, tackle, Hinton; Jimmy Meadows, tackle, '42 Melvin Wheeler, guard, Hinton, '43; Melvin Richmond, guard Gauley Bridge; Fred Vass, end, Hinton '46; Jimmy Hartley, center, Hinton '47 and North-South game star August 20; Malcolm Osborne, back, Hinton '47; and Jim Porterfield, Talcott High Coach and former Glenville star.

In addition Charley “Chug” Schrader, new Hinton coach and star at WVU last year, will both play and help Coach Billy Joe Lilly, Hinton quarterback '36 with the instructing.

As I mentioned above, such an enterprise here can become a big thing and now's the time to get our feet wet. If Beckley doesn't grab the chance offered, we'll all be outside looking in – because whether Beckley enters or not a league like this certain to spring up and become a going thing in southern West Virginia. Let's hear from you.

Note: The above teams became the Southern West Virginia Semi-Pro Football Conference.



From Hinton Daily News – Thursday, September 9, 1948
Maynard Whips Them Into Shape

If there are not some more muscles in town today, it's not the fault of Maynard Bruce, the former Hinton and V.P.I. star is in pretty good shape as a result of having worked out with the high school team the last couple of weeks.

Bruce for the last two days has acted as the guy up front who leads the squad in all those intricate conditioning exercises. I watched him put Hinton's newly organized semi-pro squad through their paces yesterday, and it made me grunt just to watch.

About 20 former college and high school stars reported at the field Wednesday afternoon at 5 o'clock, and some of those boys would be the answer to any coach's prayer, either in college or high school.

There is little doubt but the local team will be plenty good if they keep up their interest. About 10 or more other prospects are expected out today and tomorrow, and it is planned to keep a squad of 30 out all the time.

If there are any other players in this area who would like to play, they should report to Coach Lilly any afternoon at 5 o'clock.

Local fans are looking forward to the semi-pro games this season for they remember the fine brand of ball played last year. With the team better organized, and more time to get in shape, the brand of ball this year should be much better than last.

From Hinton Daily News – Thursday, September 9, 1948 (Continued)
Maynard Whips Them Into Shape

East Bank, a member of the Bi-State league, opened its season last week against South Charleston before a crowd of 5,000 and there is little doubt that the first game here will attract several thousand fans.

Andy Jones and “Lefty” Curtis were a couple of newcomers I noticed working out yesterday. Charley Schrader, former West Virginia star, and “Buck” Porterfield, who played a lot of end at Glenville, are also expected to perform for the locals.



**From Hinton Daily News – Tuesday, September 14, 1948
Meeting Tonight**

Tonight in Beckley another effort will be made to organize a semi-pro football league for this section, and at this time, it looks as if at least five teams are ready to go.

Hinton, Montgomery, Beckley, Oak Hill and possibly Smithers, seem certain of fielding teams. It is hoped that Bluefield, Princeton or Mount Hope will enter a team to assure the loop of at least six entries.

All reports from the Bi-State League, that includes three teams from West Virginia and three from Ohio, indicate that the games are being attended by large crowds.

The Hinton squad has already been working out, and there is little doubt but that this city will field a powerful eleven. Beckley already has 18 players signed up, including many former Beckley high school and college stars. It is hoped here that the group will take some definite action toward the formation of a league tonight.



From Hinton Daily News – Wednesday, September 29, 1948
Flash:

Since today's column was written, I have learned that Hinton's Wildcats, the local independent team, will definitely open its season here Sunday afternoon against Mount Hope.

This will be an official league game, and the starting time is tentatively scheduled at 3:15pm.

The local boys have been working out for the last month, and apparently are in good condition as a result of regular scrimmages.

Just what Mount Hope will have to offer is not known. The Fayette countians however, have been practicing regularly too, and will bring a 25-man squad of former high school and college players here for the game.

Hinton's chances for victory Friday may suffer somewhat if the veteran Kyle Gwinn is unable to play. The hefty co-captain is bothered with a bad knee, and for this reason had to be removed from the East Bank game. The injury has not responded to treatment, and is badly swollen. Gwinn was in uniform Tuesday, but did not participate, in any of the rough work. He confined his activities to running only to keep in condition.

Gwinn is scheduled to visit the hospital today for an x-ray, and this picture should tell the story.

INDEPENDENTS READY?

From Hinton Daily News – Wednesday, September 29, 1948 (Continued)

There is a possibility that the new semi-pro football league of which Hinton is a member, may make its debut here Sunday afternoon.

The local team was scheduled with Oak Hill but the Fayette countians will be unable to appear, as their uniforms have not yet arrived.

There is a possibility that the Mount Hope team may play here in place of Oak Hill. Beckley is slated to play Montgomery.

Since there are only five teams in the loop, Oak Hill will be given a bye in place of Mount Hope in case the latter decides to appear here.

Hinton is ready to go, in fact the local squad of some 25 players have been working out daily at the Avis park after the high school finishes practice.



From Hinton Daily News – Thursday, September 30, 1948
New League To Open Schedule On October 3rd
Chessies Open Slate At Oak Hill

The Hinton Chessies entered a five-team football league formed last night in Beckley at a meeting of team officials from Montgomery, Oak Hill, Hinton, and Beckley. Opening dates were set and a schedule approved and the loop named the Southern West Virginia Football Conference.

The Constitution and by-laws of the league will be the same as the Bi-State conference and the league officials will contact Bi-State commissioner Fred Burns and plan a playoff between the two leagues.

The league will open with Beckley meeting Montgomery and the Chessies playing at Oak Hill on Sunday, October 3. The complete schedule was formulated at the meeting but the dates have to be ironed out. In the event a sixth team should enter before the October 10 deadline, they will meet Mount Hope who drew a bye for the first game.

Election of officers and the official adoption of the constitution and by-laws was set for another meeting in Beckley next week.

The Oak Hill team was not represented at the meeting last night because the Fayette County team was meeting at the same time to pass approval on joining the league. They were represented by proxy at the session.

Other officials present at the meeting included Ed Kellem of Montgomery, Jim Rowe and “Bud Jennings of Mount Hope, Erie Howery of Beckley, and Ray Phipps and Bill Stone of the Chessies.

From Hinton Daily News – Thursday, September 30, 1948 (Continued)

The balance of the schedule is as follows:

Second Week: Montgomery at Mt. Hope, Hinton at Beckley, Oak Hill a bye.

Third Week: Oak Hill at Montgomery, Mt. Hope at Beckley, Hinton a bye.

Fourth Week: Mt. Hope at Hinton, Beckley at Oak Hill, Montgomery a bye.

Fifth Week: Oak Hill at Mt. Hope, Montgomery at Hinton, Beckley a bye.

Sixth Week: Oak Hill at Hinton, Montgomery at Beckley, Mt. Hope a bye.

Seventh Week: Mt. Hope at Montgomery, Beckley at Hinton, Oak Hill a bye.

Eighth Week: Montgomery at Oak Hill, Beckley at Mt. Hope, Hinton a bye.



From Hinton Daily News – Thursday, September 30, 1948
Bad Precedent

The action of the Board of Education of Raleigh county in denying use of the high school field to the recently organized Beckley Rockets, semi-pro footballers, should be soundly condemned by every fair-minded citizen of Raleigh county.

Just how the use of the field by the semi-pros would interfere in any way with the high school program is difficult to understand.

If the Rockets would interfere with the high school program, or hurt the field in any way, then they should be denied its use.

Instead of trying to hinder the new football program that has taken life in this section, the Raleigh board should try to help it along. It is nothing more than an amateur organization, and the boys who will play are probably all taxpayers and voters, and they should be permitted to use the field.

Charleston, Logan, South Charleston, Hinton and all the rest of the cities are permitting use of their fields by the Independents, and the action of the Raleigh Board is certainly not in keeping with Beckley's state-wide reputation of being a progressive city made up of real go-getting citizens.

From Hinton Daily News – Thursday, September 30, 1948 (Continued)

Here is hoping that the members of the Raleigh board will reconsider their action and let the boys use Woodrow Wilson high school field when it is not in use by the high school.

Hinton's Wildcats (that's the name of the independent football team here) are confronted with the problem of playing two games in as many days.

The locals were originally scheduled to play the Oak Hill team at Oak Hill on Saturday night, but the Oak Hill uniforms had not arrived, and it was thought the game was off.

Thinking that Oak Hill was not ready to start, Hinton scheduled a game with Mount Hope here Sunday, only to learn that Oak Hill's uniforms had arrived, and the O.H. team wanted to play as originally scheduled.

Now the local boys don't know whether to play just one game or both. It is a problem that the boys themselves will have to settle.



**From Hinton Daily News – Saturday, October 2, 1948
Ex-High School Stars Set For Exhibition Tilt
Bruce, Phillips To Lead Wildcats Against Stallions**

Hinton fans may have the opportunity of seeing some high class football here Sunday afternoon at 3:15pm as the Hinton Wildcats oppose Mount Hope in an exhibition game at C&O park.

The local outfit was originally scheduled to play Oak Hill there tomorrow night in a regularly scheduled league game. The Oak Hill team was not ready, however, and the exhibition here was scheduled.

Some of the greatest Hinton stars in history will don the moleskins again for the fray, and after a months' intensive practice, they feel that they are ready to go.

Maynard Bruce, husky Hinton fullback under Mickey McClung, and for two years the regular varsity quarterback at V.P.I. is expected to lead the Hinton attack with able assistance from "Big Poodie" Phillips, former star fullback here, and "Flop" Osborne, a sweet-running back. Boyd Vansickle and Raymond Parry are other boys on whom the local coach, Billy Joe Lilly, is planning his hopes for victory.

A big forward wall will swing into action for the locals with Bill Stone, Jimmy Hartley, Fred Vass, "Tobe" Humphries, Tommy Clinebell, Melvin Richmond, Denny Surber, Julian Fredeking, Harry Gore, "Lefty" Curtis, Bobby Jack Crush, Jack Sweeney, "Applejack" Wheeler, Fred Vass, "Muskrat" Ratliff, Jimmy Thompson, Ray Phipps, Charles Johnson, and "Bud" Maddy, all well known local athletes who are expected to see action.

From Hinton Daily News – Saturday, October 2, 1948 (Continued)

From the above list, Coach Lilly can pick a fast as well as a heavy team for the fracas, but according to word from Mount Hope, the same situation exists there.

Fred Burgess, former Concord star and now coach at Kingston will be at halfback with Fred Spadaro at 170 at the other half. U.J. Baird, the Mount Hope quarter, is the smallest man on the team at 140 pounds.

Some huskies will perform in the Mount Hope line with Rowe and Taylor at the tackles, weighing 220 and 230 pounds respectively. Jackson, a guard, tips the beams at 250, while Bill Criss, a former all-state guard, weighs 190 pounds. Stone and Christian, the ends, will weigh around 150 pounds but both men are exceptionally fast.

The Mount Hope team is being coached by Bud Jennings, former high school coach there, who is now handling the junior high team.

Last year the local team played several fast games here giving the fans a nice afternoon's entertainment, therefore it is hoped that a large crowd will attend the game Sunday afternoon to give the Hinton boys a good start financially.

After the game tomorrow, the local team will swing into their regular schedule of 10 games that will see home and home games with each of the other league teams that include Oak Hill, Mount Hope, Beckley, Montgomery and Rainelle.



**From Hinton Daily News – Monday, October 4, 1948
Faulconer Named Grid Commissioner**

John Faulconer, publisher of the Hinton Daily News, was elected commissioner of the new Southern West Virginia Football Conference, a semi-pro grid league in southern West Virginia.

Bill Barrett, Beckley radio sportscaster and grid official, was at the same time, elected secretary-treasurer of the new loop.

Voting for the offices was conducted by mail with representatives of each of the six teams entered in the league, sending their ballots to George Springer, Beckley sports editor who was acting as chairman.

The new league will officially open when the Beckley Rockets meet the Montgomery Greyhounds in Montgomery, Wednesday night.

Sunday afternoon the Beckley Rockets will journey to the local field to meet the Hinton Wildcats, with the Montgomery Greyhounds clashing with the Mount Hope Stallions on the Fayette county field. Rainelle and Oak Hill will round out the schedule with a game on the Rainelle field.



From Hinton Daily News – Monday, October 4, 1948
Hinton Defeats Stallions
Osborne And Bruce Score For Wildcats
Hinton Looked Good In Exhibition Tilt

Coach Billy Joe Lilly's Hinton Wildcats of the Southern West Virginia Football Conference, defeated the Mount Hope Stallions 1400 in an exhibition game at Avis field yesterday afternoon.

Maynard Bruce and "Flop" Osborne scored the two Wildcat scores, while Bruce added the extra points from placement.

The first Wildcat score climaxed a drive that started on the Mount Hope 47 where Bruce cut wide around his own right end to move the ball to the Mount Hope 13. Bobby Jack Crush moved the ball to the five yard stripe on a left end sweep. Big Poodie Phillips hit the center of the line, but was held for no gain. On the next play, Maynard Bruce cut wide around his right end to score standing up. Bruce also added the extra point from placement.

Both teams played on even terms in the second period with the Wildcats in scoring position only once when Bruce passed to Osborne for a first down on the Mount Hope 15. The Stallions line held for three downs and Bruce's pass to Rob Vass was incomplete.

From Hinton Daily News – Monday, October 4, 1948 (Continued)

The second half opened with Bruce taking the Mount Hope kickoff behind his own goal line and running through the entire Stallions team with the exception of the safety man. Rob Vass threw a body block into the safety man and Bruce tripped over Vass to the Hinton 38. The lone Mount Hope score came early in the third period when a pass gave them a first down on the local's 25 yard line. On the next play Eddie Stone passed to his brother, Tod Stone standing on the Hinton five yard stripe, who ran the remaining distance to score. Tod Stone added the extra point from placement.

The final score of the game came in the last minutes of the third period when the Wildcats registered a first down on the Mount Hope 34. Osborne picked up one yard at center. Bruce faded back on the next play to heave a long pass into the waiting arms of "Flop" Osborne on the five yard stripe who ran over for the score. Again, Bruce added the point from placement.

Both teams battled to a standstill in the final period with neither team getting in scoring position. The game ended with the Wildcats in possession of the ball on their own 30 yard stripe.

| Lineup: | Pos. | Wildcats | Rockets |
|---------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| | LE | Ratliff | Stone |
| | LT | Richmond | T. Garrett |
| | LG | Phipps | Taylor |
| | C | Hartley | C. Jones |
| | RG | Wheeler | Criss |
| | RT | Humphries | Rowe |
| | RE | F. Vass | Christian |
| | QB | Parry | H. Jones |
| | LH | Bruce | Shanks |
| | RH | Crush | Bailey |
| | FB | Phillips | Spadaro |

From Hinton Daily News – Monday, October 4, 1948 (Continued)

Statistics:

| | | | | | | |
|------------|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| Hinton | 7 | 0 | 7 | 0 | – | 14 |
| Mount Hope | 0 | 0 | 7 | 0 | – | 7 |

Touchdowns:

Osborne, Bruce, T. Stone

Points After Touchdowns:

Bruce 2, T. Stone 1

Substitutions:

Hinton:

R. Vass, Maddy, Thompson, Sweeney, Osborne, Johnson, Vansickle, Clinebell, Fredeking, Surber

Mt. Hope:

McGraw, Whitten, H. Garrett, T. Stone, Nelson, Lomas, Beverly, Bannister

Officials:

Referee – Jack Ballangee, Umpire – Harold Beasley, Linesman – Charles Schrader

Semi-Pro Loop Revises Slate

Oak Hill plays at Rainelle, Saturday, Beckley at Hinton Sunday and Mt. Hope entertains Montgomery next Tuesday under a revised Southern West Virginia Semi-Pro Football Conference arranged at a meeting of team representatives in Beckley last night.

Only one game has been played in the circuit thus far as the teams have found that equipment has been slow coming in. But most of them are set, now, and hope to launch out on a season that will lead to much success in 1949.

Beckley downed Montgomery, 6-0, in the circuit's first tilt Wednesday night. Previously to that Hinton took a 14-7 exhibition game from Mt. Hope. But all the teams swing into action and the battle for the conference championship is expected to be hot and heavy. Oak Hill's home opener comes with Beckley a week from this Sunday and the local Rockets will not appear at home as the city has no place for them to play.

Managers of all six teams are confident that the teams will meet with much success this season.

1948

Beckley Sunday-Register
Oct. 3, 1948

SEMI-PRO EXHIBITION

By Register Staff Writer

HINTON — The Mount Hope Stallions and the Hinton Wildcats, both members of the new Southern West Virginia Semi-Pro Football Conference, will play an exhibition game here this afternoon at 3:15, team officials announced.

Hinton and Oak Hill were originally scheduled to play in the opening Conference game but Oak Hill's uniforms did not arrive in time and the game was postponed. Beckley goes to Montgomery Wednesday night for the conference opener for both teams.

Beckley, Hinton Semi-Pro Teams Clash Today

By Register Staff Writer

HINTON — The strong Hinton Wildcats of the Southern West Virginia Semi-Pro Football Conference tangle with the undefeated Beckley Rockets this afternoon at Avis Field at 3:15 p.m.

The Rockets, victors over the Montgomery Hornets last Wednesday, enter today's contest without the services of Ed Brogan, first-string quarterback from Stoco, who suffered a shoulder injury at Montgomery and will be out for the season, according to Coach Bob Kent.

The Hinton gridders, holding a 14-7 victory over Mount Hope in an exhibition game, will field a starting lineup that includes Maynard Bruce, three-year man and first team quarterback with VPI, "Poody" Phillips, 1941 all-stater at Hinton, and Ray Phipps and Bob Vass, former W. Va. Tech letterman.

BECKLEY STANDOUTS include Gene Crookshanks, former East Bank High and WVU squadman, Calvin Green, 220-pound guard at East Bank, Johnny Lubich, of Glen Rogers and Concord College who scored the only touchdown in the win over Montgomery, Richard Shuck, Frank Trovata, Phil Milano and others.

The 24-man Rocket traveling squad averages 189 pounds with the starting line tipping the beam at 210¾.

The Hinton High band will parade before the game and be-



From Hinton Daily News – Monday, October 11, 1948

Wildcats Take Conference Opener

Maynard Bruce Paces Hinton Semi-Pros As Rockets Fall Under Aerial Attack

Despite a weight advantage that was obvious even from the stands, the Beckley Rockets did little more than sputter here yesterday as the Hinton Wildcats, paced by Assistant Coach Maynard Bruce, took a 26-6 victory in their Southern West Virginia Conference opener.

The Wildcats scored two lightning-like touchdowns before all of the 1,200 spectators had settled in their seats. With the game two minutes old, rangy Rob Vass blocked a Rocket punt and Hinton recovered on the enemy 24. Bruce and Pookie Phillips drove to the 19 where "Flop" Osborne took a lateral from Bruce and sprinted left for a score. Three minutes later, on the second play after the ensuing Wildcats kickoff. Bruce pulled in a Beckley pass thrown by Phil Milano and raced untouched for 45 yards and pay-dirt.

Two passes from Bruce to little Bobby Crush carried to the Beckley two-yard strip early in the second quarter and from there the ex-Bobcat went over on the third try.

With Hinton enjoying a 19-0 lead, the Rockets came to life in the same period, and taking advantage of a short Wildcat punt, drove to the Wildcat 11 yard line on passes from Ed Wolfe to Meadows. From there, Dick Shuck passed to Milano, who skipped over for the one Rocket tally.

After a third period which saw the air filled with passes but no score, the Wildcats tallied again in the final stanza. Four consecutive passes from Bruce to Vass, Bud Maddy, and Crush, coupled with a penalty against the Rockets, gave Hinton possession on the Beckley one-yard line. Bruce passed again to Phillips in the corner of the end zone for the final Hinton marker.

From Hinton Daily News – Monday, October 11, 1948 (Continued)

Late in the game, the Rockets threatened when Bruce was trapped on fourth down on the Hinton 26, but a pass interception and a thrilling 62 yard dash by Boyd Vansickle brought the Cats out of the hole and found them knocking on the Beckley door as the game ended. A play-by-play account follows:

FIRST QUARTER

Milano brought Phipps' kickoff to the Beckley 30. Two line plays gained one yard and Shuck's pass was incomplete. Rob Vass leaped high in the air to block Meadows's punt and Hinton recovered the ball on the Beckley 24. Bruce sneaked through center for 5. Phillips failed to gain through the middle. Osborne took a lateral from Bruce and raced around left end for 19 yards and a touchdown. Bruce's kick for the point was wide.

Beckley took Phipps' kickoff on the Rocket's 22. A line play failed to gain and Milano's pass was intercepted by Bruce, who raced untouched from the Beckley 45 for a touchdown. Phillips' kick was low.

Martino took Phipps' short kickoff on the Beckley 46. After a line play failed to gain, Vass tossed Wolf back to the 35. Lubich got hammered behind the line of gain, and after an incomplete pass, Beckley was forced to punt.

Fielding a short punt, the Wildcats were set up for a first down on the Hinton 49. Crush caught Bruce's pass on the Beckley 46 and was stopped in his tracks. Bruce passed to Maddy for a first down on the Beckley 26. Crush gathered in Bruce's running pass and reached the Beckley 14 and the quarter ended. Hinton 19, Beckley 0.

SECOND QUARTER

Phillips lost a yard at left end. Bruce missed Crush with a short running pass. Bruce passed to Crush on the Beckley 9. Bruce passed again to Crush who was stopped after one yard at center, and then was stopped for no gain at the same spot. On fourth down, Crush rammed through left tackle to score. Bruce's kick was good.

Bobby Richmond took the Hinton kickoff on the Beckley 37, where he was dropped by Clinebell. Wolfe recovered Meadows' fumble on the 32. Johnson knocked down Lubich's pass intended for Crookshanks. Lubich passed over the head of Crookshanks, who was in the open.

Curtis took Meadow's punt on the Hinton 25, where Crookshanks threw him to the ground. Johnson got 5 at right end. Gore failed to gain. Curtis lost to the Hinton 35 on an attempted left end sweep.

From Hinton Daily News – Monday, October 11, 1948 (Continued)

Bruce's punt went into the stands at the Hinton 6. Shuck got stopped for no gain at left tackle. Wolfe passed to Meadows for a first down on the Hinton 31. Wolfe's pass to Lubich was incomplete. Shuck passed to Meadows on the Hinton 11. Shuck passed in the flat to Milano, who scored after three Hinton tacklers bounced off him. Bruce blocked Milano's try for the point.

Johnson took the Beckley kickoff on the Hinton 10 and returned to the 29. Johnson failed to gain at center. Phillips lost 5 at right end as the half closed. Hinton 19, Beckley 6.

THIRD QUARTER

Phillips brought Salango's kickoff to the Hinton 29. Bruce got 3 at right tackle. Bruce passed to Crush on the Hinton 16, but a backs-in-motion penalty set the Wildcats back on their own 24.

Shuck intercepted Bruce's long pass intended for Vass on the 50 and lugged it to the Hinton 40. Shuck sneaked for 5 yards. Richmond and Phipps tossed Meadows for a one yard loss. The Hinton line drove Lubich back to the Hinton 47 when he could find no receiver.

Bruce took Meadows' kick on the Hinton 15 and returned to the 21. The Beckley line charging hard, held Bruce to no gain at center. Milano intercepted Crush's pass on the Hinton 26 and was downed immediately. Lubich failed to gain. Vass blocked Shuck's attempted pass to Shuck, who was in the open. Shuck muffed Lubich's pass in the flat. Parry knocked down Lubich's pass intended for Crookshanks behind the goal, and the Wildcats took over on their own 26. Bruce failed to gain at center, then passed to Crush for a first down on the 37. Phillips couldn't gain on a reverse. Vass took Bruce's jump pass on the 46. Bruce plunged for a first down on the Hinton 49. Crush caught Bruce's pass on the Beckley 46 and was stopped in his tracks. Bruce passed to Maddy for a first down on the Beckley 26. Crush gathered in Bruce's running pass and reached the Beckley 14 and the quarter ended. Hinton 19, Beckley 6.

From Hinton Daily News – Monday, October 11, 1948 (Continued)

FOURTH QUARTER

A penalty gave Hinton the ball on the Beckley one yard line and Bruce passed to Phillips for a touchdown in the corner of the end zone. Maddy's kick for point was blocked.

Thompson kicked off to Lubich on his own 15 and he returned to the 30 where he was stopped by Vansickle, Lubich, almost trapped behind the line, complete a pass to Turner on the 36. Shuck's pass went wild. Meadows gathered in Shuck's pass at midfield and was downed at the Hinton 48. Lubich drove for a first down on the Hinton 38. On a end-around play, Turner got three. Richmond stopped Malano after a one yard gain. Shuck passed to Crookshanks for a first down on the Hinton 24. Meadows failed to gain. Wolfe's pass sailed over Bobby Richmond's head in the end zone. Lubich passed behind the line to Meadows who failed gain. Wolfe's fourth-down pass was almost intercepted by Phillips who had an open field ahead of him.

Bruce's pass to Maddy was incomplete, Crush took Bruce's pass for a first down on the Hinton 35. Osborne passed to Bruce on the Hinton 40 and Bruce reached the 47, but a clipping penalty put the ball on the Hinton 30. Bruce overshot Osborne with a pass down the middle. Osborne faded back to pass, changed his mind and picked up 6 yards around left end. Bruce's pass was too long for Crush. Bruce, in punt formation, was downed by a swarm of Beckley linemen and Beckley took over at the Hinton 28.

Wolfe's pass intended for Crookshank was intercepted by Vansickle on the Hinton 26, and behind excellent blocking, Vansickle raced 63 yards down the sideline to the Beckley 12. With time running out, Phillips dropped Bruce's pass in the flat, and the game ended before another play could be run. Hinton 26, Beckley 6.

From Hinton Daily News – Monday October 11, 1948 (Continued)

The Lineup:

| Pos. | Wildcats | Rockets |
|-------------|-----------------|----------------|
| LE | Vass | Turner |
| LT | Richmond | Lynch |
| LG | Phipps | Martino |
| C | Wheeler | Tanner |
| RT | Humphries | Allen |
| RE | Maddy | Ritter |
| QB | Bruce | Wolfe |
| LH | Osborne | Milano |
| RH | Parry | Shuck |
| FB | Phillips | Meadows |

Substitutions:

Hinton

Vansickle, Johnson, Curtis, Dobbins, Butler, Thompson, Crush, Sweeney, Clinebell, Fredeking, Surber

Beckley

Fragile, Stone, Rovata, Green, Crookshanks, Salanggo, Richmond, Lubich, Shleor, Lilly, Boley
Referee – Paul Vennari, Umpire - Paul Harless, Linesman – Fred Hurt.

1948

Beckley Raleigh-Register
Oct. 11, 1948

Hinton Semi-Pros Top Rockets 26-6

By Register Staff Writer

HINTON — The Hinton Wildcats turned back the Beckley Rockets 26-6 here Saturday after-

STANDING

| | | | | |
|------------|---|---|---|-------|
| Hinton | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1.000 |
| Oak Hill | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1.000 |
| Beckley | 1 | 1 | 0 | .500 |
| Mt. Hope | 0 | 0 | 0 | .000 |
| Montgomery | 0 | 1 | 0 | .000 |
| Rainelle | 0 | 1 | 0 | .000 |

Game Tuesday

Montgomery at Mt. Hope, 8 pm.

noon before a fan turnout of 1,500 to tie Oak Hill for the lead in the Southern West Virginia Semi-Pro Football Conference.

| | | | | | |
|---------|----|---|---|---|----|
| Hinton | 12 | 7 | 0 | 7 | 26 |
| Beckley | 0 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 6 |

Touchdowns — Hinton, Osborne, Bruce, Crush, Phillips. Beckley — Milano, Points after touchdowns, Hinton — Bruce 2.

HINTON'S WILDCATS CINCH CHAMPIONSHIP

HINTON Oct. 31 — The Hinton Wildcats, semi-pro football team, cinched the league championship here this afternoon by defeating the Montgomery team 24 to 6, before a fair sized crowd.

A light mist or sprinkle fell during almost the entire game but the crowd stayed in the stands and watched the well played, clean game. Not a single player was removed because of injuries, and the number of penalties was below average.

Hinton scored twice in the first quarter, with Maynard Bruce and Bobby Crush doing the spectacular.

In the third period Montgomery went to the air and after failing on three passes punted to Hinton's 36-yard line, where Bruce took it and traveled 64 yards for the third tally. Montgomery finally broke away and scored in the third and Poody Phillips in the final quarter took a pass close to the ground, and was pulled down close the goal line. Phillips rammed through the line for the final score. Montgomery failed to make a first down until the final quarter, when they registered once. Hinton tallied seven first downs.

Beckley Raleigh-Register
Nov. 15, 1948

HINTON TOPS OAK HILLMEN

HINTON, Nov. 14—The Hinton Wildcats, semi-pro football team, came from behind here this afternoon to hand the Oak Hill team its first defeat of the season, 14 to 7. The Wildcat's triumph came in the last two minutes of the game immediately after a serious threat which ended by Oak Hill losing the ball on downs near the Hinton 10 yard line.

On the Wildcats first line play Bruce was tackled for a loss on the Hinton three yard stripe; an attempted pass was incomplete, and Bruce kicked to the Oak Hill 48. Oak Hill went to the air in a desperate attempt to break the 7-7 tie, and on their first play tossed a pass which Malcolm Osborne intercepted on the 50 yard line, and went over standing up after slipping out of the clutches of a would-be tackler right on the goal line. Bruce kicked the extra point. With about one minute left to play Hinton kicked off to Oak Hill, and Oak Hill again went to the air in a last desperate try, but Vansickle intercepted their pass in midfield, and Hinton took possession of the ball as the game ended.



From Hinton Daily News – Friday, October 15, 1948
Wildcats Meet Mount Hope
Locals Will Be Seeking Second Win
Schrader Will Perform With Loop Leaders

Hinton's Wildcats, leaders in the semi-pro Southern West Virginia Football Conference, will meet the Mount Hope Stallions here tonight at 8 o'clock in their second scheduled league contest.

The Wildcats trounced Mount Hope 14-7 in a pre-season exhibition game on Avis field, but since that time, the Stallions have picked up some experience and should offer a tough fight for the locals.

The Stallions have lost one game in as many starts in the regular league schedule to Montgomery by the close score of 6-0 while the Wildcats handed the Beckley Rockets a 25-6 defeat on Avis field last Sunday afternoon.

One of the big features of tonight's game will be Coach Charley Schrader, local high school mentor, who will perform for the locals for the first time. Schrader was a standout back under Bill Kearn at West Virginia for four years and should add much power to the Hinton lineup. Schrader will be used mostly on the defense because he has not had sufficient time to learn all of the plays.

The Stallions lineup is dotted with former college and Mustang stars, and field a large lineup. Some of the former Mustang stars that will appear tonight will be Eddie and Ted Stone, brothers to the Mustang power his year, Taylor, Criss Rowe, Shanks, and Spadaro.

From Hinton Daily News – Friday, October 15, 1948 (Continued)

More and more fans are turning out for the games each week and are voicing the opinion that it is much better than watching a college game. They follow college rules and play a rough and tough brand of ball.

The probable starting lineup for tonight's game will be as follows:

| Pos. | Wildcats | Stallions |
|-------------|-----------------|------------------|
| LE | Maddy | Stone |
| LT | Richmond | Garrett |
| LG | Phipps | Taylor |
| C | Hartley | Jones |
| RG | Wheeler | Criss |
| RT | Humphries | Rowe |
| RE | Vass | Christian |
| QB | Parry | H. Jones |
| LH | Bruce | Shanks |
| RH | Osborne | Bailey |
| FB | Phillips | Spadaro |

Other players that will see action in tonight's clash for the Wildcats will include Bobby Jack Crush, Jack Sweeney, Tom Clinebell, Jimmy Thompson, Dennis Surber, Charles Dobbins ,Harry Gore, Julian Fedeking, Lefty Curtis, Van Johnson and Boyd Vansickle.



From Hinton Daily News – Saturday, October 23, 1948
Wildcats Meet Rainelle Tomorrow
Locals Are Favored To Retain Lead
Locals Have Two Win Record

The league leading Hinton Wildcats, of the Southern West Virginia Football Conference, will put their undefeated record on the block tomorrow afternoon when they entertain the Rainelle entry on the Avis Field at 3:15pm.

Fresh from two victories over the Beckley Rockets and the Mount Hope Stallions, the Wildcats were expected to make it three in a row over Rainelle, who has lost one game to Oak Hill, 6-0.

One of the last entries into the league, Rainelle displayed some championship football against the Oak Hill eleven, making a strong bid for the top spot, and should give the locals a rough battle tomorrow afternoon.

So far this season, the locals have surprised the Beckley Rockets 25-6 and overpowered the Mount Hope Stallions 13-0 the following week.

The Wildcats will play the contest without the services of three regular linemen, Rob and Fred Vass, and Johnny Ratliff. Rob Vass received a deep cut on his lip last Friday night against Mount Hope, while Ratliff suffered a leg injury. Fred Vass suffered an arm injury in a preseason exhibition game against the Stallions.

From Hinton Daily News – Saturday, October 23, 1948 (Continued)

The probable starting lineup for the locals will include Bud Maddy and Dennis Surber at ends, Melvin Richmond and Tobe Humphries at tackles, Ray Phipps and Melvin “Apple John” Wheeler at guards, and Maynard Bruce at quarterback. Paul “Poodie” Phillips, fullback, and Flop Osborne and Raymond Parry or Bobby Jack Crush at the halfback slots.

“Chug” Schrader, former West Virginia back, will probably see plenty of action on the defense and some more action on the offense. Fans were well pleased with his appearance against the Mount Hope Stallions last week. Others who will see action in tomorrow’s tilt are Jack Sweeney, Charles Dobbins, Tom Clinebell, Julian Fredeking, Jimmy Thompson, Van Johnson, Lefty Curtis, Harry Gore, Boyd Vansickle, and Jack Butler.



From Hinton Daily News – Monday, October 25, 1948
Wildcats Defeat Rainelle 20-0
Wildcats Score Early In First Period

After notching a fluke touchdown 40 seconds after the opening kickoff and holding a slim 6-0 halftime lead, the Hinton Wildcats roared back after intermission and registered legitimate touchdowns in the third and fourth periods to thump the Rainelle semi-pros, 20-0 at Avis Field yesterday afternoon.

A sizeable crowd braved chilly winds to see the unbeaten Wildcats run their win streak to three straight in Southern West Virginia Conference play. The loss was the second in three games for Rainelle.

The first Wildcat touchdown was a mass achievement, though Maynard Bruce got official credit. On the second play after Charlie Schrader's kickoff was downed on the visitor's ten yard line, Joe Witt's lateral pass went haywire and bounced over the Rainelle goal where it was pounced upon by a horde of Hinton players. When the smoke cleared, Bruce and "Apple" Wheeler had possession of the ball. Schrader's placement for the extra point was wide.

After this setback, the two teams see-sawed back and forth for the rest of the half. The Rangers could not gain through the rugged Hinton forward wall, and Hinton found the unusually heavy Rainelle line too tough. Only scoring threat was Bobby Crush's runback of a Rainelle punt from his own 30 to the enemy 34.

An interception by Poodie Phillips midway of the third quarter preceded the second Hinton tally. Phillips gathered in a Joe Wilt pass on his own 30 and went to the Rainelle 44. From there, Bruce passed to Flop Osborne for a first down on the 29, then passed again to Osborne, who took the ball on the 10 and scampered over unmolested. Bruce's placement was good.

From Hinton Daily News – Monday, October 25, 1948 (Continued)

Charlie Schrader plunged from the one-yard line for the final marker, a few minutes after he had fumbled at the same spot.

The Hinton High School coach set up the touchdown with an interception on the Rainelle 35, after Osborne reached the 15 and Bruce passed to Schrader on the five. A penalty put the ball on the one-yard line and Schrader, driving for the score, fumbled and Rainelle recovered. Rainelle kicked out, and after two passes from Bruce to Dobbins, the Wildcats were back on the one-yard line. This time, Schrader bulled over. Phillips kicked the point.

Rainelle never threatened, but twice entered Hinton territory, once reaching the 30 on a series of aerials, and once when a poor punt by Bruce went outside on his own 28. On both occasions, the Hinton line held for downs.

The Wildcats were knocking at the door when the game ended. Osborne having returned Wilt's punt to the Rainelle 18. The lineups:

| Pos. | Wildcats | Rangers |
|-------------|-----------------|----------------|
| LE | Osborne | Cole |
| LT | Sweeney | Altizer |
| LG | Wheeler | G. McKinsey |
| C | Schrader | T. McKinley |
| RG | Phipps | Neal |
| RT | Humphries | Walker |
| RE | Maddy | Reid |
| QB | Parry | Morton |
| HB | Bruce | Brooks |
| HB | Crush | Bobbitt |
| FB | Phillips | Wilt |

Substitutions:

Hinton – Richmond, Hartley, Dobbins, Thompson, Fredeking, Scruggs, Clinebell, Curtis.

Rainelle – Bennett, Legg, Christian, Boggess, Fain Gilkerson, Akers, Whistman, McClung.

Officials – Referee – Jack Ballengee, Umpire – Harold Beasley, Linesman – Shelby Ratliff

First Downs – Hinton 7, Rainelle 3.



From Hinton Daily News – Tuesday, October 26, 1948

A Standout

The several hundred fans who watched Hinton's Wildcats trounce a good Rainelle team here Sunday, are still talking and shaking their heads about the terrific exhibition of defensive football the two elevens displayed.

Local fans are starting to believe that there is not another team in this section of the country that hold a candle to the local semi-pros.

There was some talk at the start of the season of arranging a post season game between the winners of the local league and the Bi-State conference. Brother if that game is played, yours truly hopes to be present.

Getting back to the Sunday game here, there were many standout performances, bit I don't believe I have ever seen better defensive performances than the one put on by Ray Phipps, Hinton's 195-pound guard and captain.

Phipps, who was a great high school player, really loves to play the game, and it was principally due to his untiring efforts that the local league finally got started.

To the spectator, it seemed that Phipps was in on just about every play. One fan told us after the game that on 15 consecutive plays, Phipps was "in" on 12 of them.

From Hinton Daily News – Tuesday, October 26, 1948 (Continued)

If Ray was in A-1 physical condition, I have little doubt that he could make any of the college teams, and if the pro scouts had seen him Sunday, there would have certainly been a rush to get him to sign on the dotted line.

One thing that has always made the local man good is his great competitive spirit. He doesn't know the meaning of the word "quit", and it is the same in any sport in which he competes. Ray looks awkward and slow, but he is far from being either. His movements are deceptive and in reality he is exceptionally fast. He has proved this more than once while playing softball.

Yes sir, Mr. Ray Phipps is a mighty man in that forward wall.



From Hinton Daily News – Friday, October 29, 1948
Jack Sweeney Honored
Wildcat Player Unexpectedly Passes

When Hinton's Wildcats play Montgomery here Sunday in a regular league game, it will be a dedication game in honor of Jack Sweeney, a member of the local team, who died unexpectedly here Tuesday night.

The entire proceeds of the game will be given to Jack's Mother in memory of her Son who only last Sunday played a fine game at tackle against the Rainelle eleven here.

Even the players, officials and every one who attends are going to pay the regular admission price for this contest. Officials at the game will donate their services, and the visiting Montgomery team will accept only 25 percent of the gate receipts instead of the usual 50 percent.

The action of local players in dedicating this game to their former teammate, is a fine gesture, and will serve as a worthwhile tribute to an outstanding young man.

A victory for Hinton Sunday will also clinch the league championship for the local boys, and this fact alone should assure a record crowd.

Let every football fan cooperate to make this game a success. It deserves your support.



**From Hinton Daily News – Wednesday, November 17, 1948
Wildcat-South Charleston Semi-Pro Playoff Vetoed
Locals May Card Other Game With Conference Team**

A playoff game between the champions of the Southern West Virginia Semi-Pro Hinton Wildcats and South Charleston, titleholder of the Bi-State League, is definitely out.

The Wildcats decided that at a meeting during their practice session yesterday afternoon.

They left the way open, however, for at least one more game, possibly a return tussle, Sunday, with Oak Hill, Rainelle, or Montgomery.

Co-Coach Billy Joe Lilly explained that with three first-string men unavailable, Paul Phillips, Charley Schrader, and Bobby Crush, a playoff with South Charleston was out of the question.

Phillips has dropped from the squad with a shoulder injury. Crush is ill with the flu, and Schrader feels he cannot take the chance of reinjuring his bad ankle on the eve of Hinton high's all-important Thanksgiving Day game with Beckley. The absence of these three men, Lilly pointed out, would leave a squad of only fifteen, too few for the bruising brand of football played by the semi-pro leagues. "The absolute minimum is twenty men in this type of football."

Oak Hill, after its 14-7 defeat here last Sunday, asked for a return game this weekend. The Wildcats are expected to decide today whether they'll take on the Big Reds or some other team before closing their season.



From Hinton Daily News - Saturday, October 30, 1948

**Wildcats Meet Montgomery Hopeful
Contest Will Honor Former Hinton Tackle
Game Time is Set at 3:15pm**

Hinton's undefeated Wildcats, of the Southern West Virginia Football Conference, will meet the Montgomery Hornets tomorrow afternoon at 3:15pm on the Avis field in a dedication game to the memory of Jack Sweeney, Wildcat tackle who died unexpectedly Tuesday afternoon.

The Wildcats will be gunning for a victory over the Hornets to clinch the league championship. Hinton is the only team in the loop that is undefeated to date.

The Hornets have a .500 record to date with wins over Mount Hope 6-0, and Oak Hill 13-6, while losing to Beckley 6-0, and a protest game to Rainelle 19-0.

Montgomery's hopes for a victory have been bolstered by the addition of Charles "Tubby" Kinder and Robert "Red" Miller, former Montgomery high and college stars to the Hornets roster. A former Montgomery high school coach, Lofton Tudor, has also been added to the coaching staff of the Hornets.

Everyone attending the game tomorrow will be forced to pay the admission price. Players, coaches, and officials will also pay the admission. The proceeds of the game will be given to the Mother of Jack Sweeney, who performed brilliantly for the Wildcats against the Rainelle entry last Sunday afternoon. The Montgomery team is only taking 25 percent of the proceeds to defray expenses instead of the usual 50 percent.

From Hinton Daily News - Saturday, October 30, 1948 (Continued)
Wildcats Meet Montgomery Hopeful
Contest Will Honor Former Hinton Tackle
Game Time is Set at 3:15pm

The probable starting lineup for the game is as follows:

| Pos. | Wildcats | Hornets |
|-------------|-----------------|----------------|
| LE | Osborne | Pollock |
| LT | Richmond | Naylor |
| LG | Wheeler | Redman |
| C | Hartley | Clemens |
| RG | Phipps | Webb |
| RT | Humphries | Montgomery |
| RE | Maddy | Harmon |
| QB | Parry | Robinson |
| LH | Bruce | Reid |
| RH | Crush | Wilson |
| FB | Phillips | Darby |

Other members of the Hornets team that are slated to see action against the Wildcats include “Gunboat” Smith, Louise Curalto, Bill White, Bob Wolfe, Walter Reynolds, Bill Hill, Dick Garrett, Bob Chaffins, Walter Christian, Evverette Reed, and “Speed” Burdette.

Wildcats slated for action are “Chug” Schrader, Charles Dobbins, Jimmy Thompson, Julian Fredeking, Bill Scruggs, Tom Clinebell, Lefty Curtis, Dennis Surber, Harry Gore, and Van Johnson.



From Hinton Daily News - Monday, November 1, 1948
Undefeated Wildcats Trounce Montgomery
Bruce Passes For Two Touchdowns

Hinton's undefeated Wildcats took one step nearer the conference championship yesterday afternoon by defeating the Montgomery Hornets by the score of 25 to 6.

Despite earlier assumptions that the Wildcats would cop the league crown with a win yesterday, the locals still need a victory over the once beaten Oak Hill eleven to win the title.

The Wildcats scored in every period but the third yesterday, to defeat the better than average Hornets. The first period when Maynard Bruce faded back to the Hinton 48 and heaved a pass into the waiting arms of Bobby Jack Crush on the Montgomery 36, who cut sharply to the left and outran three would-be tacklers to score. Bruce's kick for the point was wide.

The locals tallied again in the second stanza when Jim Hartley intercepted Wilson's pass on the Montgomery 36 and returned the ball to the 14 before two tacklers brought him down. Only two plays later, Bruce again uncorked his passing arm and tossed one into the end zone to Crush for the score.

Tobe Humphries' kick for the point was blocked.

Late in the second period, it was Bruce again who took Darby's punt on the Hinton 34 and ran completely through the Montgomery team to score on a 68-yard return. Phillips kick for point was blocked.

From Hinton Daily News - Monday, November 1, 1948 (Continued)

Midway in the fourth stanza, Bruce again spotted Poodie Phillips with a pass on the Montgomery 28 and Phillips fought his way to the five yard stripe, before three tacklers pulled him down. Two plays later, Phillips bowled his way over the payoff stripe from the one yard line for the final Wildcat score. Bruce, standing back in kick formation, passed to Rob Vass for the extra point.

Montgomery's only score was somewhat of a mystery. Osborne had the ball and was around right end, when the ball slipped from his hands and was taken by Wilson in midair who galloped 72 yards into payoff territory. Quarterback Robinson attempted to pass to Chaffin for the point, but the pass was too long.

The Wildcats completely outclassed the visitors in the first down department by making nine to only one for Montgomery.

Elsewhere in the Conference, the Oak Hill entry stopped the Mount Hope Stallions 13 to 6 on the Oak Hill field. The disbanded Beckley Rockets disappointed a large crowd in Richwood, when they failed to show up for the scheduled tussle with Rainelle. The Rainelle eleven won the game by forfeit.

Next Sunday afternoon, the Wildcats journey to Fayette County to meet the Oak Hill eleven in the game that will decide the conference championship.

| Pos. | Wildcats | Hornets |
|-------------|-----------------|----------------|
| LE | Vass | Pollock |
| LT | Richmond | Montgomery |
| LG | Phipps | Sedmond |
| C | Clinebell | Clemens |
| RG | Wheeler (CC) | Harmon |
| RT | Humphries | Wolf |
| RE | Maddy (CC) | Chaffin |
| QB | Osborne | Robinson |
| LH | Bruce | Reed |
| RH | Crush | Wilson |
| FB | Phillips | Darby (C) |

From Hinton Daily News - Monday, November 1, 1948 (Continued)

Standings:

Hinton 6 12 0 7

Montgomery 0 0 6 0

Substitutions:

Hinton – Hartley, Surber, Scruggs, Dobbins, Fredeking, Thompson, Curtis, Ratliff, Bennett

Montgomery – Reynolds, Smith, Forms, Reed, Miller, Keglors, Stanley, Holdrew, Hill

Officials: Referee – Jack Ballengee, Umpire – Harold Beasley, Linesmen – Bun Goff & Skip Price



**From Hinton Daily News – Wednesday, November 3, 1948
Semi-Pro Football Team Notes**

There has been quite a bit of confusion concerning the status of teams in the Southern West Virginia Football Conference, with the chief misconception being that the Hinton Wildcats clinched the league title with last week's win from Rainelle.

Not so, The Wildcats are tied for first place with the Oak Hill Big Reds. Neither team has been defeated in regular season league play, though Oak Hill dropped on exhibition game. As a matter of fact, one touchdown has been scored against the Big Reds in league play and that, a last-minute desperation tally shoved across by the Mt. Hope Stallions when the two Fayette County teams clashed. Oak Hill won 14-6.

The week end meeting, therefore, Oak Hill and Hinton will decide the league championship.

We wouldn't want to frighten the Wildcats, but they're going to find out sooner or later. The Oak Hill roster reads like a list of all-staters of a decade ago. Among the Big Red starters will be big Lowell Rinehart, who used to ragged when he played for Russ parsons' prize elevens. Another is Bobby Cooper, and all-state Oak Hill High School lineman who blocked a Mt. Hope punt last Sunday. Then there is Bob Titlow and Smitty Smith, former Red Devil mainstays, and

Billy Salters, a bullseye passer who tossed one touchdown pitch against the Stallions.

While we're hanging the crepe in this corner, Hank Basham of Fayette Tribune has been doing likewise. Hank has warned the Hilltoppers that the Wildcats will be tough.

From Hinton Daily News – Wednesday, November 3, 1948 (Continued)

In the same column, Basham explained the professional football set-up at Oak Hill, and we gathered that an organization named the Oak Hill Sports Improvement Association is sponsoring the Big Reds.

Here's what Basham had to say: "The subject is semi-pro football to start off with today and we'd like an answer from as many people as possible.

The Oak Hill Big Reds a semi-pro team started this year, having played 4 games to date, this season, two away and two at home. Their record is good, as they've lost but one game. That was a non-league game and they're still tied at the top of the conference with Hinton.

But, even with this record, turnout has been disappointing for the boys and everyone involved.

Now here is what we want to know. Don't you fans like the brand of ball? It's fast, rough and the players are big, in other words, it's knocked-down-drag cut football. Or, is it because the games have been on Sunday afternoon? Still on semi-pro football: This week Hinton comes to Oak Hill for a battle that will decide first place in the semi-pro conference. However, this game will be played Saturday night (at 8pm) There is no high school game this week at the local stadium. (The Red Devils go to Mullens Friday). So, how about turning out and taking a look at this type of football and we're sure you'll like it.

If you want to know who gets the money, then read further;

First, these players must play enough to pay off a \$2,000 debt for uniforms and equipment. After that, the players will divide up a certain amount, then the rest will go for more improvements on the city park and toward other improvements to benefit sports in Oak Hill.

The Sports Improvement association is behind the tam and it is a non-profit organization, so every cent they make off sports events must go back into improvements for the park and if enough is made, it will be applied to new bleachers for the high school.

We understand several halftime attractions will be held at the intermission



From Hinton Daily News – Monday, November 15, 1948

Championship of the semi-pro Southern West Virginia football circuit was in the hands of the Hinton Wildcats today, with the compliments of wing-footed Malcolm “Flop” Osborne, Wildcat half-back.

Osborne galloped 60 yards with an intercepted pass in the final minutes at Avis park yesterday afternoon to get Hinton a 14-7 decision over a powerful Oak Hill team that knocked at Hinton’s door three times in the last quarter. With the count tied at 7-7 and the Wildcats battling to stave off an enemy touchdown that at times seemed as certain as death and taxes, Osborne pulled down a pass by Lowell Rhinehart, Oak Hill half-back, and scored from his own 40-yard line. There were 28 seconds of the game left when he crossed the goal untouched in the Northeast corner of the field.

The victory, witnessed by an aspiring crowd of perhaps a thousand people, who saw a lively struggle of two hard-hitting lines and two clever backfields, was the fifth in a row for the unbeaten Wildcats. They had previously trimmed Beckley 26-6, Mt. Hope 13-0, Rainelle 20-0, and Montgomery 25-6.

They saw some tough sledding, however, before they put the ball game on ice, Oak Hill’s Big Reds, led by the smashing Rinehart, scored within the first three minutes, putting Hinton behind for the first time this semester. The Wildcats tied the score early in the second period with a 20-yard touchdown play that was combined work of Osborne and Paul Phillips, with Osborne going over for the marker.

Hinton Daily News – Monday, November 15, 1948 (Continued)

Intercepted passes, not only, accounted directly for Hinton's winning touchdown, but also set the stage for the other two scores of the day.

Oak Hill was favored with the first one, After the visitors had kicked off and Bobby Crush had returned the ball to the Hinton 32, the Wildcats picked up five yards in two plays. Then the first pass attempted by Halfback-Coach Maynard Bruce was intercepted by Oak Hill and the enemy began it's drive from the Wildcat 21.

Rinehart, a powerful, long-legged triple threat back from Kingston, smashed through center for three yards and Oak Hill's second biggest threat, a 180-pound right half named Smith, rammed through for seven more and a first down on the Hinton seven. Rinehart scored from there, then plunged for the extra point and Oak Hill was on top, 7-0.

Charley Schrader, Hinton high school coach and the Wildcats' defensive fullback, staged the pass interception that cleared the way for Hinton's first score soon after the second quarter began. Schrader, in fact, plowed all the way down the sideline to the goal line after snatching Salters' pass on the 50 yard string right in front of the Hinton bench., but the officials ruled that he stepped out of bounds on the Oak Hill 32.

From there, Osborne ripped off nine yards over the Big Red left tackle and Phillips bulled through center for a first-down on the 20. On third down, Phillips cut over left tackle to about the 15, was stopped and lateralled to Osborne, who outraced the defenders to the goal line.

Bruce kicked the point. Oak Hill protested that the boot went wide, but the officials' decision stood and the game was tied up at 7-7 for the next three quarters.

A few minutes later, after a 50-yard ramble by Phillips, Hinton drove to Oak Hill's nine-yard line, only to have a pass intercepted.

In the closing minutes of the third period, Oak Hill began a drive from its own 20 that carried it to the Hinton nine-yard stripe. There the Wildcat forwards, led by Ray Phips, John Wheeler, Rob Vass and Schrader, broke through to smother Salters for a seven-yard loss. Salters attempted a pass on the next play.

Hinton Daily News – Monday, November 15, 1948 (Continued)

It was partially blocked by Vass and caught by Wheeler. Hinton ran two plays and punted out and the invaders began another goalward drive.

Three consecutive first downs with Rinehart and Smith plunging and Rinehart passing, carried Oak Hill to the Hinton 11, where the Wildcats once again stiffened and held for downs. Hinton took over but lost nine yards on the next play when Bruce juggled the ball and was smothered on his own two-yard ribbon.

A fake kick which turned into a pass from Bruce was dropped by Crush, and on fourth down, standing under his own goal posts, Bruce punted out of bounds on the Oak Hill 48, the ball travelling 50 yards from scrimmage. Oak Hill's first play was the Rinehart pass intercepted by Osborne for the final touchdown. Bruce kicked the ball squarely through the uprights for the point.

First downs totaled Hinton eight, Oak Hill nine.

After the game the Big Reds, coached by a former Oak Hill all-stater, John Duda, asked for a return tussle with the Wildcats at Oak Hill this weekend. Yesterday's game was originally scheduled at Oak Hill on the night of November 6 but was cancelled because of a power failure which blacked out the stadium.

Co-Coach Billy Jo Lilly said the Wildcats will hold a meeting tonight to decide whether they want to play any more games. A playoff has been proposed between the Southern West Virginia Conference champions and South Charleston champions of the Bi-State League.

Starting Line-Ups:

Hinton

LE – R. Vass, LT – Humphries, LG – Wheeler, C – Hartley, RG – Phipps, RT – Richmond, RE – Maddy,
QB – Clinebell, HB – Bruce, HB – Phillips, FB – Crush

Oak Hill

LE – Plasha, LT – Howell, LG – Tankell, C – Adkins, RG – Cooper, RT – Campbell, RE – Titlow, QB – K. Salters,
HB – S. Smith, HB – Rhinehart, FB - Fazio



From Hinton Daily News – Monday, November 22, 1948

Wildcats Get Playoff Bid – Invited To Meet Ironton On December 5.

A playoff between the champion Hinton Wildcats of the Southern West Virginia Semi-Pro Football Conference and Ironton, Ohio, winners of the Bi-State League, was in the making here today.

The Wildcats have been invited to meet Ironton, Sunday, December 5, on a neutral field at Ashland, Ky., for a \$500 guarantee.

They will meet this evening at 8 O'clock at the home of Rob Vass to discuss the invitation.

Melvin Richmond, a member of the team, reported that the game would be sponsored by a Shriners organization. The sponsors would receive fifty percent of the proceeds and the two teams, twenty-five percent, Hinton being guaranteed a minimum of \$500.

The unbeaten Wildcats, who closed their regular season clinched the conference championship by beating Oak Hill here November 14, last week rejected a proposal to meet South Charleston, which was runner-up in the Bi-State.



From Hinton Daily News – Tuesday, November 23, 1948

**Wildcats To Play Ironton
(Also Vote To Meet Alderson Eleven Here Sunday)**

Hinton's semi-pro Wildcats began preparing today to face Ironton, Ohio on December 5 in a playoff game, matching the winners of the Southern West Virginia Semi-Pro Football Conference and the Bi-State League.

They will warm up for the championship tussle by taking on the Alderson semi-pros here Sunday afternoon.

The unbeaten Wildcats, top team in the Southern conference, voted at a meeting last night, to accept an invitation to meet Ironton, champions of the Bi-State, at Ashland, Ky.

The invitation was received yesterday from an Ironton Shrine organization, which will sponsor the playoff.

Although Montgomery had been considered as an opponent for this coming Sunday, the team decided on Alderson, which has not been met this year. Montgomery and Hinton tangled early in the conference fare.

Alderson, not a member of any conference, played a few games last year but only one so far this year, besting Ronceverte 34-0. The team is composed largely of former Alderson high school performers. Sunday's game is set for 2:15pm.

**Wildcats – Ironton Championship Game
Scheduling Conflicts Cancel Game
December 5, 1948**

Research Note:

After exploring all available archives for the Hinton-Ironton Championship game, to be held in Ashland, Ohio, there are no newspaper articles to be found.

Upon personal interviews with Summers County locals, who are still living from that time period, it has been concluded that the game never happened. A scheduling conflict occurred, and the game was canceled. Thus, the practice game with Alderson was also canceled.

If anyone has news to the contrary, please let us know by email:

jimnoel1925@hotmail.com

Hinton ended up the 1948 season, undefeated, and the Southern West Virginia Football Conference champions of the semi-pro league. Congratulations, Wildcats!

Ironton was declared the Bi-State Semi-Pro champions of 1948.

Charleston Gazette
Nov. 24, 1948

1948

Charleston Gazette
Dec. 9, 1948

Hinton and Ironton To Play on Dec. 5

HINTON, Nov. 23.—(AP)—Coach Bill Lilly announced today the acceptance of an invitation for his Hinton Wildcats to play a post-season football game at Ashland, Ky., Dec. 5 against Ironton, O., of the Bi-State Independent league.

Hinton won the championship of the Independent Southern West Virginia conference in regular season play.

Club officials said they were offered a guarantee of \$500 to appear in the post-season contest, to be sponsored by Ashland Shriners.

Bi-State League To Meet Sunday

A meeting of Bi-State Football league members has been called by Commissioner Fred Burns for Sunday afternoon in Huntington.

Burns said the meeting would begin at 1 o'clock at the Prichard hotel.

Team representatives of the six-member circuit will elect an all-league team and plans for the 1949 season are to be discussed.

Ironton, O., with a record of eight victories, one tie and one defeat, will be declared official champion of the league's first season of play.

Burns emphasized, however, that no action will be taken on applications for additional franchises in the league at Sunday's meeting. Discussion of new franchises and election of officers will take place at a second meeting early next year, he added.

Several cities have filed for franchises, according to Burns. These include Ashland, Ky., Beckley, Huntington and Hinton.

HINTON AND OAK HILL IN 6-6 DEADLOCK

HINTON, Sept. 11 — The semi-pro football game here this afternoon between the Hinton Wildcats and the Oak Hill aggregation did nothing whatever to settle the rivalry between the two teams, or to determine which was superior, the game ending in a 6-6 tie.

The first half provided something of a paradox, the Hinton Wildcats making six first downs to none for Oak Hill, yet playing almost the whole time in its own territory. The Oak Hillers, unable to gain on the ground, were good at punting with the wind with them, and the Wildcats six first down just about offset their punting gains. The half ended 3-0, with Oak Hill intercepting a Hinton pass just as the whistle blew.

Oak Hill got busy in the third quarter and quickly racked up five first downs in a row, the march ending with W. Smith going over for t.d., and Wildcats unable to do much about it.

In the final quarter, the Wildcats bounced back to life and started their own march, which ended in a pass to Bill Scruggs who toted it over. An attempted rush over the line for the extra point was smothered, and it was 6-6, with less than five minutes to go. Oak Hill resorted to the air to recover the lead, but quickly lost the ball on an interception, and the Wildcats unsuccessfully beat towards the goal, but Old Man Time cut them down a little too soon.

Bobby Joe Crush and Bill Scruggs started for Wildcats, while a good catch of a quick low pass over the line by Ratliff at a critical time, did much to erase two previous failures. W. Smith was the heavy-duty lad for the Oak Hillers.

Beckley Raleigh-Register
Sep. 12, 1949

Beckley Raleigh-Register
Oct. 3, 1949

Hinton Semi-Pros Top Tide 31 to 0

By Register Staff Writer

HINTON — Hinton's semi-pro Wildcats scored almost at will in the last three quarters to defeat Quinwood's Green Tide here yesterday 31-0. Bobby Crush tallied on runs of 54, 1 and eight yards. The lineup:

| Hinton | | Quinwood |
|-----------|----|-------------|
| Surber | LT | Jones |
| Phipps | LE | Canedy |
| Moore | LG | T. McKenzie |
| Hartley | C | J. McKinsie |
| Morgan | RG | Childers |
| Westfall | RT | Crites |
| Dobbins | RE | Hays |
| Fredeking | QB | Vaughan |
| Osborne | LH | Legg |
| Scruggs | RH | Akers |
| Crush | FB | Long |

| | | | | |
|----------|---|----|----|------|
| Hinton | 0 | 12 | 13 | 6-31 |
| Quinwood | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0-0 |

Touchdowns—Surber, Crush 3, Maddy. Points after touchdowns—Scruggs. Substitutions — Hinton: Barry, Sims, Gill, Graham, Holbert, Richmond, Maddy. Quinwood: Bare, Alitzer, Carter, Berger, Gillespie. Referee—Ballengee. Umpire — Beasley. Linesman — Pugh.

1949

Beckley Raleigh-Register
Oct. 30, 1949

HINTON SEMI-PROS WIN

By Register Staff Writer

RAINELLE — Coach Charles Chug Schrader of Hinton High School scored one touchdown and Bruce passed to Osboren for another as the Hinton Wildcast defeated the Big Green of Greenbrier County here last night in a semi-pro football game before a disappointing turnout of fans. The scores came in the second and third quarters.