



## **TUCKER COUNTY FOOTBALL OPENS SEASON AT POCAHONTAS COUNTY**

By Dave Helmick  
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The Mt. Lions Football season will get underway this Friday August 25<sup>th</sup> at Pocahontas County with a 7pm kickoff. This year the Tucker County team has only 23 kids out and will look to improve on last year's disappointing 3-7 season. Gone are 13 seniors from last year's team that leave some big shoes to fill for this season. The Mt. Lions wrapped up the season last year with a big win road win against Notre Dame.

Head Coach AJ Rapp knows the biggest holes to fill for this season will be up front on the offensive and defensive line. Rapp said, "We lost all 5 of our starting offensive linemen from last year." The replacements for this group is very capable as Rapp stated, "We are not physically bigger on the line as we were last year, but we do have some skill returning in these positions, we just need to jell together." The backfield for the Mt. Lions all return with Luke Poling returning for his senior year at quarterback. Brett Reall also returns as a senior at running back and junior Cole Rapp is back at fullback. The other skill positions on offense will be filled with players such as seniors Jordan Moss, Jacob Davis, juniors Ben Callaway and Ben Cromer.

On defense there is also some holes to fill up front. Junior Owen Poling and sophomore Raine McCauley will fill the defensive end positions. The nose guard position will see time from junior's Byron Gidley and Seth Cangley. The linebacker's will be sophomore Hunter Collar, Cole Rapp, Jordan Moss and Brett Reall. The safety positions will be manned by Luke Poling and Ben Callaway, while the corner positions will be filled with Jacob Davis and junior Gariet Pennington. Cope Rapp will handle the punting and Ben Callaway will continue to be the kicker for the Mt. Lions.

Tucker County's schedule is the same as last year as the Mt. Lions will open the season with a trip to Pocahontas County this week and then they will return home on September 1<sup>st</sup> to host Tygarts Valley in week 2. On week 3 Tucker County will host Northern Garrett on September 8<sup>th</sup>. The Mt. Lions will then hit the road for 4 straight road games against Moorefield on September 15<sup>th</sup>, Philip-Barbour September 22<sup>nd</sup>, Southern Garrett September 29<sup>th</sup> and East Hardy on October 6<sup>th</sup>. Tucker County will have Open week on October 13<sup>th</sup> and then they will return home for 3 straight games to finish the season against Pendleton County October 20<sup>th</sup>, Petersburg October 27<sup>th</sup> and then Notre Dame November 3<sup>rd</sup>. Something new this season is the kickoff times has moved up to 7pm in every game except at East Hardy. Coach Rapp spoke about the schedule as he said, "The PVC conference football wise is one of the toughest conferences in the state, and our out of conference schedule is tough as well." Rapp also said, "I also have some questions with Tygarts Valley, Pendleton County and Philip-Barbour because they have new coaches this season." Coach Rapp also added, "Our depth with 23 kids is going to be key to how successful we will be."

Friday's game vs Pocahontas County will kickoff at 7pm. For more pictures, audio interviews and printable schedules go to [TuckerCountySports.Com](http://TuckerCountySports.Com).



Senior Brett Reall returns at running back for the Mt. Lions this season – Photo by Dave Helmick



Senior Luke Poling is back at quarterback for Tucker County this season – photo by Dave Helmick