

Ashland v IUP Script

8.31.2023

INTRO:

ALEX:

DECEMBER 8TH WAS THE LAST TIME FRANK CIGNETTI FIELD SAW GRIDIRON ACTION, AND 266 DAYS LATER, THE CRIMSON HAWKS ARE BACK. THE WAIT IS FINALLY OVER AS THE IUP FOOTBALL TEAM IS READY TO KICKOFF THE 2023 SEASON AGAINST THE ASHLAND EAGLES ON THIS CALM AUGUST EVENING.

GOOD EVENING VIEWERS AT HOME, AND THANK YOU FOR PICKING AWARD WINNING WIUP-TV TO WATCH TONIGHT. I'M ALEX DONALDSON AND I'LL BE CALLING THE PLAYS TONIGHT.

NATHAN:

AND I'M NATHAN OSLER PROVIDING COMMENTARY AS WE GET READY TO KICK OFF UNDER THE LIGHTS BETWEEN

	<p>THE ASHLAND EAGLES AND THE IUP CRIMSON HAWKS.</p> <p>ALEX:</p> <p>HAPPY TO BE UP HERE WITH YOU NATHAN. NOW DESPITE THEIR LAST CONTEST TAKING PLACE NINE MONTHS AGO, THESE TEAMS STILL SHARE SOME RECENT HISTORY WITH EACH OTHER.</p>
	<p>NATHAN:</p> <p>THAT'S RIGHT ALEX. THESE TWO TEAMS DUKED IT OUT LAST NOVEMBER 26TH IN THE SECOND ROUND OF THE NCAA D-II ATLANTIC REGION TOURNAMENT. IUP TOOK THAT GAME 19 - 13 HERE AT MILLER STADIUM, BEFORE FALLING TO SHEPHERD, 48-13, IN THE CHAMPIONSHIP</p>
	<p>ALEX:</p> <p>HOWEVER, THE CRIMSON HAWKS' WIN</p>

OVER THE EAGLES DID NOT FACTOR IN WHEN THE AFCA COACHES PRE-SEASON POLL WAS PUBLISHED. IUP COMES INTO THIS GAME RANKED #14, WHILE ASHLAND IS SLIGHTLY HIGHER AT #12.

NATHAN:

ONE OF THE REASONS FOR IUP BEING A LITTLE LOWER IN THE RANKINGS THAN EXPECTED COULD BE THE OFFSEASON DEPARTURES OF CORE PLAYERS LIKE SEXTON, DAUBERMAN, AND LONG TIME IUP RECEIVER DUANE BROWN.

ALEX:

BUT THE DEPTH THAT IUP BOASTS SHOULD FILL IN ALONG THE ROSTER, AND COACH PAUL TORTORELLA, WHO IS ENTERING HIS SIXTH SEASON AT THE HELM, IS TRUSTING REDSHIRT-JUNIOR WR, HILTON RIDLEY, AS THE NEW WR 1. BUT PERHAPS THE BIGGEST CHANGE OF ALL IS THE NEW MAN UNDER CENTER, THE TRANSFER OUT OF COLORADO

	MESA; KARST HUNTER.
	<p>NATHAN:</p> <p>THAT IS RIGHT ALEX. JUST OVER 1700 MILES AWAY ON I-70, HUNTER HAS MADE THE JOURNEY AND IS READY TO MAKE HIS MARK. HUNTER IS A DUAL THREAT QUARTERBACK WHO IS A REDSHIRT JUNIOR. WITH 33 TOTAL TOUCHDOWNS AND 13 INTERCEPTIONS DURING HIS TWO YEAR TENURE AT COLORADO MESA, HE PROVES TO BE A VERY SOLID OPTION TO HAVE STARTING AT QUARTERBACK. KARST WAS THE 2021 ROCKY MOUNTAIN CONFERENCE FRESHMAN OF THE YEAR. THE 6'4 SIGNAL CALLER NOT ONLY THREW FOR 268 YARDS PER GAME LAST YEAR, BUT ALSO RAN FOR 43 YARDS PER CONTEST AS WELL. HE CAN BEAT YOU WITH HIS ARM BUT CAN ALSO IMPROVISE AND USE HIS FEET TO MAKE PLAYS..</p> <p>ALEX:</p>

A NEW MAN UNDER CENTER IS NOTHING NEW FOR IUP, THIS IS THE FIFTH DIFFERENT OPENING DAY STARTING QB FOR THE HAWKS SINCE 2018. ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE BALL, HOWEVER, ASHLAND WILL HAVE A NEW STARTING QB FOR THE FIRST TIME IN FOUR YEARS. WITH AUSTIN BRENNER GRADUATING LAST YEAR WITH THE FOURTH-MOST PASSING YARDS IN TEAM HISTORY.

ALEX:

SERVING AS THE BACKUP QB AND #1 PUNTER FOR THE EAGLES THE LAST TWO YEARS, TREVOR BYCZNSKI HAS BIG SHOES TO FILL AND WILL HAVE HIS CHANCE TO PROVE HIMSELF THIS SEASON AS THE STARTER. IN HIS CAREER, HE'S ONLY HAD 28 COMPLETIONS, TOTALLING FOR 234 YARDS. WITH HIS LIMITED PLAYING TIME, HE HAS YET TO PASS FOR A TOUCHDOWN, BUT MAYBE WE'LL SEE

	<p>THAT TODAY. INTERESTINGLY ENOUGH, HE HAD 28 PUNTS LAST SEASON - JUST AS MANY PUNTS AS COMPLETIONS IN LAST YEAR'S CAMPAIGN.</p>
	<p>NATHAN:</p> <p>ON THE DEFENSIVE SIDE OF THE BALL, THE CRIMSON HAWKS HAVE MANY RETURNING FACES. RETURNING FOR THE HAWKS STELLAR LINEBACKING CORE ARE THE LIKES OF DREW DINUNZIO-BISS AND DARIUS BRUCE, WHO ARE EXPECTED TO REPEAT THEIR SUCCESS OF LAST SEASON. BRUCE LED THE CRIMSON HAWKS WITH 4 INTERCEPTIONS WHILE DINUNZIO-BISS LED THE THEM WITH 88 TOTAL TACKLES AND WAS AN ALL-PSAC WEST FIRST TEAM SELECTION FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HIS CAREER.</p> <p>ALEX:</p> <p>AND REMEMBER NATHAN, DINUZIO-BISS</p>

	<p>HAD AN INTERCEPTION IN LAST YEAR'S REGIONAL PLAYOFF GAME BETWEEN THESE TWO PROGRAMS AS WELL.</p>
	<p>ALEX:</p> <p>WHILE THERE ARE LOTS OF RETURNING FACES FOR IUP ON DEFENSE, IT'S STILL NOT AS MANY AS ASHLAND'S DEFENSE. ONLY ONE UNDERCLASSMEN ON THE EAGLE'S DEFENSE, WHICH IS BAD NEWS FOR IUP'S REVAMPED OFFENSE.</p> <p>NATHAN:</p> <p>YES ALEX, LAST YEAR'S 9TH-BEST SCORING DEFENSE IN THE COUNTRY IS LED BY SENIOR DEFENSIVE END DEEB ALAWAN. ALAWAN WILL LOOK TO FOLLOW HIS JUNIOR SEASON WHERE HE WAS A SECOND-TEAM ALL-GREAT MIDWEST ATHLETIC CONFERENCE SELECTION, AS HE LED THE EAGLES WITH 7 SACKS. HES LEANED OUT OVER THE YEARS AND WILL LOOK TO USE</p>

	BRUTE STRENGTH TO MAKE AN IMPACT.
	<p>ALEX:</p> <p>KICKOFF IS NEARLY UPON US AND BOTH OF THESE SQUADS LOOK EAGER TO GET STARTED.</p> <p>NATHAN:</p> <p>A RARE THURSDAY NIGHT GAME FOR THE HAWKS IS NEARLY UPON US AND THIS WILL BE A BIG GAME FOR THESE TWO HIGHLY RANKED SQUADS.</p>