

Mountaineers Pound Avery, 48-6

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The Mitchell High football team, which made it to the Class 1AA Western Finals last season, made a strong statement Friday night in Newland.

The Mountaineers, a pre-season favorite to contend for a Western Highlands 1A/2A title, belted Avery 48-6 in the season opener for both teams at MacDonald Stadium. The Mountaineers (1-0) racked up 615 yards of offense, including 531 yards on the ground. Justin Hughes and Michael Styles did the bulk of the damage.

Hughes rambled for 249 yards on 14 carries and four touchdowns; Styles carried it 14 times and piled up 146 yards with a touchdown. The Mountaineers built a 21-0 lead in the opening stanza, and broke the game open with a 21-point blitz in the third quarter. Alex Villanueva scored Avery's (0-1) only touchdown on an eight-yard run with 2:34 left to play, spoiling Mitchell's shutout bid. Villanueva was 8-24 with three interceptions for 94 yards.

Friday night's game was the first of two meetings between the schools. Fortunately for Avery, the first meeting was a non-conference game. The teams will face each other October 28 in Bakersville in a WHC match-up. The Mountaineers eliminated Avery from the state playoffs last season.

The Vikings travel to West Wilkes Friday night.