

Former Huskie To Make College Debut

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Zach Hudler, who played football at Ashe County High, will make his collegiate football debut on August 31, when the Rams travel to Valley, AL., to play Point University in their season opener. Bluefield will play a scrimmage against Emory & Henry on August 23. Bluefield, an NAIA school in Bluefield, Va., and a member of the Mid-South Conference, has reinstated football after dropping the sport in 1941. The Rams played as a club team in 2011, and they joined the MSC on a probationary basis last fall.

Hudler was an all-conference performance during his stay with the Huskies. He played for Bill Strong, who led the Huskies for six years (2006-12). Hudler, a rising junior, is a starting defensive tackle for the Rams. And the Rams will feature a new head coach this season. Ordell Walker, who coached at Greenville College in Illinois the last ten years (the last three as head coach), was named the Rams' head coach on May 31. Bluefield will play an 11-game schedule this season. Five of those games will be at home.

Football is back at Bluefield College, a sport that ceased to exist soon after the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor and nearly all the male students at Bluefield left to join the efforts in World War II. Games for the new football team will be played at nearby Mitchell Stadium in Bluefield, W.V., home to the football teams at Graham High School in Bluefield, Virginia, and Bluefield High School in Bluefield, West Virginia, Mitchell Stadium seats 10,000 fans and was the site of games between West Virginia University and Virginia Tech in the 1950s and 1960s. Bluefield originally started its football program in the early 1920s, reaching various levels of success in the early years. In 1929, B.E. "Mullie" Lenior was brought in to coach the team. An All-American football player from the University of Alabama, Lenoir led Bluefield to a 79-18-2 record in his 11 years as head coach.

The football program was nearly cut in 1933 due to funding concerns at the college. Community leaders rallied financial support to save the program, and the Bluefield football team recorded its first undefeated season that year. The 9-0 season included a win over now NCAA Division 1-AA powerhouse Appalachian State University.

But the 1941 season would be the final season for the football program after the college lost most of its male student-athletes to service in World War II. Seven decades later, Bluefield College is finally fielding another football team