

The Northeast Football Conference

ASA - Lackawanna - Monroe

Sept. 6, 2017 – The Northeast Football Conference successfully opened its 2017 campaign with two wins.

Results: ASA opened the season with a 49-0 win over the New Jersey Warriors while Monroe recorded a 56-20 win over Hocking. Lackawanna's game with Gattaca was canceled due to Gattaca being unable to field a team.

This week: All teams are scheduled to play on the road. Monroe looks to move to 2-0 when it plays at Nassau at 7 p.m. Friday.

Lackawanna, the two-time defending conference champion, plays at Hudson Valley at 1 p.m. Saturday.

ASA plays at Wagner JV 2 p.m. Sunday.

Rankings: Lackawanna fell three spots in the NJCAA poll, released today. The Falcons' appearance in the poll now means a NEFC team has been ranked in the last 178 NJCAA polls. The streak dates to Oct. 21, 2003. A NEFC team has been ranked 347 times since the start of the 2002 season.

The Falcons' preseason ranking of No. 5 matches the highest by a NEFC member. Nassau was No. 5 in 2015. Overall, Lackawanna's highest ranking was No. 4, Sept. 20 and Sept. 27, 2016.

Other rankings: Lackawanna and ASA are both in the top 13 of JCgridiron.com's Dirty 30 rankings. Lackawanna is 11th while the Avengers are 13th.

Players of the Week: The Northeast Football Conference has selected Monroe quarterback Sean Kelly and ASA defensive tackle Jaicorious Johnson as the conference's players of the week.

Kelly, a 6-foot-2, 205-pound sophomore from Colchester, Connecticut, ran for two touchdowns and threw for two more in Monroe's 56-20 nonconference win over Hocking. Kelly finished the day 14-of-24 passing for 153 yards and 59 rushing yards on 10 carries.

Johnson, a 6-foot, 280-pound sophomore from Opelika, Alabama, recorded 13 total tackles as the Avengers blanked the New Jersey Warriors, 49-0. Johnson made nine solo tackles. He had four tackles for loss, including 2.5 quarterback sacks.

Top Performances: Monroe running back Mikaya Caesar tops the early conference leaderboard with 115 rushing yards while ASA's Andre Ridley has 137 receiving yards.

On defense, ASA's Jaicorious Johnson (13) and Malachi Timberlake (11) each recorded 10-or-more tackles.

Recaps: Monroe quarterback Sean Kelly ran for two touchdowns and threw for two more as the Mustangs recorded a 56-20 nonconference win over Hocking College. Makiya Caesar opened the scoring with a 52-yard run. He finished with 115 rushing yards. Dominique Rogers had an interception return for a touchdown while Dejohn Rogers led Monroe with five solo tackles.

ASA freshman quarterback Stone Labanowitz threw three touchdown passes as the Avengers rolled to a 49-0 nonconference, season-opening win over the New Jersey Warriors. ASA led 36-0 at halftime. Labanowitz completed 11 of 14 passes for 216 yards. On defense, sophomore defensive lineman Jaicorious Johnson led the way 13 tackles, including 2.5 sacks.

Duda notes: Lackawanna head coach Mark Duda ranks second among active coaches with 159 wins. The win total ranks 15th all-time.

Duda's 67.7 percent winning percentage ranks eighth among active coaches and 32nd all-time.

Duda was named the American Football Network's JUCO Coach of the Year in 2016.

Top players: The Northeast Football Conference had five individuals listed in 247sports.com's Aug. 27 report of the nation's top 50 junior college recruits.

They are:

- No. 6, Badara Traore, 6-8, 315, OT, ASA;
- No. 15, TJ Bradley, 6-8, 290, OT, Lackawanna;
- No. 19, Thomas Lopez, 6-5, 280, OT, ASA;
- No. 36, Chase Brown, 6-5, 315, OT, Lackawanna; and
- No. 50, Malik Besseck 6-5, 280, OT, ASA.

Tart-Spencer, Bradley, Brown, Lopez, Traore and Monroe linebacker Fokam Parfait were listed among ESPN's top 2017 junior college recruits.

Misc.: The NEFC has had a member appear in 19 bowl games since 1997, including three teams in 2012 ... The NEFC has had 14 individuals, including two in 2015, chosen as NJCAA Player of the Week since the start of the 2011 season. The conference had four players chosen in 2012 and three in both the 2013 and 2014 campaigns.

Next week: Lackawanna plays the New Jersey Warriors Sept. 16 while ASA plays No. 13 Georgia Military in Harrisonburg, Virginia, and Monroe is at Wagner JV Sept. 17.