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Mt. Bethel finally gets back to playing at home

By Jack Martin MDJ Sports Correspondent
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Mt. Bethel's Ronin Thompson looks for a receiver during their game with Asheville Christian earlier this season.
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Coming off a win via forfeit, Mt. Bethel Christian will host Eagle's View, which is traveling from Jacksonville, Florida.

The Eagles are off to a 4-1 start in their first full varsity football season. This will be the Eagles first home game since Week 2 of the season.

Home games are unique for Mt. Bethel, which starts their Friday games at 5 p.m. because their stadium does not have lights.

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Coach Micah Hughes said he likes the 5 p.m. start because there's not any extra "dead time".

"Once they get out of school we do our pregame meal," he said. "We get changed and our kids are ready to play. We kind of use it as an advantage for us because a lot of teams aren't used to playing as early. I love the Friday night 7:30 p.m. kickoffs as well, but it has become our thing and we have enjoyed it over the last couple of years."

Hughes said it is interesting to see the turnout at each game despite the unconventional start time.

"We'll go out for our pregame at 4:10 p.m. or 4:15 p.m. and a lot of people don't get off work until 5, so the stands are pretty empty," he said. "The first couple of times we did it I didn't really enjoy it, but as 5 p.m. hits, our stands have almost been completely full for every home game. Our stadium isn't huge, but we have a great atmosphere and we always pack the bleachers."

The last game Mt. Bethel played resulted in a 32-20 loss to Greenville. Aside from this loss, the Eagles have been dominant this season. They've held their first four opponents to just more than 13 points per game, while the offense put up over 40 points per game.



Hughes said the team has good athletes on both sides of the ball, and a bunch of players are a part of the team's success.

Junior receiver-linebacker Alex Hedden (one receiving touchdown, two defensive touchdowns) makes his presence felt on both sides for the Eagles, and sophomore quarterback-linebacker Ronin Thompson (nine touchdowns, 3.5 sacks, three forced fumbles) makes an impact as well.

Hughes said he believes the complementary football Mt. Bethel is playing attributes to the start it's had.

"Defensively we've been lights out," he said. "Our defensive coaching staff has done a wonderful job, and the same thing goes for the offense."

The Warriors are coming off their fourth straight win, a 50-14 victory over Cedar Creek Christian, in which they totaled 491 yards of offense.

Eagle's View is headlined by senior running back Jacorri Lavoile (526 all-purpose yards and three touchdowns) and senior receiver Ethan Garland (1,142 all-purpose yards and 14 touchdowns).

Hughes said stopping the Warriors offense is the first priority.

"They have a really explosive offense, stopping their run game and some of the funky formations they do," he said. "They do a lot of unique things offensively, so we are honing in on that."

