

JEFF SWISHER

After Jeff Swisher ran for three touchdowns in the state Class A championship game in 1984, coach Lou Nocida was asked if he was already looking forward to having Swisher as his feature back the next two seasons.

“He’s pretty good for a sophomore,” Nocida said. “But that remains to be seen, when the pressure’s on him next year.”

Talk about pressure! Swisher was following not only the Kennedy Award-winning Joel Wilson in the Sistersville backfield, he was trying to live up to the success of older brothers Brian and Scott.

Brian was the Hunt Award winner in 1981 after leading a 13-0 team that outscored its opponents 521-26. Scott Swisher was a second-team all-state wide receiver and defensive back in 1983.

When next year became this year in 1985, Swisher didn’t exactly pile up the yards like he had against Fayetteville in that 1984 state title game. He didn’t gain 100 yards until the fourth week of the season as Nocida relied on Shawn Laugh and Bryon Cline for yardage during a 3-0 start.

Then Swisher got going. Maybe getting benched against Fayetteville in the season-opening game for fumbling and unwisely fielding a punt at his own 1-yard line was what he needed.

“I decided I wasn’t great and I wanted to turn it around,” he said.

The turnaround didn't stop until his high school career ended.

In his junior year in 1985, Swisher:

- Ran for 1,653 yards despite basically tossing away the first month of the season, accounting for 2,324 all-purpose yards. He scored 120 points just in the regular season. He also made eight interceptions, including two crucial ones in the state championship game against undefeated Morgantown St. Francis — a game many outsiders expected Sistersville to lose. He gained 164 yards in that title game and had a 33-yard touchdown run and a 53-yard interception return score.

- Made the second best run of his career. After Sistersville's defense somehow stopped Buffalo (Putnam) on four straight plays from the 1-yard line in the goal line stand of all goal line stands, he ran 79 yards for a game-sealing touchdown in a 20-12 playoff win. He had a 70-yard TD run earlier in the game.

- Made first team all-state for the second straight year and was chosen as the offensive captain.

His senior year was even better:

- He didn't just make news across the state, his name made its way into newspapers across the nation when he ran 22 times for 448 yards and NINE touchdowns in a 76-8 win against Frontier (Ohio). Only four games into the season, Swisher already had 1,032 yards and 15 touchdowns — quite the difference to his start the previous season. And, in effect, it was in only three games; he was limited to only three carries for 14 yards by an ankle injury in the first game of the season.

- At the time, his yardage, touchdowns and point total were state single-game records. The 62 points ended up being the most by any player in the nation that season.

- He finished the season with 2,325 yards and 37 touchdowns, despite playing in only eight regular-season games and three plays of another. Sistersville also played an abbreviated nine-game schedule. He finished with 5,321 yards and 79

touchdowns for his career, or about three miles' worth of yardage. His 548 points were an Ohio Valley record, and he scored 69 touchdowns in 34 regular season games.

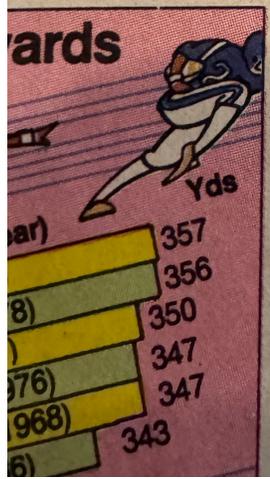
- Made the best run of his career, reversing field on a dazzling 65-yard touchdown run that proved the difference in a tightly played 14-8 victory over county rival Tyler County in the state championship game. With Sistersville unable to complete any of its four passing attempts, Swisher saved the day by running for 133 yards and Bryon Cline had 79 yards. It was Sistersville's third consecutive state title, all with Swisher in the lineup.

- Became the second Sistersville running back in three years to win the prestigious Kennedy Award as the state's best

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COVER STORY

Minnesota team kicks losing habit

By Erik Brady
USA TODAY

West Virginia prep player runs rampant

Senior Jeff Swisher of Sistersville (W. Va.) High School ran 22 times for 448 yards and nine touchdowns in his team's 76-8 win Friday.

His total broke the state record set by current Seattle Seahawk Curt Warner in 1978.

■ Story, 12C

GLENVILLE, M
Obert Haldorson wo
bank will take his far
Foss doesn't know if
get back his meatpac

Times are tough in
Minnesota. But, for o
weekend, Glenville
that. Troubles? Not
after what happened

Glenville High Sch
football game.

"We did it!" cried
Randy Severtson in
ments after his Tro
win against Ellendal

"Oh, yeah, we did
the record off our b

The Record. In Glenville, nothing more need be
Trojans were winless since the Carter administ
at 70 consecutive losses they were inching closer
tional record of 72 set by Iberia (Mo.) from 196

Losing games doesn't mean much next to lo
and jobs. But somehow along the way the Trojans

Five individual U.S. high school...
ing the 1986 school year, according to research by USA Football...
sulting high school editor Doug Huff. A review of the all-time records
set or tied last season, along with individual game, season and career
reer leaders from the 1986 season:

NATIONAL RECORDS

TEAM ALL-TIME UNDEFEATED RECORD

Undeclared seasons: 29, Lawrence, Kan.

ALL-TIME COACHING VICTORIES

Victories, one school: 346, John McKissick, Summerville, S.C. (35 seasons)

INDIVIDUAL ALL-TIME RECORDS

Rush attempts, game: 72, Russell Gunter, Andalusia, Ala., Straughn vs. Coffee Springs (304 yards)

Pass reception yards, game: 358, Tom Owens, Gig Harbor, Wash., Peninsula vs. Yelm (14 catches)

Pass reception touchdowns, game: 6 (tie), Tom Owens, Gig Harbor, Wash., Peninsula vs. Yelm

Touchdown passes, season: 54, Kirk Saul, Turkey, Texas, Valley (13 games)

Field goals, career: 43, Phillip Doyle, Birmingham, Ala., Huffman (1984-86)

1986 INDIVIDUAL LEADERS

GAME

Points: 62, Jeff Swisher, Sistersville, W.Va., vs. New Matamoras, Ohio, Frontier

Touchdowns: 9, Jeff Swisher, Sistersville, W.Va., vs. New Matamoras, Ohio, Frontier

Pass attempts: 66, Mike Milne, Hoboken, N.J., vs. Union Hill (35 completions, 425 yards, four touchdowns)

Pass completions: 39, Ty Detmer, San Antonio Southwest, vs. Pleasanton (51 attempts, 557 yards, four touchdowns)

Passing yards: 590, Kirk Saul, Turkey, Texas, Valley, vs. Chillicothe (28 of 46)

Touchdown passes: 8, Kirk Saul, Turkey, Texas, Valley, vs. Chillicothe

Pass receptions: 20, Johnny Ace, El Cajon, Calif., Valhalla, vs. El Cajon Valley (249 yards, one touchdown)

Field goals: 5, Andy Locke, Austin, Texas, Westlake vs. Lanier; John Aerni, Westlake, Ohio, vs. Amherst Steele.

Field goal distance: 59 yards, Dominic Sandifer, North Hollywood, Calif., Harvard vs. Pater Noster.

SEASON

Points: 283, Michael McKnight, Chillicothe, Texas (10 games)

Touchdowns: 44, Randy Simmons, McKinney, Texas (16 games)

Kicking points: 83, Chris Ames, Carpintera, Calif. (eight field goals, 36 conversions)

Conversion kicks: 67, Damian Krahl, Valley View, Texas (13 games)

Field goals: 14, Tom Withka, Edison, N.J., Bishop Ahr; Rich Andrews, Fort Lauderdale, Fla., St. Thomas Aquinas; Shane Volkman, Lake Stevens, Wash.

Rushing attempts: 426, Russell Gunther, Andalusia, Ala., Straughn (10 games, 2220 yards)

Rushing yards: 2,616, Steve Houston, Weath...

player, beating out record-setting Brooke quarterback Jeff Sweitzer. He'd finished fourth in the voting the year before. He was the first player since 1978 winner Curt Warner of Pineville to score more than 200 points in a season.

"I wouldn't trade him for any running back in Ohio or Pennsylvania," coach Lou Nocida said.

He didn't have to, either. Swisher ended up playing Nocida at Glenville State, too, shifting from running back to quarterback.

And for the Swisher family of Frank and Beverly Swisher, it was a case of like father, like son. Like son. Like son.

USA SPOTLIGHT

W.Va. prep runs up some big

By John Pitts
USA TODAY

It's the middle of September and Jeff Swisher has already had a good football season.

Swisher, a senior running back at Sistersville (W.Va.) High School, ran 22 times for 448 yards and nine touchdowns Friday night in a 76-8 victory against Frontier High of New Matamoras, Ohio.

The effort gave Swisher 1,032 yards and 15 touchdowns in four games, all victories, this season. He also reached the 4,000-yard career mark.

"He did a pretty good job against a rather weak ball club," said Sistersville coach Lou Nocida. "I know the folks from Frontier might not believe it, but we didn't set out to do something like this."

Swisher's scoring runs were 3, 18, 41, 60, 34, 6, 64, 9 and 73 yards. He had 266 yards and six touchdowns before halftime.

"I never thought I might score that many times in a game," said Swisher, a 5-10 and 185-pounder who rushed at three times for 14 yards the first game of the season while recovering from an ankle injury. He has averaged 10 yards a game since.

Maybe this is the kind of game that will attract the big



By Suzy Parker, USA TODAY

schools to me," said Swisher.

His last carry gave him the state modern (post-1945) single-game high school rushing record. The old mark was set by Pineville's Curt Warner in 1978. Warner, a Penn State graduate, plays for the Seattle Seahawks.

Swisher ran with Sistersville's junior varsity offense on his last carry. "I thought maybe he'd get 3 or 4 yards," said Nocida, "but there he went for another touchdown."

Swisher's nine touchdowns and 62 total points were also state records.

High school

Some of the top performing school football across the

■ **Pete Adkins** of Jeffers U.S. high school coach who beat Hannibal 58-6. The seasons: 300-54-4.

■ **Bob Agosti** of Homerton 27 times for 305 yards and 2 touchdowns in a 37-14 victory against Detroit Kettering.

■ **Darryl Beard** of Detroit 65 yards. He also scored against Detroit Kettering.

■ **Bob Clark** of Boise (Id.) for 235 yards and four touchdowns against Nampa.

■ **Terry Kirby** of Tabb (Va.) and seven touchdowns in a 41-13 victory against Nampa. Kirby, a sophomore, had 4 yards, a 24-yard punt return.

■ **Dick Letourneau** of Florida 4 touchdowns (2, 3, 3, 3) in a 35-0 victory against Jacksonville.

■ **John Lieberman** of Florida 242 yards and three touchdowns in a 25-6 victory against Carrollton.

■ **Sammy Seamster** of Florida 212 yards and three touchdowns in a 41-13 victory against Jacksonville.

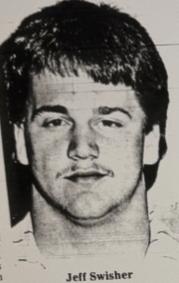
■ **Robert Siler** of Jordan 14 times for 235 yards and 14 touchdowns in a 56-14 victory against Jacksonville.

■ **Darrell Wiggins** of Kentucky 292 yards and four touchdowns in a 56-14 victory against Inola. Wiggins was Oklahoma's son with 222 points.

Source: USA TODAY's National Football Coaches Association

Sistersville's Swisher Wins Kennedy Award

By A.L. HARDMAN
CHARLESTON — The top scorer among all West Virginia scholastic football players this past season has won the 40th annual Harry H. Kennedy Award, symbolic of the state's most outstanding high school performer on the gridiron.
 He is Sistersville's Jeffrey Trent "Jeff" Swisher, who led the proteges of Coach Lou Nocida through an unbeaten season and, by coincidence, Kennedy Award as a birthday present. He turns 18 today — December 21.
 The Kennedy Award is presented each year by the West Virginia Sports Writers' Association at the Victory Awards Dinner at Morgantown in May.
 Swisher, a 5-11, 190-pound senior with a 2.29 academic average, had made a run for the award last year at the standout player for Coach Nocida's team, which won the state Class A championship — as it has now done five times in seven years.
 Swisher, who has played on three West Virginia title-winning squads,



Jeff Swisher

finished in a tie for fourth place with Beckley's Brian Parker in the 1985 Kennedy voting, as Winfield High School's Teddy Kester ran off with

the top prize. Kester is now a member of the West Virginia University football squad.
 Second in this year's voting, which concluded Nov. 15, was Jeff Switzer. Brooke High quarterback, who had 88 final votes, including 29 for first place, outmatched by 165 final votes for Swisher, who pulled in 25 first place votes. Switzer quarterbacked the Bruins to a state championship and they reached the triple-A finals again this year before bowing to Charleston Stonewall Jackson by margin of a field goal — after their brilliant QB was forced to the sidelines by an ankle injury.
 In third place in the balloting was Ron Slatmaker, Gilmer County quarterback, who had 22 total votes but no first place. Fourth was Shannon Vissman, Keyser High School's stalwart linebacker, who had 13 total votes, including one for first place, and in fifth place was DuPont High School's running back, Tommy Canterbury, who had one first place vote in gaining a total of 11 votes.
 Statistics for seasonal games only are recognized in Kennedy voting.

none of the figures from the playoff games being considered, since only 24 teams make it to the post-season tourney.
 During a limited regular season of nine games, however, Swisher — who combines sprinters' speed with dynamic power — rushed for 9.5 yard average per carry. He built up part of this sensational record by scoring nine touchdowns and 62 points in one game against Frontier, gaining national attention by this performance.
 Counting the playoffs, he had 252 points, with 2,325 yards rushing and 37 TDs. Additionally, he gained 254 yards on kick returns, and defensively had three interceptions. He is the first player since Pineville's Curt Warner, who went on to collegiate greatness at Penn State and stars in the NFL with the Seattle Seahawks, to score more than 200 points in a season. Warner won the Kennedy Award in 1978.
 Swisher becomes the second player in the last three years from Sistersville to be honored by receiving the

Kennedy Award. Joel Wilson was named the winner in 1984.
 Swisher is a brother of Brian Swisher, former Marshall University receiver who as a senior at Sistersville won the Hunt Award, presented to the state's outstanding schoolboy lineman.
 In his career, Jeff Swisher — who is being heavily recruited — can look back with pride on a record that shows 5,326 yards rushing and 79 touchdowns.
 Due to some booking difficulties, Sistersville's 1986 schedule was limited to the nine games and Jeff had a problem at the start. He suffered an ankle injury in the opening game against Fayetteville that sent him to the sidelines after he had participated in only three plays and gained but 16 yards.
 But he rolled up 350 yards and scored three touchdowns against Bealsville, Ohio, in the second game and was off on his sensational season, and he had at least 160 yards in each of the eight full regular-season games he played.
 Swisher's speed has also been put

to good use in track. He was second in the state "small school" 100-meter dash last spring.
 A list of past Kennedy Award winners follows:
 1947 — Darren Stivers (Hinton); 1948 — Randall Broyes (Beckley); 1949 — Henry "Hoppy" Shores (Charleston Stonewall Jackson); 1950 — Jim Earley (Parkersburg); 1951 — Gordon Boyd (Huntington Vinson); 1952 — Don Griffith (Charleston Stonewall Jackson); 1953 — Robert Barrett (Barboursville); 1954 — Noel Whipkey (Charleston); 1955 — Ron Mc... (Albany); 1956 — John E. Frye (Huntington); 1957 — James Bargeon (Parkersburg); 1958 — Fredence Drake (Fairmont West); 1959 — Fred Colvard (Logan); 1960 — Robert Kelley (Weston); 1961 — Paul Allen (Huntington); 1962 — Michael White (Charleston Catholic); 1963 — Frank James Smithberger (Weirich); 1964 — Melvin Walker (Dunbar); 1965 — No Selection; 1966 — No Selection; 1967 — David Morris (Wayne); 1968 — Kerry Marbury (Monongah); 1969 — Rickie Hurt (Charleston); 1970 — Richard Petty Williams (Charleston); 1971 — Richard Petty Williams (Charleston); 1972 — Darryl Williams (DuPont); 1973 — Darryl Williams (DuPont); 1974 — Robert Lyons (Harbor); 1975 — Robert Alexander (South Charleston); 1976 — Mike Estes (George Washington); 1977 — Carl Warner (Florence); 1978 — Tim Stephens (Parkersburg South); 1979 — David Bayer (George Washington); 1980 — Tom Kester (Sistersville); 1981 — Bradley King (North Marion); 1982 — Tony Johnson (Morgantown); 1983 — Jeff Wilson (Sistersville); 1985 — Ted Kester (Winfield).



Photo by Bill Hollandsworth

SISTERSVILLE PREVAILS — Sistersville quarterback David Rial laterals the ball to split end Tom Still during first quarter action Saturday

night at Laidley Field. The Tigers defeated arch-rival Tyler County, 14-8.

Swisher's 'Miracle' TD Run Was Winner For The 'Ville

By ROSS SNYDER
 Of The News Sports Staff
CHARLESTON — It was definitely worth the price of admission.
 In fact, it would have been worth the cost of the television rights just to capture it on video tape.
 For the guy who has everything — rushing and scoring records, all-state honors and a much deserved Kennedy award likely to come his way — Jeff Swisher pulled one more miracle out of his hat Saturday evening at Laidley Field.
 "I'm in hopes, since you guys have been in the news media all your lives, that you can put it in words because I can't. Have you ever seen anything like it?" Sistersville coach Lou Nocida asked.
 Although I can't put Swisher's 65-yard touchdown run into the proper perspective, I'll try to do justice to most remarkable run I've seen by high school football player.

corner of the endzone.
 The touchdown, Swisher's 37th of the year, made the difference in Sistersville's quest for its third consecutive championship as the tigers held on for a 14-8 Class A victory.
 "It was the line blocking that did it and the down field blocking by my receivers. All I had to do was run," the modest Swisher said.
 When asked if he had his sights set on the endzone, Swisher said "I did as soon as I cut back and saw some receivers down field."
 He also confirmed that this was one of the finer runs in an elustrious career. "Yes, I think so Swisher said the reason why, like I said before, was the blocking."
 The multi-talented senior, who literally accomplished everything during the tetra studded four years, finished Saturdays hard hitting affair with 138 yards in 18 carries.
 "That young man deserves every-

A team in West Virginia football history.
 "When I was a freshmen we lost and a lot of people didn't think we could come back Swisher concluded but we did. We won it three years in a row."
 For Swisher it was the perfect conclusion to a story book career. Although his many records may fade Swisher's remarkable 65-yard touchdown run will remain in the minds of Sistersville fans for years to come.

OSU Tops Bucknell

COLUMBUS, Ohio (UPI) — I Hopson's 21 points and 16 b Burson led Ohio State to a

ganza. The v distinct team in connect ships s ton M between In hi coach to 104 have ship The char 5 rec In som 'Thi' of c tall littl S Co sci pl. Cl up p

This is the kick that won the 1986 West Virginia Class AAA football championship for Charleston Stonewall Jackson High School. Junior John Yiannis booted a 20-yard field goal out of the hold of David Wells with one second

remaining to go over defending state titlist Brooke Saturday at Laidley Field in Charleston. The Bruins finished the season with an 11-2 record.
(News-Register Photo—Art Limann)

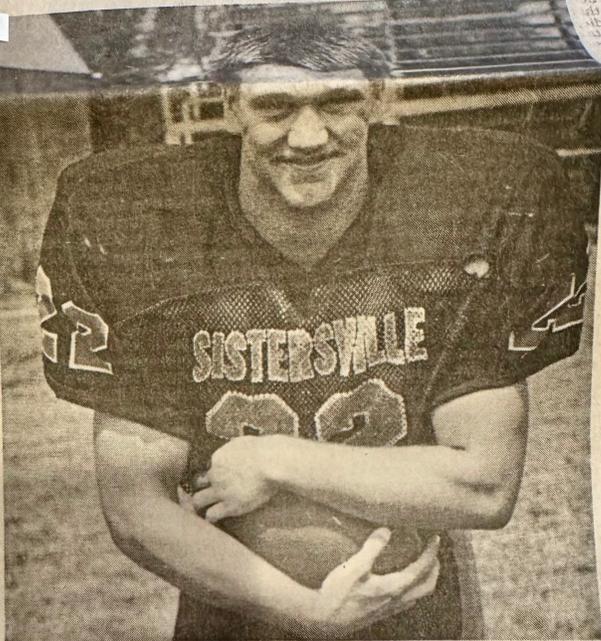
Amazing Sistersville Does It One More Time

Sports Writer
CHARLESTON — The year 1986 has not been kind to defending sports champions. The Kansas City Royals failed dismally in their quest to repeat as baseball dynasties such as the San Francisco 49ers, Los Angeles Lakers and Edmonton Oilers have also found the going somewhat tougher the second time around.

On the other hand, there is the long-running saga of the Sistersville Tigers, who have made the West Virginia Class A football crown their personal property since emerging on the scene in 1980.

Saturday evening at Laidley Field in Charleston, Lou Nocida's Orange-and-Black proved to be the elite small-school team in the Mountain State for the fifth time in the past seven years by outlasting stubborn county arch rival Tyler, 14-8.

Deadlocked 8-8 at intermission, Nocida's powerhouse felt its back pressed against the proverbial wall by the determined Red Raiders but a spectacular lift by the man Sisters-



Sistersville's record-smashing tailback, Jeff Swisher, capped a remarkable high school football career as he broke loose to race 65 yards to the winning touchdown as the Tigers gained their third straight West Virginia Class A football championship with a 14-8 triumph over county rival Tyler. Swisher made 133 yards in 17 carries during the title match.

Statistics

	Tyl	Sis
First downs	11	11
Rushes-yards	45-178	45-223
Passing yards	22	0
Sacked-yards lost	1-10	0-0
Return yards	15	28
Passes	1-3-2	0-4-1
Punts	2-36.5	4-30.3
Fumbles-lost	4-2	1-0
Penalties-yards	7-71	4-40
Time of possession	24:15	23:45

Individual Statistics

RUSHING—Tyler-Scott Holmes 21-102, Chad Seckman 13-42, Jeff McKinney 8-26, Roy Ruble 3-8, Sistersville-Jeff Swisher 12-136, Bryan Cline 19-89, David Shepherd 1-4, Tom Still 3-3, David Rial 5-(1-2).
PASSING—Tyler-McKinney 1-2-1-22, Holmes 0-1-0, Sistersville-Rial 0-4-1-0.
RECEIVING—Tyler-Bobby Kimble 1-22.

Sistersville fans have come to count on for such heroics ultimately decided the outcome.

Receiving a pitch, senior tailback Jeff Swisher scampered to his left, broke a pair of tackles and used his sprinter's speed to completely reverse his field and complete an electrifying 65-yard TD dash down the right sideline at the 8:45 mark of quarter No. 2.

managed just 45 yards of total offense after intermission but the Tiger stop corps made that relatively meager output stand up.

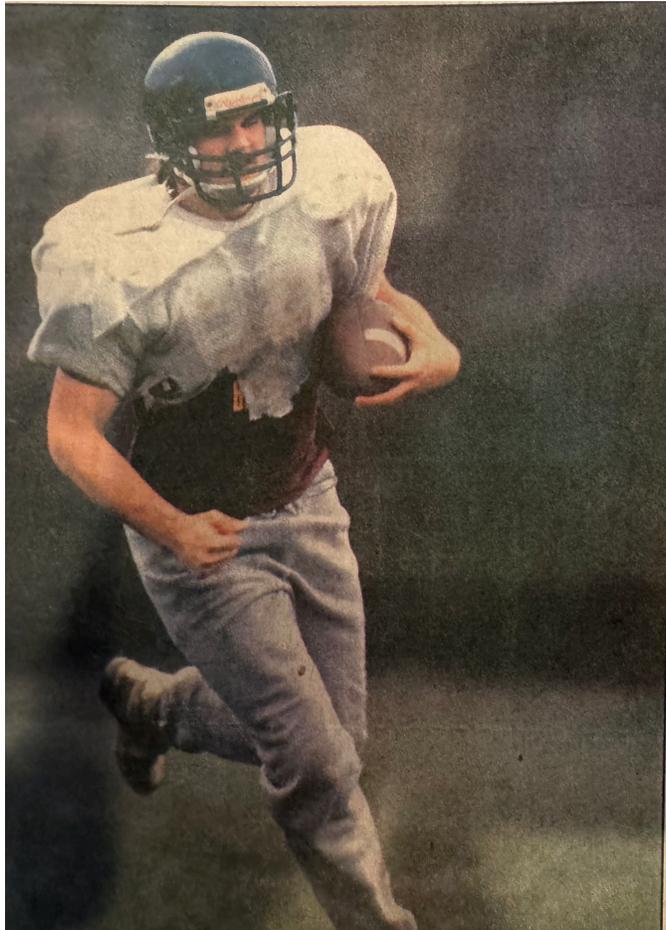
At the outset, it appeared many of the experts who expected a replay of Sistersville's 34-0 regular-season romp, might have hit the nail on the head as the Tigers started from their own 36 after taking the opening kickoff and steadily marched upfield.

With Cline and Swisher alternating

Raider 48 and returning it to the 36.

Stender's defense proved equal to this challenge, however, as a clipping penalty helped Tyler keep the count at 8-0 but momentum still seemed to be eluding the Raiders as Tiger punter Casey Soliday lofted a kick that Brian Brown downed at the three.

Facing third-and-seven deep in a potentially-deadly hole, Tyler promptly showed that their previ-



Sistersville ace has rabbit feet, nearly 3 miles

By Mike Cherry
STAFF WRITER

SISTERSVILLE — Rare is the running back that averages more yards per carry than words per sentence.

But such is the case of Sistersville High School senior Je Swisher. Around a stranger, his vocabulary consists of "yeah" and "nos" and "I don't knows" and "maybes" and a bit too much humility for someone who has rushed for just short of three miles in his three-year career.

"He's not real talkative," said teammate Rocky Romine, a junior who starts in the defensive backfield for the Tigers. "But I always in pretty good spirits. I know we look to him as though like he's a power. We feel confident going into a game with Swisher on our side."

Swisher stands 5-foot-10 and 195 pounds. He can bench press 300 pounds despite not ever seriously hoisting barbells in his life. Sistersville Coach Lou Nocida described Swisher to a pair of college recruiters visiting the little Tyler County town on Tuesday afternoon this way: "He's built like a bullfrog and has feet like a rabbit."

This season, tailback Swisher has led perennial power Clarksburg (11-0) with 2,200 yards on 219 carries (10 yards per carry) and has scored an astonishing 36 touchdowns and 624 points. Swisher has rushed for 5,248 career yards, 624 touchdowns and 624 points. The chubby-faced Swisher is an even bet with Brooke quarterback Jeff Sweitzer to win the Kennedy Award as the state's best player.

Swisher and his teammates will be going for their third consecutive Class A title Saturday at Laidley Field as the Tigers face intra-county rival Tyler County (11-1). The Tigers (101-9 the past eight years) have been in a state championship