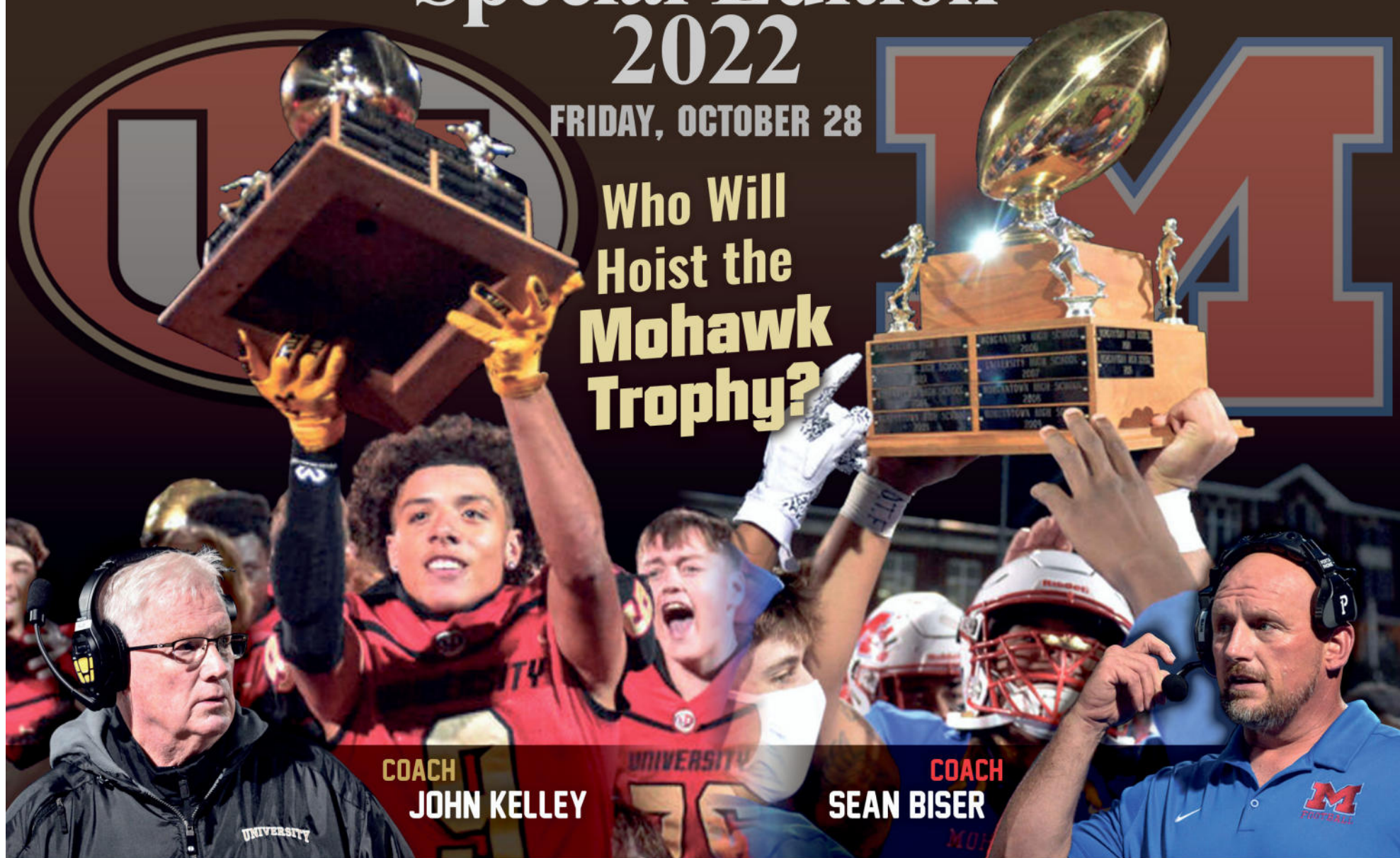


# Goal Post **MOHAWK BOWL** Special Edition 2022

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 28

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# Coaches see Mohawk Bowl as typical game

BY ERIC HERTER  
For The Dominion Post

In the 71 meetings on the football field between Morgantown and University High, there have been upsets, blowouts, and plenty of great games.

But, in the end, it truly is just another high school football game.

The annual contest between Morgantown High and University High School features two schools that are separated by 7.4 miles or 16 minutes of driving.

“Everybody puts a lot into it,” MHS head coach Sean Biser said. “The community puts a lot into it, it’s one of those games that everyone looks forward to.”











The Mohigans hold a 55-13-3 edge in the all-time series — the game wasn’t officially

SEE GAME, P-5



AP photo

Morgantown High defensive lineman Nathan Hagan (61) makes a tackle in last season’s Mohak Bowl. University High won the game 49-14.

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38		19 

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# Aidan Stire's success in kicking is a family trait

BY MATTHEW PEASLEE

For The Dominion Post

It's no secret how the Stire family gets their kicks.

The kicking game runs in the family. Aidan Stire is a sophomore at Morgantown High and has assumed the punting and kicking role for the football team this season. It's a role his older brother, Evan, held at MHS and at WVU. His other siblings, Grace and Austin, were soccer players. Aidan is, too, which makes for some busy days throughout the fall season.

He wouldn't have it any other way.

"It really weighs out well," Stire said. "I get out of school at 2:30 and football practice is from 2:30 to 6. Then, soccer is 7-9. It's spread out and I'm able to do it all, but it can take a toll on my body. I have to take advantage of every chance to rest and recover."

Stire admits there were some nerves when he was thrust into the No. 1 spot for kickoffs, punts, extra points and field goals. But in his first varsity start, a 50-0 Mohigans win against South Charleston, Stire booted seven kickoffs — three went for touchbacks and one was pinned inside the 5 yard line — had two punts that averaged nearly 40 yards each and drilled 5 of 6 extra point attempts.

He has a long field goal of 33 yards this season and has a long punt of 60 yards.

Stire credits his grueling offseason routine for preparing him for a demanding role on the fall sports slate.

"In the offseason, I was really going hard in the weight room with Coach (Sean) Biser and that helped me build strength," Stire said. "That helped me take a big leap. I did a lot of camps which helped me get used to the pressure and some in-game situations."

At the West Virginia Specialists Combine in July, Stire stood out as one of the

top kickers in the state, recording the longest field goal distance and best kick-off charting among all rising sophomores.

He also participated in the Kicking World Camp in Columbus, Ohio, and drilled a 55-yard field goal, which qualified him for the Kicking World National Showcase to be held in Austin, Texas, this December.

Stire has come a long way since he was 2 years old, when he first started playing soccer. When he was in middle school, he practiced on the football field with brother, Evan, and really wants to follow in his footsteps.

"In middle school I practiced with him and got the opportunity to kick in middle school football games," Stire said. "I just

grew into it from there. Watching my brother and other great kickers ... His passion for kicking really helped me. I'd love to follow in his steps, kick in college and play at WVU."

Stire is grateful for the trust and confidence that Biser and the coaching staff has in him, kicking as a young player. He also is thankful for local kicking coaches and former WVU players Matt McCullough and Mark Johnson for their guidance.

ance.

"They have been solid mentors for me," Stire said. "They've helped me fix some things and help me get through things when I'm struggling. It's pretty awesome to have them by my side. They've helped me grow and encouraged me to practice kicking every chance I get."

Helping with his rest and recovery are

SEE FAMILY, P-6



Benjamin Powell/The Dominion Post

When he's not kicking footballs, Aidan Stire is also a standout on the Morgantown High boys' soccer team.



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# Edwards’ decision to stay on sidelines a tough choice



William Wotring/The Dominion Post

Former University High quarterback Chase Edwards led the Hawks to an undefeated regular season in 2021.

BY ERIC HERTER

For The Dominion Post

Chase Edwards doesn’t remember the 2021 Mohawk Bowl.

He was at the game.

He played in the game.

He just doesn’t remember it.

Edwards, a three-year starting quarterback for University High, suffered his fourth concussion in the Hawks’ 49-14 victory last season. He threw for 177 yards and two touchdowns to lead UHS to an undefeated regular season.

Two weeks later, he played in a 46-21 loss to Cabell Midland in the second round of the state playoffs. It would be the final football game he played.

“I miss it a lot,” Edwards, a senior at UHS said. “I don’t miss being hit all the time. I miss the adrenaline and all the excitement around the games.”

Edwards said in the days, weeks, and months after the 2021 Mohawk Bowl he didn’t feel like himself.

“There are moments when you feel like you are not in your own body,” Edwards said.

He suffered migraine headaches and even had to postpone the beginning of his junior baseball season. He also had to leave UHS baseball games early due to migraines.

The son of two physicians, Edwards said his parents still left the decision to play in 2022 up to him.

“My parents were going to let me make my own decision,” Edwards said. “They supported me, my whole family did. I didn’t want to keep hurting my head. I made the decision not to play right before the three-week period this summer.”

UHS head coach John Kelley said he was hopeful that Edwards would play this season, but also knew the risks involved.

“We had our fingers crossed with Chase,” Kelley said. “He describes it best, he said he wants to play more than anything in the world, but he also never wants to have that feeling again, where you are dazed to the point

SEE TOUGH, P-6

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## GAME

FROM PAGE P-2

called the Mohawk Bowl until 1994 after the two schools combined efforts to renovate Pony Lewis Field — and Biser said he is looking forward to his first true Mohawk Bowl held at MHS's Pony Lewis Field. Biser is in his third season at MHS, and his only other taste of a home Mohawk Bowl was during the 2020 pandemic season.

"It was a very small crowd at our stadium, with a limited crowd," Biser said. "It wasn't the full atmosphere, I'm excited to see it."

University High coach John Kelley

remembers the years the two schools didn't even play — from 1982-93 — even though the series dates back to 1947. Once UHS became a Class AAA school and was in the same conference as Morgantown, the series began to heat back up.

"I thought it was a bigger game back then," Kelley said of the rivalry. "Now, both programs are established as playoff contenders nearly every year. I try to put it into perspective. It's one-tenth of the season. We just need to play the game and realize that we have another game after this."

Kelley said he used to put more emphasis on the Mohawk Bowl.

"I've changed my approach," Kelley said. "Everyone used to put a lot of emphasis on this game. It's fun for the community, it's fun for the schools and it's just a nice thing for Morgantown as a city."

The 2022 edition of the Mohawk Bowl features two teams with contrasting playing styles.

Morgantown (5-3) uses its Wing-T offense to pound teams with its rushing attack and then will rely on junior quarterback Maddox Bowers and his receivers to make big plays downfield.

University (6-2) has an explosive passing attack behind quarterback Luke Hudson with receivers Noah Braham, Jaeden

Hammack and John Coleman. The Hawks are looking for back-to-back wins over MHS for the first time since 2013-2014.

The key to the contest could rely on defense, where the Hawks are giving up 24.8 points per contest. However, in their wins, UHS is allowing just 10.8 points a game.

"We really need to match their physicality," Kelley said of the MHS offense. "Their offense is not going to surprise you. We know every play they run; we just don't know when they are going to run it. They could probably say what they are going to run and still gain six or eight yards."



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## FAMILY

FROM PAGE P-3

the MHS trainers and chiropractor Dr. John Bennett. Things really don't slow down for Stire come winter, though. He is also a member of the Mohigans basketball team and has his sights set on being part of a dynamic triple threat.

"I'd love to win a ring," Stire said. "In football, soccer and basketball. That's the ultimate goal."

The next step is a match up against arch-rival University in the annual Mohawk Bowl on Friday. It's just something else Stire has prepared for his entire life.

"We're definitely ready for the Hawks," Stire said. "It's really big for me because my siblings went to MHS and I went to watch them play in the MoHawk Bowl in different sports. So I know about what this game means for both schools. It's always a crazy atmosphere and I'm excited to be a part of it."

## TOUGH

FROM PAGE P-4

that you can't focus. He went to concussion clinics. He may never have another one, but the next one he has, he may never recover from."

With Edwards' decision made, the UHS coaching staff began grooming junior Luke Hudson as the starter for the 2022 season. Behind the scenes, assistant coaches Rich Braham and Eric Snyder were also carving out a role for Edwards.

"I want to give some credit to coach Braham, because he suggested that Chase come around and help coach the quarterbacks," Snyder, the offensive coordinator for UHS, said. "We were all for it, but we didn't know if he would be all for it. He's just come around every single day and helped be our quarterbacks coach putting Luke through drills and our other quarterbacks too. He's been magnificent."

Coach Edwards gives the rest of the coaching staff, Snyder in particular, an

inside view into the UHS offense.

"He's live this offense," Snyder said. "He's played in this offense, so he definitely has some experience that I could not give. He really has some great intel to help out with Luke and has really embraced this new role."

Whether Kelley, Edwards or Snyder knew it, this coaching career began last year when Edwards sat out the regular season finale against Oak Hill and the first-round playoff win over Woodrow Wilson.

"I told him at the end of the season last year that he should look into coaching because he really has a knack for it," Snyder said. "This year has definitely been the icing on the cake."

Edwards said he hopes to go to college and study finance, and he might investigate coaching football as well in the future.

The injuries have caused him to fall back in love with baseball.

"Obviously, football was my favorite sport," Edwards said. "Baseball has

taken over. I'm really excited about this season."

Still, Edwards has become a vital part of the UHS football program this year.

Hudson, who has set school records this season as the UHS passer, said Edwards has helped him take the next step as a quarterback.

"Chase has always been a great friend of mine," Hudson said. "He tells me everything I am missing now as a coach, he's so positive and it's like having two sets of eyes out there when I'm playing and that's great. He's really a great friend and a great coach."

Edwards said he still misses playing football, but coaching has helped fill that void a little.

"I'm still nervous as can be before games," Edwards said. "It's probably worse now, because I can't control how the game goes."

While he won't have a direct impact on the 2022 Mohawk Bowl, the good thing is at least Edwards will be able to remember it.



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