

Chargers fall in first home football game since 2019

BY JAMES J. LIDINGTON
ISLE OF WIGHT ACADEMY

Atlantic Shores Christian School's Kai Hodge rushed for 91 yards and scored twice as the visiting Seahawks took down Isle of Wight Academy's varsity football team 55-21 in the first home game for the host school in nearly two years.

IWA was led by senior J.T. Taylor, who rushed 14 times for 79 yards and scored a touchdown.

The Chargers outrushed the Seahawks 173 yards to 155. Nine different Atlantic Shores rushers carried the football, as the visitors maximized their possessions thanks to positive field position for the majority of the game.

Atlantic Shores scored the first five times it had the ball. After a lengthy game-opening kick return, Shores set up its offense at the IWA 33-yard line. Four plays and a first down later, Shores quarterback Damien Mazil found receiver Carlos Smith with a 7-yard touchdown strike. A Jonathan Hilton point-after-touchdown kick, his first of seven in the game, made it 7-0 with 10:58 still remaining in the opening quarter.

After IWA threw an interception, the first of

three on the game, Shores needed only two plays from the IWA 8 to score again. The PAT made it 14-0 just 53 ticks of the clock after the first score.

Yet another IWA interception set the Seahawks up at the IWA 24. Four plays later, Mazil found Smith again from 12 yards out to give the visitors their third touchdown.

With the Chargers trailing 35-0 in the second quarter and facing the prospect of a running clock in the second half, a raucous IWA crowd cheered its team on to a 10-play, 66-yard drive capped by Taylor's 4-yard run with 2:21 remaining before halftime.

Unfortunately for IWA, Shores' Ameer Ali took the ensuing kickoff and rambled some 97 yards for a touchdown. The PAT made it 42-7 with 2:02 left. Large runs by IWA's Taylor and Jackson Cofer keyed a 62-yard, four-play drive to make it 42-14 with 52 ticks left on the clock.

Not to be outdone, Shores' Will Gaughan returned the ensuing kickoff back for yet another touchdown to make it 49-14 going into intermission.

The game was the official season opener for both teams.

The Atlantic Shores contest was the Chargers' first

home game since Oct. 11, 2019 — a 39-31 IWA loss to the eventual state runner-up Ambassadors.

The Chargers will travel to longtime rival Portsmouth Christian School on Sept. 3. Game time is 7 p.m.

Isle of Wight's Hannah Edwards finished second in a recent cross country scrimmage at the Smithfield Invitational. She completed the race circuit in 13:43:04, less than a minute behind winner Madelyn Berry, of Smithfield, in a contest that featured 62 runners.

IWA's Lorraine Upton finished seventh with a time of 14:29:38. Teammate Hailey Whitley finished 11th and Hannah McClain finished just seconds behind in 12th.

Alexandra Wilson finished in 16th place, while Hannah Whitley finished 19th to round out the Chargers' top 20.

Pierce Cutler finished seventh in the boys race, which featured 77 runners.

Cutler, a junior at IWA, finished the course in 13:15:13. Sophomore John Butler finished the course in 14:13:17, earning him 15th place. Freshman Jayce Joyner was the other IWA runner to finish in the top 20 in the boys race, ending up with a time of 14:25:16.

The cross country teams compete again at Fuqua School on Sept. 2.

The Chargers volleyball team opens play Sept. 2 with a match at Southampton Academy in Courtland. Match time is 6 p.m.

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