

2011 CVC FOOTBALL — PRINCETON

# LITTLE TIGERS A LITTLE WISER

By BOB NUSE  
For The Trentonian.

**PRINCETON** — Joe Gargione hopes the experience his Princeton High football team gained on the field last year pays dividends this season.

The Little Tigers suffered through a winless season a year ago, hurt by some injuries to key players as well as a lot of inexperienced.

Many of those players, however, return this year with varsity playing time under their belts and hopes for a better season.

"There were a lot of sophomores and juniors who are now juniors and seniors and they got a lot of time last year," said Gargione, who is entering his second season as Princeton's head coach. "I think it's good for the consistency of the program and having me as head coach now for a second year that they have that experience of just being on the field.

"There won't be that deer in the headlights look when they step on the field against Northern Burlington Friday. It won't be as new because they have been through it."

Gargione acknowledges that last year was tough on the players and the coaches.

But with a full year of solid off-season work and a more experienced roster, things should be looking up for the Little

Tigers this season.

"As a first-year coach you don't want to go through that, but we learned a lot from it," Gargione said. "We took some bumps and bruises and the coaches and players learned a lot. We're excited to be starting another season Friday."

Gargione feels like the Little Tigers have solid senior leadership, led by quarterback Alex Mitko.

Other seniors with experience who should help lead the team are Eric Shorter (WR/DB), Kevin White (DB/WR), Jeff Barsamian (OL/DL), Nick Gillette (OL/DL), Colin Bell (FB/LB), Fernando Silva (OL/LB), Tim Miranda (WR/DB), and Andrew Wensler (OL/DL). Other seniors, some of whom are out for football for the first time are Morris Cardona (FB/LB), Ben Harrison (WR/DE), EJ Morgan (DB/WR), Andrew Ochoa (OL/DL), Dwayne Williamson (RB/LB), and Abe Meisel (WR/DB).

The Little Tigers do not have a lot of depth, so once again injuries could play a factor and most players will play two ways.

"The main downside to having 30 varsity players is the injuries that you get over the year," Gargione said. "Alex is doing a great job so far. He understands the game and has a great arm. He's a dual threat



Trentonian File Photo/LACKIE SCHEAR

**Princeton's Alex Mitko is back to lead the Little Tigers, who went winless last season.**

because he can run the ball. I'm not making any predictions on wins and losses, but we feel confident and know the first game can help set the tone. A win would be great, but the kids have to understand we have 10 games to play. We keep talking about being a team and picking each

other up."

Among the underclassmen that should play key roles are juniors Ben Smallzman, the top running back and also a linebacker, Grant Schaefer (FB), Jack Persico (OL/DL), and Carl Helstrom (LB/OL). Sophomores Will Harrison, Liam Helstrom and Cal O'Meara

are also in the mix.

"Ben is our No. 1 tailback and we are trying to figure out the fullback situation," Gargione said. "Cardona is in his first year playing and he is an outside linebacker so we don't want to give him too much right away."

Along with having more experience in the lineup, Gargione is hoping having a year to learn his system also helps the Little Tigers show improvement.

"We are excited, the kids are pumped up and the tempo in practice has been good," Gargione said. "This is a senior class with a lot of leaders. This is not the first year doing it now but the second, so the kids understand that. We've seen some different teams in scrimmages so we have gotten a lot of different types of offenses that we have seen."

Like last year, Princeton will be a team with a lot of players who never come off the field. That, however, has been the case for the Little Tigers often over the years.

"We need to be consistent throughout the game," Gargione said. "When I was in high school I never came off the field, so I know what it is like. These kids know they have to stay in the field because we don't have the depth."

## PRINCETON SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Time
Sept. 9	at No. Burlington	TBA
Sept. 17	Burlington Twp.	TBA
Sept. 24	at WW-P North	TBA
Oct. 1	Hopewell Valley	TBA
Oct. 7	at Albemarle	TBA
Oct. 15	Pemberton	TBA
Oct. 22	Ewing	TBA
Oct. 29	Lawrence	TBA
Nov. 5	at Nottingham	TBA

## PRINCETON RESULTS

Date	Opponent	Results
Sept. 11	No. Burlington	L, 28-7
Sept. 16	at Burlington Twp.	L, 42-7
Sept. 25	WW-P North	L, 50-20
Oct. 1	at Hopewell Valley	L, 41-8
Oct. 9	Albemarle	L, 40-6
Oct. 16	at Pemberton	L, 38-6
Oct. 23	at Ewing	L, 31-14
Oct. 30	Lawrence	L, 46-14
Nov. 6	Nottingham	
	C.J. III Consolation	
	Opponent	
Nov. 13	Montgomery	L, 34-3

## PRINCETON ROSTER

Barsamian, Jeff	SR	OL/DL
Bell, Collin	SR	WR/DB
Cardona, Morris	SR	OL/DL
Gillette, Nick	SR	OL/DL
Harrison, Ben	SR	WR/DB
Meisel, Abe	SR	QB/DB
Miranda, Timmy	SR	WR/DB
Mitko, Alex	SR	WR/DB
Morgan, E.J.	SR	OL/DL
Ochoa, Andrew	SR	WR/DB
Shorter, Eric	SR	OL/DB
Silva, Fernando	SR	OL/DL
Wensler, Andrew	SR	WR/DB
White, Kevin	SR	WR/DB
Williamson, Dwayne	SR	WR/DB
Chen, Yiwei	JR	QB/DB
DiGregorio, Zack	JR	OL/DL
Harrison, Will	JR	OL/DL
Helstrom, Carl	JR	WR/DB
Klinges, David	JR	WR/DB
Pannell, Javon	JR	WR/DB
Persico, Jack	JR	OL/DL
Schaefer, Grant	JR	OL/DL
Smallzman, Ben	JR	RB/LB
Williams, Jami	JR	WR/DB
Wright, Bobby	JR	OL/DL
Xu, Will	JR	WR/DB
Bullock, Taisim	SO	
Forney, Tom	SO	
Gumpert, Ehtanso	SO	
Harrison, Will	SO	
Helstrom, Liam	SO	
Kurranche, Jolo	SO	
Mathers, Peter	SO	
Meisel, Will	SO	
O'Meara, Cal	SO	
Abtheira, Elias	SO	
Alloway, Ian	SO	
Bell, Victor	SO	
Cacciola, James	SO	
Danis, Ben	SO	
Dolan, Elliot	SO	
Froehlich, Kyle	SO	
Harris, Amyr	SO	
Meisel, Zac	SO	
Moore, Tad	SO	
Moore, Thomas	SO	
Smallzman, Sam	SO	
Velaz, Carlos	SO	
Wright, Tom	SO	