

65 Years of Red Devils Football

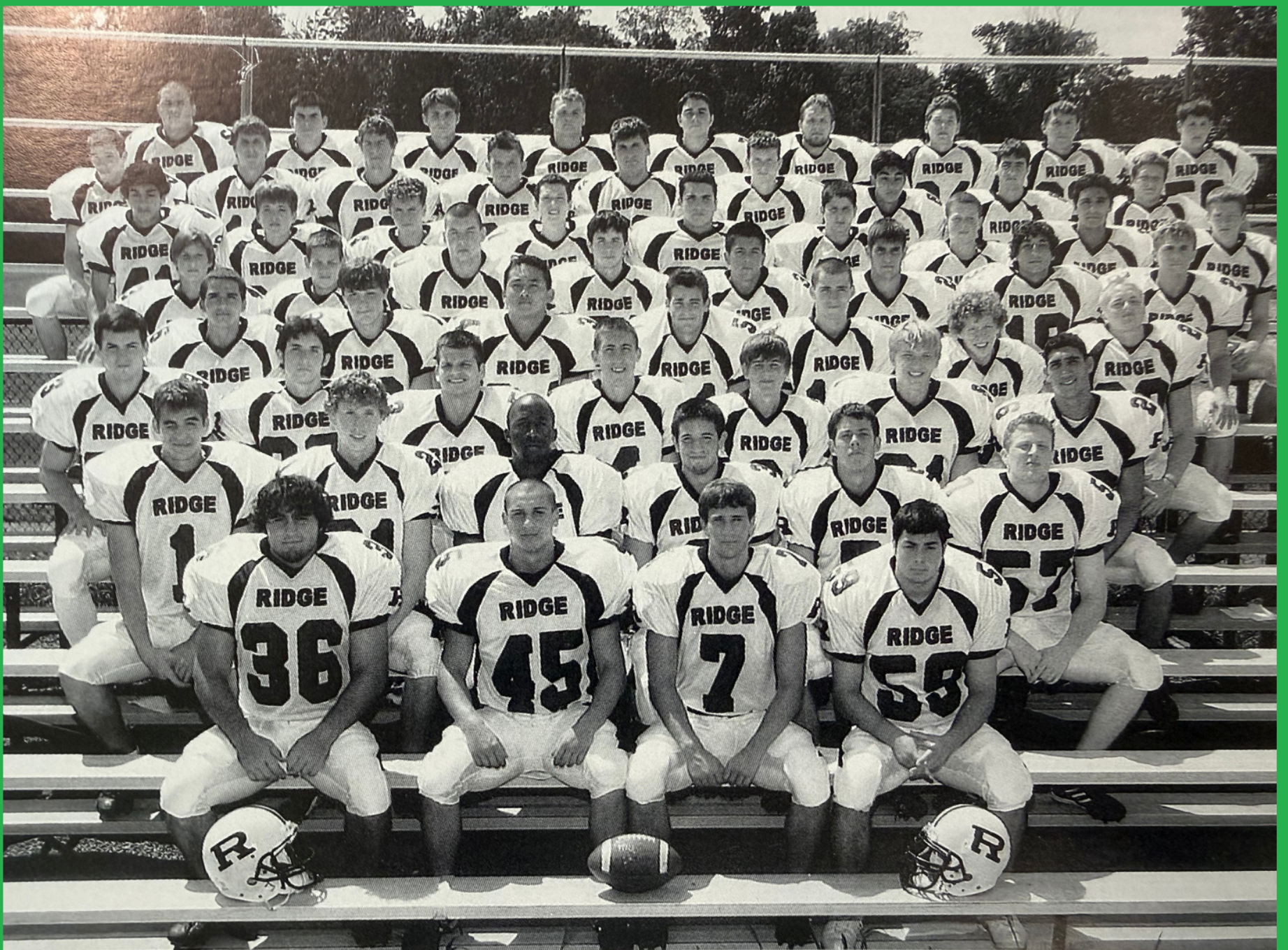
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THE ROAD BACK

2003 • Part 1



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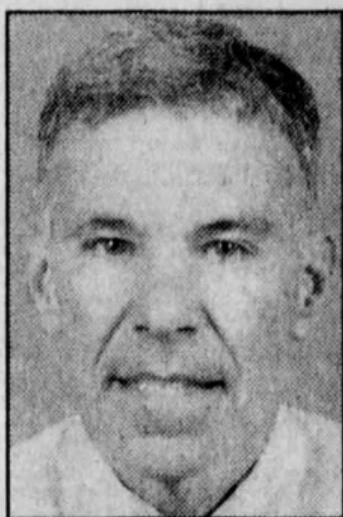
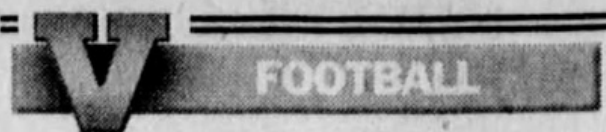


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A PROGRAM REBUILT

The 1990s brought both success and challenges under Coach Tom Falato. By 2001, his efforts were recognized when he was named Coach of the Year.

Coach of the Year



"When the job opened again, they offered it to some pretty good guys who turned it down. But I knew the community was growing. I thought we could do something special."

TOM FALATO,
Ridge football coach

Falato's hard work paid off for Ridge

When Coach Falato took over in 1991, he was told the program might have just one season left because Ridge football was likely to be disbanded. More than a decade later, his hard work had helped rebuild Ridge into a playoff contender, **setting the stage for 2003.**

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HIGH

EXPECTATIONS FOR

2003

“The sky’s the limit for Ridge.”

18 returning lettermen from the 2002 playoff team.

“Look for this explosive club to be a factor in North Jersey, Section 2, Group III.”

-The Courier News Preseason Preview

5. RIDGE

Nickname: Red Devils.
School Colors: Green and white.
Stadium: Lee Field.
2002 record: 7-3.
Offensive formation: Run-and-shoot.
Defensive formation: 4-3.



Head coach Tom Falato
Lebanon Valley '70, 13th season

Assistants: John DeBisco (offensive line, defensive line), Andrew Cefalo (offensive line, defensive line), Greg Mobus (offensive line, defensive line), Kevin Morra (quarterbacks, secondary), Matt Bastardi (wide receivers, secondary), Adam Wright (wide receivers, secondary), Rod Holbrook (linebackers, offensive line), Tim Howard (running backs, linebackers)

KEY PERFORMERS



Matt Mullen
Sr., RB/LB



Tim Howarth
Sr., QB/DB

Brian Brazinski
Sr., OL/DL

Chris Picerni
Sr., OL/DL

The team

Top lettermen lost: Justin Watkins (WR/DB), Peter Moroni (WR/DB), Jeff O'Callahan (C/LB).

Top lettermen returning: John Boudreau (Sr., WR), Matt Mullen (Sr., RB/LB), Tim Howarth (Sr., QB/DB), Brian Brazinski (Sr., OL/DL), Mike Buck (Sr., P/K), Chris Cefalo (Sr., LB), Joe Sutherland (Sr., WR/DB), Byron Glaspie (Sr., WR/DB), John D'Agostini (Sr., WR/DB), Chris Picerni (Sr., OL/DL), Eric Schroeder (Sr., WR/DL), Andrew Walker (Sr., LB), Luke Watkins (Sr., LB), Zack Alexander (Sr., WR), Don Howlett (Sr., OL), Phil Klaas (Sr., OL/DL), Steve Monestero (DB), Brian Swayne (Sr., DL).

Top newcomers: Kevin Ryan (Sr., WR), Chris Roselle (Sr., DL), A.J. Laferrera (Sr., WR), Josh Felter (Jr. DL), Corey Gibson (Jr., DB), Ale Kushneir (Jr., DB), Cliff Meinweiser (Jr., OL/DL), Liam Vandermerwe (Jr., RB/LB), Eric Nau (Jr., WR/DB).

The schedule

9-12	at Watchung Hills	7
9-27	at Rahway	1
10-4	at Governor Livingston	1
10-10	A.L. JOHNSON	7
10-17	at North Plainfield	7
10-24	ROSELLE	7
10-31	at Immaculata	7:30
11-7	HILLISIDE	7
11-26	SOMERVILLE	7

Chris Cefalo's outlook

What we do well: "Our line is doing real well. That's probably our biggest strength. They had a real good off-season. With them up front, it makes it easier for everybody else. We have a lot of guys back, so experience is really helping out, too."

What we need to work on: "The little details — technique, staying focused and keeping injury-free. We jell pretty well together. We're a pretty close-knit group. Everyone is confident in what they're doing. We've just got to work on the details."

Who we can't wait to play: "Watchung Hills is going to be a real big game. They came out and had a real good game against us last year. We couldn't stop (Watchung Hills' single-wing offense) early on, but we started to get a feel for it. It think this year we'll have a better grasp of it. It should be a very good one."



Chris Cefalo
Sr., LB

Our outlook

The sky's the limit for Ridge. A whopping 18 lettermen return from last fall's playoff team, including quarterback Tim Howarth (1,538 yards, nine TDs passing), tailback Matt Mullen (11 TDs), wide receiver Joe Sutherland (38 catches, 517 yards) and linebacker extraordinaire Chris Cefalo (82 unassisted tackles, four interceptions, four forced fumbles). Two-way lineman Brian Brazinski (6-foot-4, 260 pounds) is drawing interest from Ivy League programs. Even the kicking game, with senior Mike Buck (five FGs), is set. With Lee Field sporting a state-of-the-art field turf, look for this explosive club to push Immaculata for the Mountain Division crown and be a factor in North Jersey, Section 2, Group III.

— Jerry Carin

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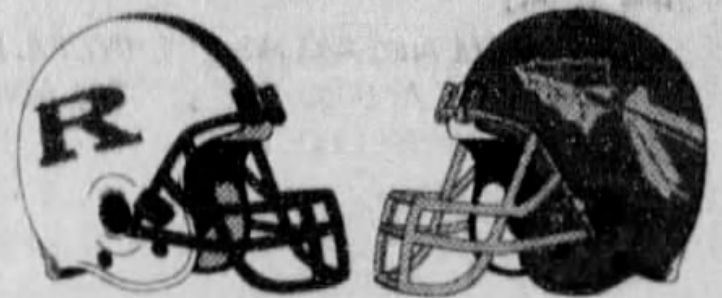
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A STRONG START

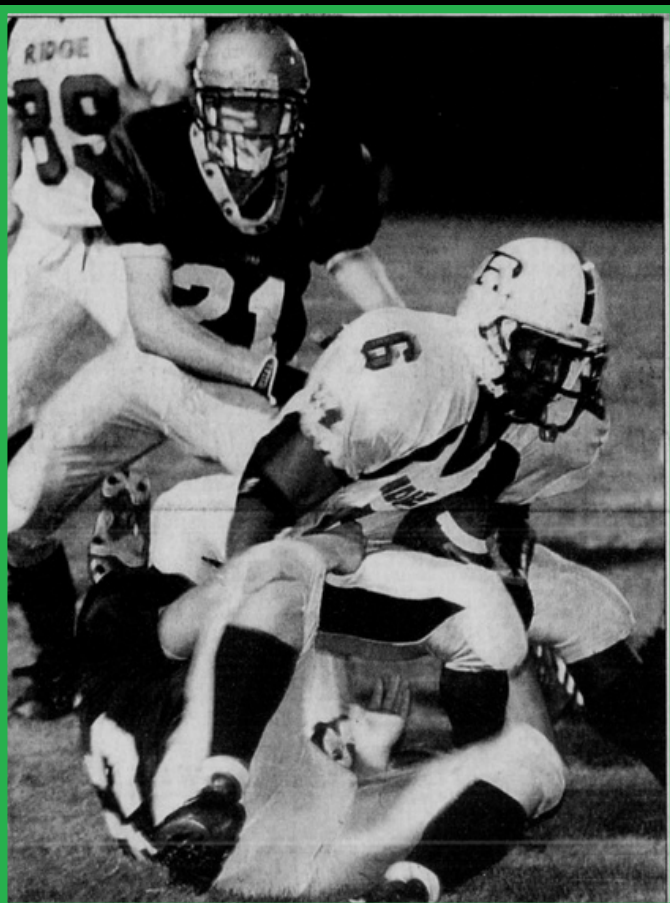
Ranked No. 5, Ridge opened the season with a gritty 17-14 win over Watchung Hills.

VARSITY FALL OPENING NIGHT

No. 5 Ridge guts out season-opening win



RIDGE	17
WATCHUNG HILLS	14



Ridge head coach Tom Falato called the win “one of the guttiest and grittiest” for the Red Devils in recent memory.

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LIVING UP TO THE HYPE

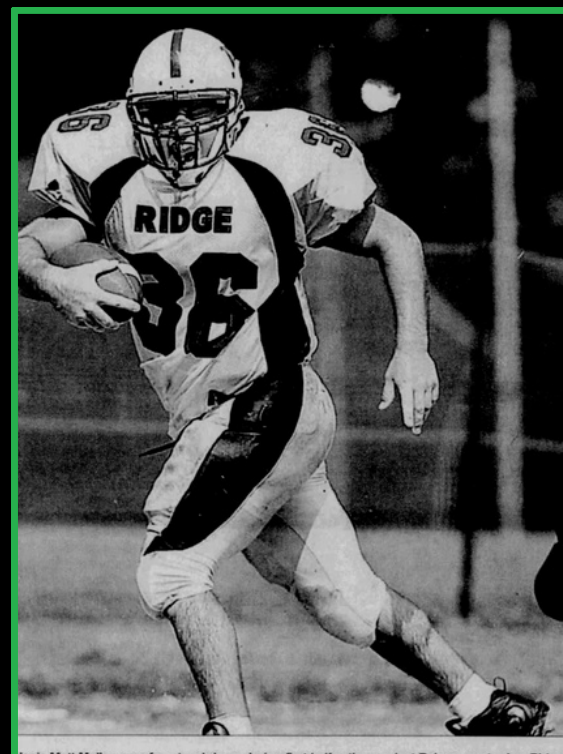
“Unbeaten Ridge, off to its best start ever...”

-The Star-Ledger, October 18, 2003

RIDGE 41
RAHWAY 22

Ridge
topples
Rahway

By mid-October,
Ridge had lived
up to preseason
expectations
with a perfect
5-0 start.



Howarth, Mullen steer 5-0 Ridge by North Plainfield

Ridge wins behind diversified offense

Ridge rolls past Roselle

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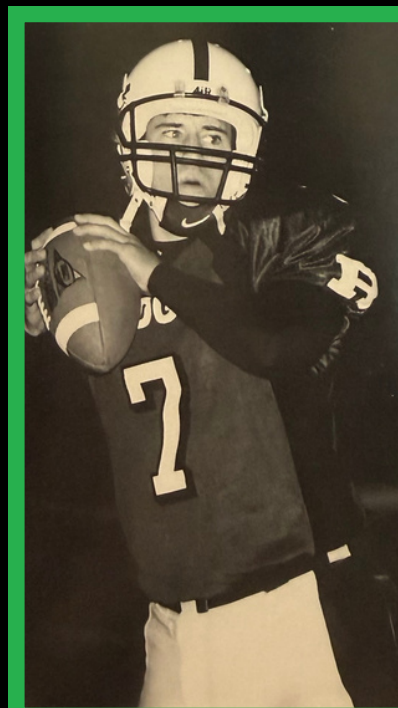
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LEADING THE WAY

Senior quarterback Tim Howarth was a driving force behind Ridge's standout 2003 season, leading the offense through its undefeated start and helping put Ridge in a position for a playoff berth.



BEST OF THE BUNCH

Best quarterback: Tim Howarth (5-11, 180) of Ridge threw for 1,566 yards and 10 TDs and ran for 315 yards and five TDs last year despite having to sit out the Immaculata game with a slight concussion. A healthy Howarth will lead the best passing attack and the most dangerous offense the Mountain Division has to offer.

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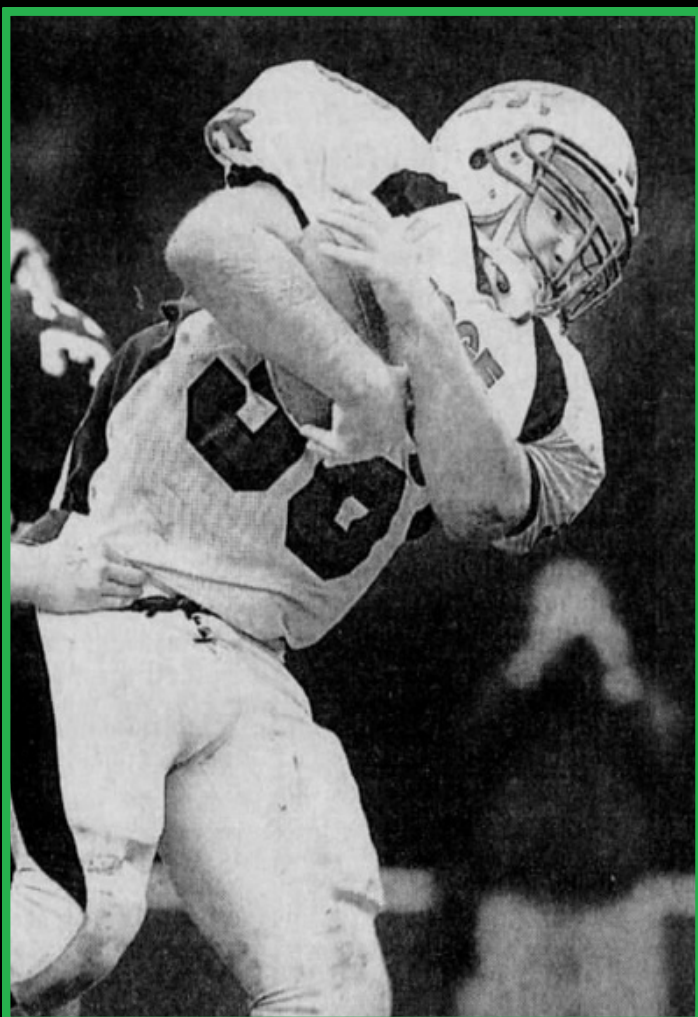
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KEY PLAYER

Mullen powers Ridge



Senior running back Matt Mullen was a key part of Ridge's offense, consistently producing big games during the Red Devils' push toward the playoffs.

SOMERSET TOP 10

2-Ridge (2-0)

Running back Matt Mullen has been the perfect compliment to the run-and-shoot passing attack.

- Rushed for 4 TDs against Gov. Livingston
- 206 rushing yards vs. Johnson
- 131 rushing yards, 2 TDs vs. Hillside

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PLAYOFF BOUND

A **37-6 win** over Hillside clinched Ridge's place in the **North Jersey, Section 2, Group 3 state playoffs.**

RIDGE 37, HILLSIDE 6

BERNARDS — Senior tailback Matt Mullen rushed for 131 yards and two touchdowns and senior kicker Mike Buck booted three field goals as Ridge rolled.

Senior quarterback Tim Howarth threw for 187 yards and a touchdown, scoring another on a 56-yard run in the first quarter.

The victory assures Ridge a spot in the North Jersey, Section 2, Group III playoffs.

**Mullen, Buck power
Ridge over Hillside**

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A SUDDEN TURN

Ridge had secured its playoff spot and
looked ready for a deep run.

Then everything changed.

Part 2 tomorrow...