

# Knights Move to 2-0 With Home Opener Victory

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Staff Writer

The Arthur Lovington Atwood Hammond Knights opened their 2023 home season by taking on the Villa Grove Blue Devils on Friday, September 1. A very large crowd came early for the Knight Fest activities and then were thoroughly entertained by an exciting football game.

In a wild offensive night by both teams that saw 78 total points on the scoreboard, a huge defensive play by the Knights late in the game preserved the victory. A new tradition was begun following the win with the raising of the Knights "W" flag. Here's hoping that the flag goes up often this season!

Jayce Parsons was the offensive standout for the Knights in the game, scoring five running touchdowns and rushing for 2 two-point conversions. Jayce's tds runs were 6 yards, 39 yards, 5 yards, after a 64 yard run on that scoring drive, 40 yards and finally a 17 yard run. Maddix Stirrett had ALAH's other score on a 16 yard run. Kaden Herschberger was 3 for 3 on extra-point kicks.

The home team needed every point they could get as Villa Grove's Brady Clodfelder had three touchdowns, a 1 yard run, and 2 touchdown

receptions of 27 and 66 yards. He also contributed an extra point run. The Devils' Hunter Butts had a 24 yard rushing td and caught an extra point pass. Braden Dowler returned an interception 56 yards for their fourth score. VG's last touchdown was a 66 yard pass from quarterback Layne Rund to Hunter Butts who also caught the extra point pass that brought the visitors within 8 at 43-35 with 4:51 remaining in the game.

The Blue Devils got the ball back for what would be their last series with 2:46 left. An unsportsmanlike conduct penalty set them back to a third down with 24 yards to go to keep their possession alive. But that's when the Knights defense made a huge play, junior defensive lineman shot through the VG offensive line and sacked the Blue Devil QB while also forcing a fumble which senior lineman Jeffrey Arwine recovered giving the ball back to the home team with 2:03 to go to victory.

The Knights picked up a crucial first down when running back Landon Waldrop picked up 10 yards on a second and 11 play and quarterback Jayce Parsons gained 2 yards on third and 1. ALAH ran a favorite victory formation play to finish the game and secure the

hard fought win.

The Knights head to Oakland next Friday, September 8 to face the Tri-County Titans.

ALAH has a 2-0 season and Lincoln Prairie Conference record as every game on the schedule this season is a conference game with the addition of Nokomis and Sullivan Okaw Valley to the LPC.

### OFFENSIVE STATS

#### Week 2 vs Villa Grove

**Rushing** - Jayce Parsons 17 for 231 & 5 TDs; Landon Waldrop, 12 for 61; Maddix Stirrett, 10 for 32 & 1 TD; Easton Frederick, 4 for 26; Alex Rexroad, 1 for 7; Connor Nettles, 1 for 6

**Passing** - Jayce Parsons, 0 for 7, 1 interception

### DEFENSIVE STATS

**Tackles** - Maddix Stirrett, 15; Jeffrey Arwine, 9; Colin Smith, 7; Landon Waldrop, 7; Jacob Tighe, 7; Easton Frederick, 3; Cruz Hale, 3; Mit Appleby, 2; Nate Hale, 2; Garrett Casteel, 2; Brennon Hutson, 2; Payton Warrior, 1; Connor Nettles, 1; Chris Kuhns, 1; Jayce Parsons, 1; Nathan Tighe, 1; Mackenley Bowles, 1

**Tackles for Loss** - Nathan Tighe, 1; Jeffrey Arwine, 1

**Sacks** - Jacob Tighe, 2; Jeffrey Arwine, 2; Landon Waldrop, 1; Colin Smith, 1

**Interceptions** - Cruz Hale, 1  
**Pass Break-Ups** - Cruz Hale,

2; Easton Frederick, 2; Maddix Stirrett, 1; Connor Nettles, 1; Jayce Parsons, 1

**Forced Fumbles** - Jacob Tighe, 1

**Fumble Recoveries** - Easton Frederick, 1; Jeffrey

Arwine, 1

**Punt Blocks** - Colin Smith, 1

### SPECIAL TEAMS STATS

**Kick-Offs** - Garrett Casteel, 4 for 188; Kaden Herschberger, 3 for 76

**Kick-Off Returns** - Landon

Waldrop, 2 for 101; Payton Warrior, 2 for 19; Cruz Hale, 1 for 7; Maddix Stirrett, 1 for 4

**Punts** - Connor Nettles, 1 for 51; Landon Waldrop, 2 for 49

**PATs** - Kaden Herschberger, 3 for 3 (100%)



Knights senior Garrett Casteel runs up to the ball for the kickoff at the beginning of the ALAH vs. Villa Grove game on Friday, September 1. Garrett had 4 kickoffs for 188 yards in the Knights 2023 season home opener.



Knight defenders #70 Jacob Tighe and #5 Mitiku Appleby take down the Villa Grove runner in the game on September 1. Jacob had 7 tackles, including 1 for a loss and 2 QB sacks and Mitiku had 2 tackles. #3 Maddix Stirrett led the team in tackles with 15 and #7 Colin Smith had 7.



Kaden Herschberger sophomore kicker on the Knights football team kicks the first of his 3 PATs in the game with Villa Grove last Friday. Kaden also had 3 kickoffs for 76 yards in the game. Cruz Hale is the holder on the extra point attempts.



ALAH senior quarterback Jayce Parsons heads to the end zone for his second of five touchdowns in the game with the Villa Grove Blue Devils last Friday night. His td gave the Knights back the lead for good at 13-8 after trailing 8-7 in the second quarter. The Knights would tack on 4 more scores to win the game 43-35. Jayce had 231 yards on 17 carries.

## ALAH JV FOOTBALL VS ARGENTA-OREANA



The ALAH Knights jr. varsity football team opened their 2023 season on the road vs. the Argenta-Oreana Bombers. Prior to the game Knight captains, #28 Brayden Leech, #11 Cash Hale, #76 Kamden Morfey and #9 Cruz Hale along with Coach Mitch Wilson met with the officials and the A-O captains.




In the first jr. varsity game at Argenta on August 28, freshman Jayden Parsons falls into the end zone for the first touchdown of the season. Jayden had caught a pass from quarterback Cruz Hale and escaped the tackle of the Bomber to score. The Knights went on to win the game 28-0.



Sophomore defensive back Cruz Hale brings the ball up field after intercepting a pass from Argenta-Oreana's quarterback. Looking to block for Cruz are #17 Kaden Herschberger and #21 Tristan Keagle.



Knights linebackers #24 Brennon Hutson and #20 Trey Strode wrap up and take down the Bomber runner in the first quarter of the JV game vs. Argenta-Oreana. The ALAH defense played well in the game and shut out the Bombers.



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