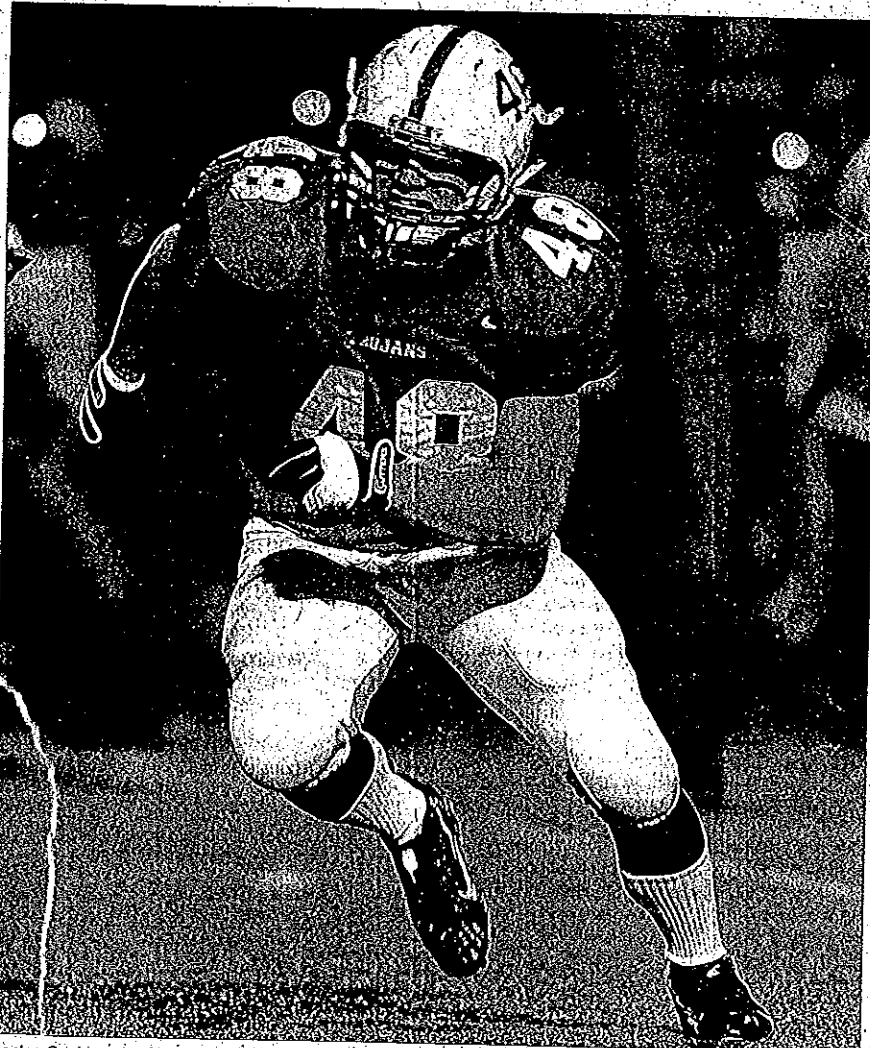


# EXCITING ON mat, gridiron



Center Grove senior Shelby Mappes, a standout wrestler for the Trojans, has emerged as the football team's most productive pass-rusher. A defensive end, Mappes has seven sacks since becoming a starter Sept. 26.

## CG sacks leader utilizes wrestling skills

STORY BY JEFF SKIRVIN  PHOTO BY JOE SABA

Shelby Mappes doesn't mask where his passion lies. Wrestling has been and always will be his No. 1 sport. But his statistics on the gridiron this season suggest he isn't just a grappler. He's a football player, too.

Mappes will join the rest of his top-ranked Center Grove football teammates in the Class 5A state title game Saturday against No. 3 Carmel.

"I love wrestling. It's my passion," the senior defensive end said. "I think a lot of people see me as a wrestler who plays football. But when I'm playing football, that's where my dedication is."

Since entering the starting lineup Sept. 26 against Lawrence North, Mappes has recorded a team-leading seven sacks. Not bad, considering he didn't even have a set position for the Trojans before the season began.

Mappes had played linebacker the previous three seasons.

But Center Grove defensive coordinator Ruben DeLuna said he didn't see Mappes getting much playing time at that position. Geoff Sissom, Anthony Elias and Jon Rifkind had solidified their spots in the starting lineup.

So during two-a-day practices, DeLuna moved Mappes to defensive end, a position he thought

Mappes could be effective at because of his shiftiness as a wrestler.

When Bryan Doucey became ill the week of the Lawrence North game, Mappes found himself in the starting lineup.

He's been there ever since.

"Since he had played linebacker and has some speed, I thought he would be like a hybrid player that would be a good pass-rusher on third down situations," DeLuna said. "He's turned out to be a very solid every-down kid."

Mappes, DeLuna and Trojans coach Eric Moore credit the

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Shelby Mappes

Center Grove senior on playing football and wrestling.