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## A not so quiet storm: Reed, emotions have sparked Lancaster

By JOE ARNOLD  
Sports Writer  
[jarnold@nncogannett.com](mailto:jarnold@nncogannett.com)

LANCASTER - Jesse Reed blames it on an involuntary reaction, one that he struggles to contain.

The fullback in Lancaster's Wing-T offense, Reed doesn't like getting hit. His 5-foot-10, 220-pound frame can take the punishment opposing defenses are so willing to dish out, but that makes little difference to Reed: Woe to the teammate who crosses paths with a freshly hit Reed.



"I don't do it every play, but when you get a huge hit, it hurts, especially when a lineman whiffs on a block," Reed said. "It's just a human instinct. You want to yell at the first person you see. The first person I usually see is a lineman and they get it.

"It's probably not a smart thing to yell at them."

Lancaster's offensive linemen, however, take little offense at Reed's outbursts. Most have grown up playing football with him, and all know how emotionally charged their fullback gets.

"We kind of brush that off," center Ed Hebb said. "We've been playing with him so long, we know that's how he gets over things. It doesn't really bother anyone. We're used to it. Plus, we're a forgiving group."

It's easy to pardon the occasional outburst when it's coming from the player who accounts for nearly 50 percent of your entire rushing attack. As one of the few returners from Lancaster's perfect regular season in 2006, Reed has accepted the yoke as the Gales' featured back. He has 1,134 yards on 160 carries this season (7.9 yards per carry) and has 18 touchdowns, three times as many as Lancaster's second-leading scorer.

"He's been a slashing-type of runner, and he's been that way since junior high," Gales coach Rob Carpenter said. "He's an emotional football player, and he kind of reminds me of myself a little bit. That emotion makes him a good runner."

His stocky frame and fiery attitude helped Reed emerge as Lancaster's biggest offensive threat this season. He piled up a career-high 192 yards and four TDs in the Gales' 26-24 win over Grove City on Sept. 7. He rushed for 120 yards against Parkersburg South, 170 against Groveport, 178 against Hilliard Darby and 148 against Newark.

His big game against the Cruisers forced fans and opponents to take notice of Reed's athleticism. He unveiled a video game-like hurdle that went for a TD on Lancaster's first drive of the game. He hurdled two more defenders on a 63-yard sprint in the fourth quarter that helped the Gales ice the 35-21 win.

The technique - which has spawned the loose nickname "Jumpin' Jesse Reed" - was more self-preservation than flash, Reed said.

"I had never practiced it before and had never tried it," he said. "It was just a heat-of-the-moment thing. It was the best way to score. I guess they were just trying to take my legs out."

The technique, which he tried once in the season opener against Logan, took some getting used to by Lancaster's offensive line.

"As big a back as he is, he likes to jump over things. I don't know why," Hebb said. "I guess it seems natural to him. Against Logan, he jumped and stepped on my hand and almost broke it."

So what keeps Lancaster's linemen blocking for a running back who has a temper and a penchant for nearly breaking his teammates' bones?

"He's one of those guys that you love to block for," said Hebb, who has helped clear Reed's path since their fifth-grade days as Rising Park Razorbacks.

"If something goes wrong, he's gonna be able to break a tackle and make something on his own. He's a calming influence, but he can get you excited

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Jesse Reed of Lancaster High School tries to power through Pickerington Central's defense Sept. 22, 2006. E-G file photo

### The Reed File

- **NAME:** Jesse Reed
- **SCHOOL/YEAR:** Lancaster/senior
- **POSITION:** Fullback
- **STATS:** 1,134 yards on 160 carries (7.9 ypc); 18 TDs
- **REED SAYS:** "I'm a pretty balanced back. My speed's not the greatest; I can't outrun everybody, but I'm faster than the majority of players. I can also run through people."

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and get you to believe in him. It's exciting. It's almost like having one of your own linemen back there."

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