

# Waiting for the Fall: A Decade of Dreams, Drama and West Virginia University Football



For the people of West Virginia a state that is often ridiculed and disregarded their flagship university's Mountaineer football team is a source of pride, a shining representative for their state on the national stage. So when native son and head coach Rich Rodriguez led the Mountaineers to an unexpected Sugar Bowl victory at the end of the 2005 season, behind a youthful roster that included electrifying freshmen Patrick White and Steve Slaton, West Virginia fans figured the best was yet to come. Instead, the seasons that followed served up endless, stomach-churning drama, pivoting around one of the most earth-shattering upsets in college football history to be known forever by its final score, 13-9. Successes came the Mountaineers way, including three Bowl Championship Series victories in seven years. But so did turbulent coaching changes that splintered the fan base, looming uncertainty caused by ongoing conference realignment, power struggles that forced some into highly embarrassing acts, and enough backstabbing and subterfuge to fill a Shakespearian tragedy. The Mountaineers emerged from the turmoil to face a bright future in a new conference, but will the old demons still haunt them? As a sportswriter for the Charleston Daily Mail, Mike Casazza has covered the Mountaineers for more than a decade; he's lived WVU football from Nehlen to Rodriguez to Stewart to Holgorsen. In *Waiting for the Fall*, Casazza has written the definitive document of this unprecedented period for West Virginia University football. You'll also read an insightful foreword from ESPN play-by-play announcer and native West Virginian Mike Patrick, who broadcast that infamous loss to Pittsburgh. *Waiting for the Fall* is an epic tale that captures the events and emotions that defined an era for West Virginians who experienced it firsthand. It's also a must-read for football

fans who watched with interest as the sports most successful team without a national title became a soap opera disguised as a major college football program. And if you're a sports fan who simply loves a great story told well, Waiting for the Fall is just the sort of page-turner you'll love.

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