IRON RIVER—Too many turnovers gave Iron Mountain several breaks they really didn't need during their 39-0 win over West Iron at Nelson Field Sept. 7.

The Wykons' loss drops their record to 1-2 overall (0-1 in West Pac action).

"Turnovers killed us again," Coach Mike Berutti said later.__PUBLIC__

Fumbleitis: "We fumbled once on their 20 yard line. We're driving in, and we fumble. Another series, we start at our 35. Two plays, first down. Two plays, first down. Pick up 10 yards and we fumble after a 10-yard run.

"You can't recover from turnovers like that. And we've never been a fumbling-type team." It's especially puzzling because the Wykons are doing the same ball-protection drills they have for years.

The fumbles, said the coach, don't happen on handoffs. Most take place when the backs battle for extra yards—an opponent reaches in and pulls the ball loose.

To stop that, they need to focus on protecting the ball with the other hand when they're in traffic. "That's something we have to get better at."

Brooks flows: IM didn't need many breaks the way Paul Brooks ran. Brooks carried 17 times for 194 yards. His 54- and 1-yard TD runs gave the Mountaineers an early 13-0 lead. Then Taylor Huotari intercepted a pass and later scored on a 36-yard run. IM led 19-0 after the first quarter.

In the second, QB Zach Jacobs' 13-yard keeper got IM on the board again. Then the Wykons fumbled, Brooks recovered and later scored from 32 yards out. 33-0 at halftime.

It didn't have to be that way, Berutti said.

"Three, four big plays. We had Brooks tied up at the line of scrimmage—nowhere to go. All of a sudden, he squirts out of there and goes 40 yards for a touchdown."

The Wykons' problem, he said, is that they overpursued—so they weren't in position to adjust when Brooks suddenly changed direction.

"It shows the kids are hustling," but by overpursuing, the Wykons weren't filling the cutback lanes or taking proper angles to make the tackle.

Gimme a break: IM started the running clock when Jacobs passed to James Christensen for a five-yard score late in the third quarter, making it 39-0. For the most part, though, Berutti said WIC's defense played much better than the week before at L'Anse. "They kept playing hard right to the end.

"We aren't getting any kind of break right now, and it seems like everything that can go wrong is going wrong." Example: Tyler Stafford apparently scored on a 39-yard run in the fourth quarter—but a holding penalty restored IM's shutout.

"Somewhere down the line," said Berutti, "if we keep working hard, we're going to get that break and get things turned around."

Numbers: Offense, WIC 174 yards (134r, 40p), IM, 361 (283r, 78p). First downs: WIC 8, IM 16.

Rushing: Alec Schmelebeck, 6-55. IM: Paul Brooks, 17-194; Taylor Huotari, 5-54. Passing, receiving stats: NA.

Defense: Tackles, Schmelebeck, 9t-4a; Chasz Jonet, 7t-2a; Ron Varney, 5t-1a; Cody Desjardins, 4t-3a. Sack: Brandon Clifford.

Coming up: The Wykons host Ironwood on Sept. 14 at Nelson Field. The Red Devils (2-1, 1-0) ran past Houghton 27-15 on Sept. 7.

Mtnrs 19 14 6 0 -- 39

Wykons 0 0 0 0 -- 0