

The BlitzWeek 10

THE BEST OF HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL



Buckeyes face big challenge tonight at Penn State. **B3**

2:00 MINUTE DRILL

Performances worth noting from the 10th week of the high school football season



Panthers, Part I

Cody Schuster passed for 179 yards and 4 TDs to help Elyria Catholic to a crucial 50-28 win over Cleveland Central Catholic.



Panthers, Part II

Jayson Graham ran for 172 yards and 2 TDs in Elyria Catholic's big win.



Harrell barrels

Avon's Marquis Harrell ran for 161 yards and 2 TDs in a 20-0 win over Bay.



Robinson keys 'Cats

Shane Robinson ran for 147 yards and 2 TDs as Keystone beat Black River 21-12.

Holt hot for Middies

Josiah Holt ran for a TD, caught a scoring pass and returned a punt 37 yards in Midview's 20-14 win over North Ridgeville.

MIDVIEW 20

NORTH RIDGEVILLE 14



TOM MAHL / CHRONICLE

Midview's Josiah Holt catches a 22-yard touchdown pass from Gage Williams in Midview's 20-14 win. No. 12 for North Ridgeville is Sean Harnish.

Marvelous Middies

Ron Nenadal
The Chronicle-Telegram

NORTH RIDGEVILLE — When Midview's leading rusher, Kevin Allen, went down with an injury, coach Bill Albright turned to sophomore Josiah Holt.

Holt didn't let down his coach, leading the Middies to an important 20-14 win over West Shore Conference rival North Ridgeville.

All Holt did was return a punt 37 yards to the Rangers 20, then two plays later catch a 22-yard

Backup Holt keys big win

touchdown pass from backup quarterback Gage Williams to give the Middies a 14-7 lead.

When North Ridgeville failed on fourth-and-14 on their next possession, Holt made them pay again. The Middies took over on the North Ridgeville 28, and two plays later Holt fought off numerous tacklers and ran into the end zone to seal the Rangers' fate.

Although North Ridgeville scored on its next series, it was too little too late.

With the win, Midview (8-2, 5-2 WSC) gave itself a great chance to make the state playoffs. The official postseason matchups won't be released until Sunday, but Midview appears to have made it in Division II, Region 6.

Albright couldn't say enough about his team and how it stepped up in the face of adversity.

"From Day 1 when we started hitting we lost one of our running backs, Garret Kleister," Albright said. "Then we get things started and we get hit with more injuries. We lost Andrew Croftcheck, Dave Rankin and the list goes on and on. I'm proud of the way these young men rose up every time."

See **MIDVIEW**, B10

KEYSTONE 21 | BLACK RIVER 12

Fantastic finish

'Cats post best year since 1971

Bob Daniels
The Chronicle-Telegram

LAGRANGE — It was a time to rejoice and reflect for Keystone's long-dormant football team.

The Wildcats came back to defeat Black River, 21-12, on Friday night. The victory gave them an 8-2 record, their best since the 1971 team went 9-0. It also temporarily kept alive their hopes for a playoff berth. Those were the reasons to rejoice, never mind that

they tied with Wellington for second place in the Patriot Athletic Conference's Stars Division.

Senior Shane Robinson, who carried the ball 30 times for 147 yards and two touchdowns, was reflective.

"Growing up playing Pee-Wee football we were always on top," Robinson said. "Then when we got to be freshmen, we were like, 'Man, we're on the bottom.' It's been like we could never win, you know."

"It's like going from middle school to high school. You go from the top and then you go right down to the bottom," he said. "We said

See **KEYSTONE**, B10



CARL SULLENBERGER / CHRONICLE

Keystone quarterback Mike Herb hands off to Shane Robinson on Friday during the Wildcats' 21-12 victory.

ELYRIA CATHOLIC 50
CLEV. CENTRAL CATHOLIC 28

EC wins, waits

Pete Alpern
The Chronicle-Telegram

BEDFORD — As the Elyria Catholic Panthers knelt at midfield in the wake of their dismantling of Cleveland Central Catholic, there were no celebrations, no pats on the back.

The mood was subdued because minds were on matters the Panthers had no control over. Many miles away, spread throughout the state, were a handful of games that would ultimately decide their fate.

Although Elyria Catholic did its part in setting off the offensive fireworks in a 50-28 victory over the Ironmen on Friday night at Ripp Field, the Panthers' postseason hopes were far from certain late Friday night.

Elyria Catholic entered its regular-season finale seeded eighth in Division IV, Region 14. One of the two playoffs vacancies were slammed shut when No. 9 Ottawa-Glandorf defeated Shawnee. The other — the Panthers' last ticket to the postseason — came into doubt when No. 7 Huron held off Margaretta.

Still, Elyria Catholic (3-1 North Coast League, 8-2 overall) received a bevy of secondary points that might have been enough to slip in: Cleveland East beat John Adams, which is a Division I team, while Warren JFK knocked off University School.

"We're all kind of nervous," said Elyria Catholic senior running back Jayson Graham. "We're all just walking around and trying to find out who won and who lost. We just don't know what's going to happen next. I personally don't care about anything else. I won't be

See **EC**, B2

PLAYOFF CHASE

It wasn't a presidential election, but a few of the playoff races were too close to call early this morning.

Unbeaten Avon Lake is in in Division II, Region 6 and will likely host a first-round game.

Midview, on the strength of a win over North Ridgeville, also appears to have qualified in Division II, Region 6.

Less certain are the fates of Elyria Catholic in Division IV and Olmsted Falls in Division II, Region 5.

Elyria Catholic won but may need help today, specifically a Norwalk St. Paul victory.

Olmsted Falls also won, but entered Friday needing a lot of help.

The official playoff pairings will be announced Sunday.

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633

Yards from scrimmage by Wellington in 62-6 win over Oberlin

22

Ball carriers used by Wellington and Oberlin in Dukes' win

3

Hundred-yard rushers for Clearview (Carlton, Hitchens and Bason) in 41-26 win over Columbia

125

Penalty yards against Buckeye during Bucks' 42-0 win over Brookside

7

Yardage of interception TD return by Clearview's Jon Bill in win over Columbia

4

Number of C's in the initials of Elyria Catholic and Cleveland Central Catholic (EC-CCC)

NORTHEAST OHIO

VALLEY DIVISION

Table with columns: Team, W, L, T, PF, PA. Rows include Brunswick, Solon, Strongsville, Medina, Lakewood, Elyria.

Friday's games: Elyria Catholic 27, Elyria 0, Brunswick 28, Medina 10, Solon 24, Strongsville 14

NORTH COAST

WHITE DIVISION

Table with columns: Team, W, L, T, PF, PA. Rows include Elyria Catholic, VASJ, Chanel, Trinity, Cle. Cent. Cath.

Friday's games: Elyria Catholic 50, Cle. Cent. Cath. 28, Akron Hoban 23, VASJ 6, Trinity 21, Chanel 13

PATRIOT ATHLETIC

STARS DIVISION

Table with columns: Team, W, L, P, W, L, PF, PA. Rows include Buckeye, Keystone, Wellington, Black River, Brookside.

Friday's games: Wellington 62, Oberlin 6, Keystone 21, Black River 12, Buckeye 42, Brookside 0

STRIPES DIVISION

Table with columns: Team, W, L, P, W, L, PF, PA. Rows include Clearview, Luth. West, Columbia, Brooklyn, Oberlin.

Friday's games: Wellington 62, Oberlin 6, Clearview 41, Columbia 26, Lutheran West 44, Brooklyn 30

SOUTHWESTERN

SWC ALL

Table with columns: Team, W, L, T, PF, PA. Rows include Avon Lake, Brecksville, Olmsted Falls, North Olmsted, Amherst, Westlake, Midpark, Berea.

Friday's games: Avon Lake 42, Amherst 3, Olmsted Falls 21, North Olmsted 0, Westlake 14, Brecksville 12, Midpark 34, Berea 30

WEST SHORE

WSC ALL

Table with columns: Team, W, L, T, PF, PA. Rows include Rocky River, Midview, Vermilion, North Ridgeville, Avon, Bay, Fairview, Firelands.

Friday's games: Midview 20, North Ridgeville 14, Vermilion 21, Firelands 0, Avon 20, Bay 0, Rocky River 49, Fairview 18

LAKE ERIE LEAGUE

ERIE DIVISION

LEL ALL

Table with columns: Team, W, L, T, PF, PA. Rows include Warrensville, Bedford, Shaw, Admiral King, Southview.

Friday's games: Warrensville 49, Bedford 14, Euclid 36, Shaw 12, Admiral King at Southview

Northeast Ohio

Lakewood 27, Elyria 0

Table with columns: Team, W, L, T, PF, PA. Rows include Lakewood, Elyria.

Scoring: L-Brian Wick 34 pass from Dan Shannon (kick failed). L-John Ross 5 run (Arjan Bako kick). L-Gahad Suleiman 4 run (Bako kick). L-John Warrell 1 run (Bako kick).

North Coast League

Elyria Catholic 50, CCC 28

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Northeast Ohio

Clearview 41, Columbia 26

Table with columns: Team, W, L, T, PF, PA. Rows include Clearview, Columbia.

Scoring: CL-James Washington 25, pass from Zach Anderson (kick failed). CL-Ben Cline 9, pass from Anderson (kick blocked). COL-Chas Manros 21, pass from Matt Jarrell (kick blocked).

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Northeast Ohio

Westlake 14, Brecksville 12

Table with columns: Team, W, L, T, PF, PA. Rows include Westlake, Brecksville.

Scoring: W-Jimmy Abed, 15 run (Kyle Speicher kick). W-Abed, 49 run (Speicher kick). B-Venditti, 1 run (kick failed). B-Venditti, 1 run (run failed).

West Shore Conference

Midview 20, North Ridgeville 14

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Northeast Ohio

Aurora 56, Wickliffe 12

Table with columns: Team, W, L, T, PF, PA. Rows include Aurora, Wickliffe.

Scoring: Aurora Amelia 14, Morrow Little Miami 7. Beallsville 35, Beverly Ft. Frye 0. Beaver Creek 21, Xenia 20. Bellbrook 18, Milton Union 14. Bellefontaine 34, Riverside Stebbins 3. Bellevue Green Fork 14, Millersburg W. Holmes 12.

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Northeast Ohio

Lima Bath 3, Wapakoneta 0

Table with columns: Team, W, L, T, PF, PA. Rows include Lima Bath, Wapakoneta.

Scoring: Lima Bath 3, Wapakoneta 0. Lisbon Beaver 28, Weir, W.Va. 6. Lockland 17, Cin. N. College Hill 14. Lodi Cloverleaf 21, Green 7. Logan 53, Ironton 14. London Madison Plains 21, London 13. Louisville 40, Minerva 0. Lowellville 29, N. Jackson Jackson-Milton 12.

Northeast Ohio

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EC

From B1

able to believe it if we're not playing next week."

The Panthers came into Friday's action having lost the previous two weeks, after opening the season 7-0.

With precision, they demonstrated just how explosive their

offense can be. Elyria Catholic scored touchdowns on seven consecutive possessions, each one needing four plays or fewer.

Our kids kept firing off but we just got beat around a little bit, to be honest. You have to be stronger to compete in this league.

Steve Hamilton,
Elyria coach

Before every game, everyone says, 'Hey, man, I care about you,' just so we know we're going to be together if we win or if we lose.

Shane Robinson,
Keystone running back

We've shown improvement every week. At this point in the season they remind me of the state championship team (of 2003).

Dave Dlugosz,
Avon Lake coach

OLMSTED FALLS 21 | NORTH OLMSTED 0

'Dogs turn turnovers to touchdowns

Shaun Bennett
The Chronicle-Telegram

NORTH OLMSTED — The false start penalty on first-and-goal hurt. The downpour that slowed a steady first-half drive didn't help much, either. But it was the turnovers that ultimately became the difference in Olmsted Falls' 21-0 victory over North Olmsted in their Southwestern Conference finale Friday night.

"It'd be easy to sit here and make excuses, but the simple fact is we just didn't get it done when we had to," North Olm-

sted coach Mike Ppacek said. "We had our chances. We had opportunities to make some plays and just didn't get it done."

North Olmsted (5-5, 3-4 SWC) played like the better team during the first half, with the Eagles defense playing lights out and their offense managing the only movement on the field.

But it was Olmsted Falls (7-3, 5-2) that scored the half's only touchdown, taking advantage when senior defensive lineman Paul Print intercepted Eagles quarterback Keith Troyer and Bulldogs quarterback John

Atkinson connected with Matt Jurcak for the 10-yard score. The touchdown was Olmsted Falls' only first down in the first half.

"We caught a break on that interception on the screen pass," Olmsted Falls coach Jim Ryan said. "We played a field-position game in the first half. That became a big play for us."

The Bulldogs caught another big break in the second quarter after a three-and-out, a solid punt return and an Olmsted Falls' 15-yard face-mask penalty gave North Olmsted the ball on the Bulldogs 25-yard line.

As a sudden rainstorm began to pelt the field, junior running back Patrick Tomko picked up back-to-back first downs to the 2-yard line. But the Eagles jumped early to lose 5 yards, then Tomko lost the ball as he was about to run into the end zone and the Bulldogs recovered on the 1-yard line.

Things didn't improve in the second half for North Olmsted, as the Eagles turned the ball over two more times — a fumble and an interception — which the Bulldogs turned into two more touchdowns.

"The defense was tremen-

dous all game long," Ryan said. "To come in here and get a shutout in these conditions, you have to give them a lot of credit."

Now the wait is on for Ryan and his Bulldogs. Olmsted Falls sat in the No. 11 spot in its region, but only three teams ahead of them had clinched a playoff berth heading into Week 10. With the win and several other teams' losses, the Bulldogs may be able to squeeze into the eight-team field.

"We talked about that all week," Ryan said. "We can't control what all those other teams are going to do, all we can do is

control what we are doing. We still have a chance, but we're going to have to wait and see."

Ryan said the Bulldogs' hopes may ride on today's game between Holy Name and Padua, as Padua sat in sixth place in Division II, Region 5.

GETTING HIS KICKS: Ryan said plenty of the credit for Friday's win should go to sophomore punter Cory Maddocks. "(He) did a great job out there. In wet conditions, not allowing many returns, keeping them pinned ... he was very big for us," Ryan said.

Contact Shaun Bennett at 329-7137 or sbennett@chronicle.com.

CLEARVIEW 41
COLUMBIA 26

Teams get the points

Jerry Rombach
The Chronicle-Telegram

SHEFFIELD TWP. — Defense was *not* the name of the game at Tom Hoch Field on Friday night.

Clearview and Columbia both put on an offensive show in the Clippers' 41-26 victory that clinched the outright Stripes Division championship of the Patriot Athletic Conference.

Three running backs for Clearview (6-4, 5-2) rushed for more than 100 yards and one managed the feat for Columbia (3-7, 2-5). The Clippers piled up 407 total yards, the Raiders finished with 247.

Antwaun Carlton led the way for Clearview with 145 yards on 15 carries that included touchdown runs of 67 and 5 yards. Anthony Hitchens had 105 yards on 14 carries, while Mike Bason had 102 yards on 14 carries. Columbia's James Magda had 114 yards on 21 carries. He also caught three passes for 27 yards and two touchdowns, and returned an interception 65 yards for a score.

Both offenses moved the ball almost at will. Only three interceptions — two of them returned for touchdowns — were able to halt offensive drives during the game.

Clearview was up 12-0 before the opening quarter ended, both scores coming on passes by sophomore Zach Anderson for 25 and 9 yards. The Clippers also scored 15 in the second while Columbia joined the point-making fun with 20. Only in the fourth quarter did neither team score.

The offense was remarkable, especially because it rained throughout much of the game.

"It's been the story all year," Columbia coach Jason Ward said of his team's porous defense. "We've tried so many different things but no matter what, defense just hasn't gone our way. But offensively we did great. We can move the ball up and down the field as good as anybody."

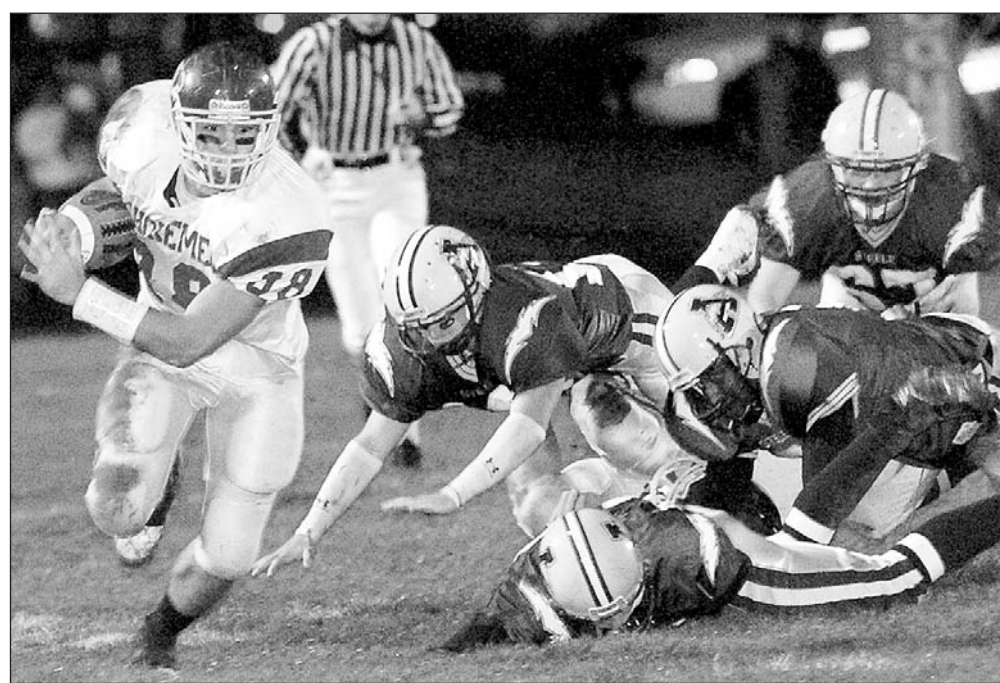
On the play of Magda, a 175-pound senior, Ward added: "He was our leader all year. He's a fine example of what a Raider should be."

While Clearview did win by two touchdowns, the game was not a rout. Columbia only trailed by seven at halftime and midway through the third quarter scored again to trail 34-26. But the Clippers got some breathing room when Carlton broke loose for his long run late in the third quarter to up the advantage to 15 points.

Clearview started the season 1-4, but finished with five straight wins.

"We were definitely happy with our offense, but not so much with the defense," said Clearview coach Mike Collier. "But give a lot of credit to Columbia. They have a tremendous offense. They spread you out and their quarterback gets the ball away quickly."

AVON LAKE 42 | AMHERST 3



LINDA MURPHY / CHRONICLE

Avon Lake's Mike Haddad gets around Amherst's defense Friday.

Shore set for Week 11

Roger Negin
The Chronicle-Telegram

AMHERST — With a potent one-two rushing punch, a strong-armed quarterback and a smothering defense, Avon Lake looks ready for the high school football playoffs.

Before taking the field for the first week of the postseason in Division II, the Shoremen capped off a 10-0 regular season and a Southwestern Conference championship with a 42-3 win over a game, but outmanned Amherst team on a rainy Friday night.

"The conference title is back where it's supposed to be," said Avon Lake quarterback Nick Firmont, who threw for 191 yards and three touchdowns, two to Ryan Scherer. "It feels great."

A year ago the Shoremen missed the conference title and the playoffs with a rare three-loss season, but this year Avon Lake came all the way back.

"For the seniors this is the culmination of three years' hard work," said Avon Lake coach Dave Dlugosz. "But

everybody on this team contributed."

Avon Lake rolled up 444 yards and held Amherst to 156, only 36 yards and two first downs (one by penalty) in the second half.

"Avon Lake is a very good football team," said Amherst coach Kevin Fell, whose club finished 4-6. "They're physical, tough and well-coached. They hit us in places where we weren't strong. We couldn't move the football; their defense was as good as we've seen. We couldn't counter or run off tackle."

"Our defense shut them down," said Avon Lake fullback Mike Haddad, who rushed for 128 yards and scored twice, one on a pass from Firmont. "We just had one breakdown."

That was a 45-yard pass play from John Salter to Brandon Kirsh that carried to the Avon Lake 6, but the Shoremen wouldn't allow a touchdown, only a 25-yard field goal by David Cantu.

By that time Avon Lake had a three-touchdown lead, the first

two coming in the space of 46 seconds of the first quarter.

Avon Lake scored on its second play from scrimmage when Firmont hit Scherer with a 53-yard touchdown pass. Scherer ran a post-corner and got behind the secondary to haul in the pass. The extra point missed but it was 6-0 less than two minutes into the game.

Less than a minute later, end Sean Oxley deflected a Salter pass, which was intercepted by Dave Henderson and returned for a touchdown.

"The defensive touchdown changed the momentum for us," said Haddad.

Avon Lake was in control in the second half, scoring twice on 65-yard drives and once on a 48-yard drive.

"Haddad is a great football player," Fell said. "And their quarterback did a great job. Those two did a great job. We've had too many injuries and it caught up to us tonight. I really felt if we'd stayed healthy, we'd have been playing for a conference championship tonight."

WELLINGTON 62 | OBERLIN 6

Big plays spark Dukes

Hans Schneider
The Chronicle-Telegram

OBERLIN — If NBC, home of the self-promoted "Must-See TV" Thursday lineup, was broadcasting Friday night's Patriot Athletic Conference matchup between Wellington and Oberlin, the theme would have been a no-brainer — Big-Play Friday.

After all, Wellington (6-4, 5-2 PAC) had six scoring plays of more than 35 yards and 633 yards of offense en route to a 62-6 drubbing of Oberlin.

The Dukes, who stumbled the past two weeks to fall out of the conference championship race, rumbled from the start, scoring on its first two possession to take a 14-0 lead.

Wellington's first score came on a 35-yard run by junior Jerry Herman with 8:55 left in the first quarter. Seventy-eight seconds later, following an Oberlin turnover on downs, quarterback Kull McClurg found Austen Gray for a 45-yard scoring strike.

"We hit a couple of bumps the past two weeks," said McClurg, who showed no ill effects of an elbow injury suffered against Brookside last week. "We wanted to come out tonight and set the tone for the game right away."

McClurg's feet were responsible for the Dukes' third big scoring play — a 47-yard run with 1:29 left in the opening quarter. A McClurg-to-Erick

Saunders 55-yard hookup with 6:18 left in the half upped the Dukes lead to 28-0.

Wellington led 35-0 when Oberlin (4-6, 1-6) finally got on the board with eight seconds left in the half. A six-play, 44-yard drive culminated in an Austin Pinkston-to-Kris Robinson pass from 9 yards out.

Wellington's last two big plays came in the fourth quarter. An 89-yard sprint by Steve Simonson and a 40-yard run by Austin Fullen rounded out the scoring.

"We came out ready to play tonight," said Dukes coach Matt Stoll. "The last two games were frustrating for all of us. But we had a great week of practice and all the kids had their heads up. They showed a lot of character this week and it gives us something to build on for next year."

Despite the lopsided loss, Phoenix coach Dave McFarland was pleased with his first year at the helm.

"I actually feel pretty good tonight," said McFarland. "We played tough, we played with pride and we kept our heads up. We played a lot of younger guys tonight and they all played hard."

"Building a program up means taking some lumps sometimes. We'll learn from this game and this season as a whole. I really think we can be a hell of a good football team next year."

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AVON 20 | BAY 0

Harrell leads Avon

Steve Byrne
The Chronicle-Telegram

BAY VILLAGE — The flags were flying at Bela Molnar Stadium on Friday night — 21 of them, to be exact.

"We only had one personal foul call on us all year," Bay coach Mike Peregord said. "Tonight we must have had six of them."

There were actually four personal foul penalties called against the Rockets, but there were also three illegal blocks, two defensive pass interferences, an offside, an illegal procedure and a penalty for illegally helping the ball carrier.

"I don't know what it was," Peregord said. "Maybe it was last-game frustrations. We never got more than two or three penalties a game. There were penalties I'd never seen before."

But if all the penalty flags need not be saluted, the effort of Marquis Harrell should be. Harrell ran for 161 yards on 26 carries and scored two touchdowns as Avon defeated Bay 20-0 in a West Shore Conference game.

Harrell, a junior, had 88 of his yards on 15 carries after halftime, when Avon (6-4, 4-3 WSC) needed them the most. The Eagles had to play without another outstanding junior, quarterback Ryan O'Rourke, after O'Rourke suffered an undisclosed injury late in the

second quarter and did not return.

Harrell scored on a 14-yard run in the second, then gave the Eagles a 14-0 lead with a 26-yard touchdown run with 8:18 to play.

The victory allowed Mike Elder, Avon's first-year head coach, to go out on a high note.

"We ended the season on a three-game winning streak," Elder said. "We have to feel good about that. Having Marquis and Ryan back next year is something to build on, but we're going to miss a lot of great seniors."

Peregord also ended his first season with the Rockets, although without the happy feelings Elder got. Bay was 1-9 and 1-6 in the WSC.

"They've been a good group," Peregord said. "They worked hard and they got better. People say we're young, but if you don't improve, being young, it means nothing. Being young isn't an excuse."

Avon secured the victory with 1:28 remaining as Mike Simon, a 270-pound offensive lineman, was put in at fullback and pushed his way across the goal line from less than a yard out.

DELAYED GRATIFICATION: Bay replaced its grass field with synthetic grass this season. The Rockets have yet to win on their new surface.

VERMILION 21 | FIRELANDS 0

Sailors glide to shutout

Paul Heyse
The Chronicle-Telegram

HENRIETTA TWP. — Senior quarterback Ryan Hurd equaled a season-high three touchdown passes and the Sailors defense pitched a shutout as Vermilion downed Firelands 21-0 on Friday night.

It was the 16th year in a row Vermilion (6-4, 5-2 West Shore Conference) defeated Firelands. The Falcons (1-9, 1-6) haven't beaten the Sailors since a 15-14 win in 1992 at Vermilion.

Vermilion's defense set the table for two of the Sailors' three touchdowns.

Linebacker Derek Barbato recovered a Firelands fumble at the Falcons 27-yard line in the first quarter, and lineman Travis Johnson jumped on a loose ball at the Falcons 16 during the third quarter. Vermilion scored two plays after

the first Firelands mistake and needed only one play to convert after the second.

"Firelands dramatically improved from the past couple years," said Hurd. "I prepared for this game just as I would any other one. The rest of the team did, too. We knew we had a challenge tonight. They came out and gave us that challenge. It's a good win overall, especially for the seniors."

Firelands' best chance came late in the first half.

A fake field-goal try off a 26-yard attempt left Firelands a yard short of the end zone. Junior Matt Deichler connected with sophomore Josh Hagg for a 9-yard pass, but the Falcons needed the touchdown on the play, which came on fourth-and-10 from the Sailors 10.

"The defense really came to play tonight," said Vermilion coach Frank Horvath. "It was

a solid game, what can I say? We had some seniors step it up like Ryan Hurd, Travis Johnson and Derrick Dillon."

Firelands, which snapped a 25-game losing streak earlier in the season, was hoping to paste on another win to close out the season. It simply wasn't to be.

"We played good in pieces," said Firelands coach Rock Farlow. "But we could not put anything together for any length of time. We just have to get better doing what we do. Typically, we'd run two good plays and then have a bad one. In football, it's four downs and a dime. That two good, one bad doesn't work."

DROUGHT OVER: Vermilion ended a streak of nine losing seasons — the Sailors' last winning season was in 1997 when they finished 9-1.

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LAKEWOOD 27 | ELYRIA 0

Rough year ends with loss

Tim Gebhardt
The Chronicle-Telegram

ELYRIA — A number of firsts were recorded Friday night at Ely Stadium.

Unfortunately, they were all negative as far as the Elyria Pioneers were concerned.

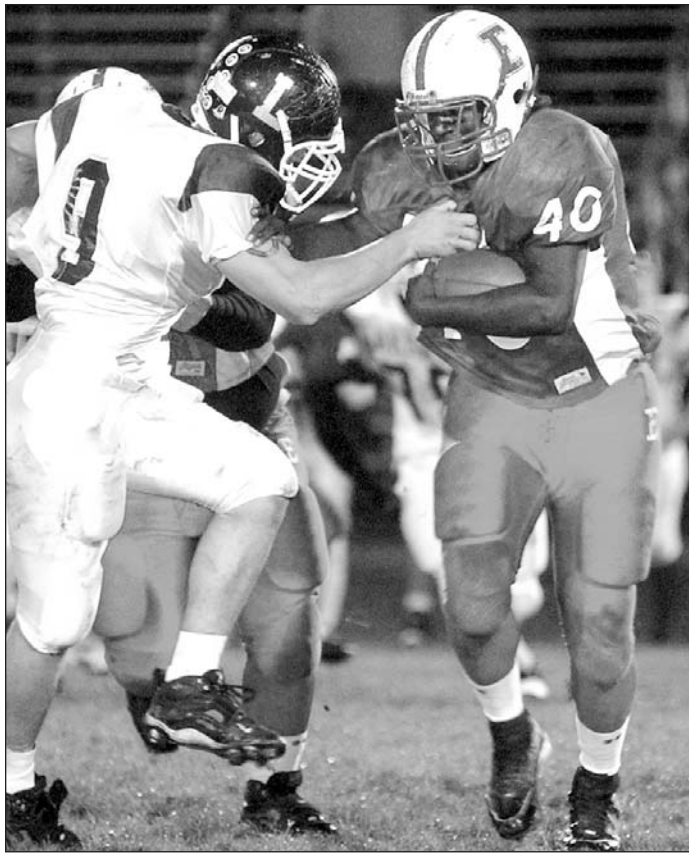
Lakewood beat Elyria 27-0 in front of a sparse crowd to put the wraps on a 1-9 season, the most losses in the Pioneers' 114-year history.

Elyria finished the 1950 and 1941 seasons 1-8 and didn't win a game in 1911 (0-6-2) or 1903 (0-4-2). But never had an Elyria team lost nine times in the same year. In its infant days, Elyria High didn't win a game in 1897, 1898, 1899 or 1902 but played only once or twice during those seasons.

Elyria was torched for 364 points this year — the most it's ever given up. The shutout was the first since losing 7-0 at North Olmsted to open the 2004 season.

First-year coach Steve Hamilton knew he was in for a tough year with only a handful of lettermen returning, but he couldn't have imagined it being this rough.

Elyria joined the Northeast Ohio Conference this season and just didn't match up physically with the likes of



STEVE MANHEIM / CHRONICLE

Elyria's Greg Davison gets away from Lakewood's Kenny Kinder on Friday in the first quarter of Lakewood's win.

Brunswick, Solon or Strongsville. Elyria's only win came at the expense of Marion Harding, a team with just one victory itself.

Hamilton did play a lot of underclassmen in hopes the experience will bear fruit in the next year or two.

"These younger kids hope-

fully learned a life lesson," Hamilton said. "Nothing comes easy. They had the mentality that they were going to give 100 percent all the time. Our kids kept firing off but we just got beat around a little bit, to be honest. You have to be stronger to compete in this league."

The difference Friday wasn't really 27 points. Lakewood's first touchdown came on a fourth-down pass play and the Rangers nursed a 6-0 lead late into the third quarter. However, Elyria couldn't sustain anything offensively and eventually was unable to convert a couple of fourth-down situations that set up short drives for Lakewood.

Junior Greg Davison led the offense with 59 yards on 13 carries and senior safety Greg Shotwell — as he's done all year — gave it all he had on defense.

"Greg Shotwell does a great job of motivating the kids," said Hamilton. "He was one of our leaders. The seniors have to be hurting."

LOTS OF SOPHS: Hamilton is hoping by taking his lumps this year, it'll pay off for Elyria in the next couple. Hamilton, in his first year, had five sophomores start against Lakewood and brought a number of others off the bench.

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ROUNDUP

Lutheran West outscores 'Canes

ROCKY RIVER — Lutheran West spotted Brooklyn an early 6-0 lead before scoring 44 unanswered points en route to a 44-30 victory over the Hurricanes in a Patriot Athletic Conference Stripes Division game Friday night.

Seniors Josh Malave, Dave Krieger and James Ziegen each scored two touchdowns for the Longhorns (7-3, 4-3 PAC). Ziegen had 190 rushing yards, while Malave had 143 and Krieger added 46.

Freshman Brad Watson had five PAT kicks and added a 25-yard field goal for the Longhorns.

Buckeye 42, Brookside 0

SHEFFIELD — Six players scored a touchdown for the Bucks (6-4, 6-1 PAC), who claimed the Patriot Athletic Conference Stars Division championship.

The Cardinals (2-8, 1-6 PAC) could muster only 82 yards of offense, 68 rushing

and 14 passing, as they completed only one of 10 attempts and had three passes picked off by Buckeye's defense.

Brookside got only seven first downs and was victimized by three lost fumbles.

Westlake 14, Brecksville 12

BRECKSVILLE — Senior running back Jimmy Abed's touchdown runs of 15 and 49 yards in the third quarter lifted the Demons (4-6, 3-4 SWC) against the defending Southwestern Conference champions.

Rocky River 49, Fairview 18

FAIRVIEW PARK — The Pirates (10-0, 7-0 WSC) scored three touchdowns each in the first and second quarters as the West Shore Conference champions completed an unbeaten regular season and assured themselves of hosting a first-round playoff game.

MIDVIEW

From B1

"Then this last week we lost our starting quarterback, Adam Koubek, and running back Kevin Allen. The way these young men stepped up speaks volumes of the way they have survived. I'm just very proud of them."

For North Ridgeville (7-3, 4-3 WSC) it was another disappointing end to another fine season. Midview ended North Ridgeville's 2006 season the same way.

"Ranger Pride is here," coach Jeff Riesen said. "We lost the game, but I think our kids played their hearts out on the field and I can't be prouder of them. When (Midview) scored that third touchdown, we could have just packed it in, but instead we went right down the field for a

score to make it 20-14.

"The senior class came together and led this team to a respectable season. Yes, we finished 7-3 and were hoping for better, but when you play as well as we did there are a lot of little things that we can reflect on and look on fondly."

The first quarter saw both teams score on their first possessions and then settle in for a defensive struggle. The weather turned rainy and created problems for the offenses as the field turned into a pile of mud.

BACKUPS NEEDED: The matchup saw both teams use backup quarterbacks. Koubek went down last week with a concussion for the Middies, and North Ridgeville lost Eric Proszek on Friday with an injury to his left arm, the same one he broke last year.

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KEYSTONE

From B1

in the locker room before this game. 'Hey, we started our program as winners when we were little and we're going to end it as winners.

"Before every game, everyone says, 'Hey, man, I care about you,' just so we know we're going to be together if we win or if we lose," said Robinson.

The game got off to a rainy, slippery start. Each team turned the ball over twice in the first 3:16. The Pirates added a third when they fumbled away a punt after forcing Keystone into a fourth-and-15 headache at their

45. It was the opportunity the Wildcats needed. Two plays later, Robinson ran for his first touchdown late in the period and Keystone (5-2 in the PAC) took a 7-0 lead when Tim Beverage kicked the extra point.

Black River got back in it on its next possession when Seth Rowan scored on a 4-yard pass from Anthony O'Connor. And the Pirates took a 12-7 lead three minutes later after recovering a Keystone fumble at their 30. Rowan, who got loose for 43 yards on the fourth play of the five-play drive, scored from a yard.

"I think after that, we remembered what a good football team we are and played like we did

the rest of the year," said Wildcats coach Rob Clarico. "We just started playing like we knew we could play."

The Wildcats put together a well-executed drive to end the half, covering 75 yards in 17 plays — and which fell less than a yard short of a touchdown when they couldn't punch the ball in as the clock ran down.

But they regained the lead on their first possession of the third quarter on Carl Walter's 18-yard run and a three-man pass play that was drawn for two on the conversion. Quarterback Mike Herb threw a pass intended for Tyler Minnich. It was a little high and the ball skimmed off Minnich's fingertips. Fortuitously,

Kyle Shaw was not far away and caught the tipped ball for two extra points.

Keystone put it away when Robinson ran 9 yards for a touchdown in the last three minutes of the period.

"Shane is a tremendous athlete and it's nice to have someone like him back there if things aren't going well," Clarico said.

TRACKING TRAINS: Six trains, whose loud blasts and rumbling freight cars regularly interrupt Keystone football games, blasted by on the tracks south of the stadium during the game. That's one train fewer than Wildcats fumbles. One train made noise during the pregame Seniors Night ceremony.

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