



LOOKING AHEAD TO WEEK 4

Midview at Firelands, Friday, 7:30 p.m., WOBL 1320-AM

The West Shore Conference opener features a pair of teams coming off big victories Friday night. Firelands beat Keystone 27-21 to improve to

2-1. The Falcons beat Brookside in the opener, then were blanked by Smithville in Week 2. The Middies went overtime Friday to beat Buckeye 18-15 and improve to 2-1. Midview edged Warrensville Heights 8-7 in Week 1, then lost to Amherst, the No. 1 team in the C-T poll, in Week 2. Firelands is one of the season's best stories under first-year coach Todd Pooch. The Falcons went just 1-9 last year, 1-6 in the WSC.

The Middies stopped Firelands 28-0 last season on their way to an 8-2 (5-2) record and playoff appearance. Midview is chasing its first WSC title and can't afford an early season slip versus Firelands. But if the Falcons can pull an upset, they will certainly join the group of contenders for the league title.

Other games of interest in Week 4: Amherst at Olmsted Falls; Clearview at Buckeye; Avon at Fairview; Lutheran West at Wellington.



CARDINAL MOONEY 59 | ELYRIA CATHOLIC 14

Mooney too strong, fast for Panthers

Shaun Bennett
The Chronicle-Telegram

YOUNGSTOWN — When a Cardinal Mooney running back burst through the Elyria Catholic defensive line during Friday night's game, the Cardinals didn't just look fast spurting through the gaps, they looked as if they were shot out of a cannon.

Ray Vinopal rolled off the right end and streaked 73 yards down the sideline for a touchdown, Braylon Heard took a pitch to the right side and used a cutback move to the middle of the field for a 45-yard score and Karrington Griffin — standing

just 5-foot-6 and 165 pounds — looked like he was covered in grease as he slipped out of tackles and through seams in the defense to lead the Cardinals with 131 rushing yards.

The result was 11 Cardinal Mooney players combining for 462 yards and six touchdowns on the ground as the Division IV juggernaut rolled to a 59-14 victory over the Panthers.

"A few of those guys were on the 400-meter relay team that won a state championship last year," Cardinals coach P.J. Fecko. "Yeah, I'd say those guys are pretty quick."

Not that speed was the only reason the Cardinals were able to gain huge chunks of yardage throughout the game.

"Their offensive line was huge," Elyria Catholic defensive tackle Tom O'Malley said. "We haven't seen a line that big."

The size, the speed, the strength, the tradition ... all reasons Cardinal Mooney came away with a victory and all reasons the Panthers were excited to make the 90-mile drive.

"They are what we want to be," Panthers coach Ben Malbasa said. "We have to play teams like that if we hope to be

better. None of the players or coaches are particularly happy with the results, but I'm proud of the way our players kept fighting for four quarters of football."

Cardinal Mooney (2-1) built a 52-0 lead through three quarters before Elyria Catholic (2-1) finally ruined the shutout bid. Sophomore quarterback Danny Reaser, who played most of the game after senior Vince Scarpelli got banged up a bit on the first drive, led the Panthers on a 14-play, 78-yard scoring drive that was capped by sophomore running back Danny Davila's

1-yard dive into the end zone.

After Mooney scored again, junior running back Alex Alicea scored from 7 yards out for the Panthers' final touchdown.

"Elyria Catholic is an aggressive football team and they are going to win plenty of games this year," Fecko said. "I think our key so far is that we've been able to gain a lot of experience very quickly, and we've gotten better each and every week."

The Cardinals lost several key players from last year's state runner-up squad, but they began the season with Division I Mentor (a close loss) and Cov-

ington Catholic from Kentucky (a blowout win) to help their young players mature.

"The more you can load up your schedule, the better your football team is going to be in the long run," Fecko said.

The Panthers are counting on it.

GOOD TIMING: Rain fell steadily during the trip from Elyria to Youngstown, absolutely poured during halftime and began to drizzle again after the final whistle. But somehow both halves of football managed to get played between the bursts of bad weather.

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A. LAKE

From D1

until an injury to Mike Mansnerus forced the move to tailback. Mares has certainly responded.

"Keep in mind, Steve Mares is not our starting tailback," Dlugosz said. "He runs for 216 (222) this week and I think he ran for 182 last week. We're getting some pretty good production out of him."

"The offensive line played a huge role," Mares said after his five-touchdown, 222-yard performance. "Without them, there's no way."

Avon Lake finished with nearly 500 yards of offense and 21 first downs. It punted just twice.

"Give the kids the credit for that," Dlugosz said. "You can put in all the schemes you want but unless you execute it, it really doesn't make a difference."

Avon Lake set the stage with a 10-play, 70-yard drive at the outset, but only Dan Ohlemacher's point-after was the difference once Neushaffer returned the ensuing kick 72 yards to the 18-yard line to set up Elyria's first score.

The Pioneers answered again following Mares' second TD with sophomore Jake Neushaffer — Nolan's little brother — blocking the extra point. Elyria drove 71 yards in 13 plays with the senior Nolan dashing in for the final 4 yards. Dan Poskocil hooked up with D.J. Hallauer for the 2-point conversion to put the Pioneers on top.

However, Avon Lake took advantage of a late-hit penalty to keep another drive alive that was capped by Pete Hart's 28-yard scoring strike to Ryan Kirkpatrick. Then, after stopping Elyria on downs at its 35 with just over two minutes left before intermission, the Shoremen quickly scored the knockout on a nine-play drive that Mares finished with a 10-yard run that left only 11.4 seconds in the first half.

"We were doing some things offensively the first half," Elyria coach Steve Hamilton said. "These kids are working their butts off. It's a little frustrating for me because they are working hard."

FAST COMPANY: The five-touchdown performance put Mares in some pretty good company as far as scoring against the Pioneers. Tony Fischer of Euclid (1997), Greg Pruitt Jr. of Shaker Heights (2001) and Johnny Karason of Lorain (1952) all had five-TD nights versus Elyria. The record is six touchdowns scored last year by Strongsville's Eric Stoyanoff.

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FALCONS

From D1

credit," Pooch said. "We went with full pads on Monday. I told them it was Labor Day and we were going to do some labor. I've never seen a team come out that hard on a Monday. The linemen were teeing off on one another. I told them at the end, 'Boys, you put all that work in and we're winning it with you right now.'"

Still, at the beginning, the Wildcats seemed prepared to repeat last year's blowout. Taking the opening kickoff, they

OBERLIN 29 | NEWBURY 12



CARL SULLENBERGER / CHRONICLE

Oberlin's Dorian Pretlow blocks a punt by Newbury on Friday that sets up the Phoenix's first touchdown.

So far, so perfect for Phoenix

Joel Hammond
The Chronicle-Telegram

OBERLIN — For the second straight year, Oberlin is 3-0 after the first act of its season, non-conference games.

This year, though, the Phoenix is hoping for an encore — not a box-office flop — in Act II.

Oberlin eventually dispatched pesky Newbury, which dressed 14 — yes, 14 — players, 29-12 on Friday night. The Phoenix, like last year, has opened with wins over Ashtabula Sts. John and Paul, Lutheran East and the Black Knights, who fell to 0-3.

Now comes the tough part: the Patriot Athletic Conference, in which the Phoenix last year followed its hot start with a 1-6 mark. Oberlin plays at Black River on Friday, then plays host to Keystone and Columbia, three opponents to which the Phoenix lost by a combined 121-71 last season.

"We are confident, but we have to take it one game at a time," said junior running back Aaron James, who ran for 50 yards, including a 33-yard touchdown. "We were at this same point last year. We have to step it up, because we have tough conference games coming up and we have to get serious."

The road ahead will be tough for Oberlin, and Newbury cut the Phoenix little slack, despite the Black Knights' numeri-

Oberlin 3-0 again, looking for better finish this season

cal deficiency. Trailing 22-6, Newbury forced a Phoenix three-and-out with 3:40 left, and scored six plays and 1:18 later on a 29-yard touchdown pass from Kyle Chapman to Miles Miller. After the Black Knights' inside kick try failed, they recovered an Oberlin fumble at midfield. Newbury moved to the Oberlin 15 after two Chapman runs and a 10-yard pass aided by a Phoenix personal foul penalty, but Oberlin's Jeris Geiger ended the suspense, intercepting a flailing Chapman pass and returning it 90 yards for the clinching touchdown.

The Black Knights outgained Oberlin, 297-182. Chapman ran for 64 yards, threw for 85 and caught a 25-yard touchdown pass from Jordan Munn.

"Remember where (we've) been," said Phoenix coach Dave McFarland, alluding to the Phoenix's 11-71 record since 2000. "There are a lot of years of frustration here. We have to continue to believe. Each time we win, we get a little more confident, and that's the key in high school."

marched 69 yards in 13 plays to score just past the six-minute mark of the first quarter.

Quarterback Tyler Minnich found tight end Matt Herb over the middle and the big senior bulled over the goal line for the score. After an exchange of fumbles in the second period, Kyle Smith scored from the 1-yard line to put Keystone up 14-0 with 6:36 left in the half.

Meanwhile, the Falcons had been able to manage only one first down and 10 yards of offense. But junior quarterback Jared O'Keefe, who didn't start the game, completed a 27-yard

touchdown to Matt Deichler. Suddenly the home team was back in the game, 14-7, just 45 seconds before the half.

The O'Keefe-Deichler combination struck again midway through the third period. The Wildcats' Kyle Smith nearly broke up a pass only to see it bounce away to Deichler, who gathered it in and rambled 59 yards for his second touchdown and a 14-all tie.

Two touchdown receptions were an interesting contribution from a player who started the game at quarterback.

"We wanted to get them by surprise," Pooch said about

starting Deichler at quarterback. "Matt's a talented athlete and we thought he could do that. But we brought Jared in later. This is only his third start but he's growing up tremendously."

Keystone was hampered by the loss of running back Jim Reid, who suffered a shoulder injury in the loss to South Central last week. The 5-foot-7 Reid gave the Wildcats an outside threat that was lacking against Firelands.

"Reid's speed is electrifying and really helps on the sweep," Keystone coach Rob Clarico said. "But I really think after our first game (a 37-7 victory

over Monroeville) teams are determined not to let us sweep on them. That play just isn't there for us right now and we have to pound it in."

Kyle Smith definitely pounded it in as he picked up 77 very tough yards on 26 carries on the way to his two scores for Keystone.

SLIPPERY WHEN WET: The rain seemed to affect both teams during the first half. The Falcons dropped the ball three times and the Wildcats four. It isn't often that a team can fumble three times on a single drive and still score, but Keystone pulled off that feat on its first possession.

ROUNDUP

Falls grabs 1st win

OLMSTED TWP. — Olmsted Falls' John Atkinson completed 8-of-12 passes for 112 yards and two touchdowns to lead the Bulldogs to a 21-14 non-conference victory over previously unbeaten Mayfield on Friday night.

Robbie Van Zandt caught four of Atkinson's passes for 62 yards, including a TD catch of 8 yards.

North Olmsted 22, Lakewood 0

LAKEWOOD — Damien Kirks had 23 carries for 157 yards and touchdown runs of 3 and 2 yards for the Eagles (2-1).

Pat Tomko scored the third touchdown on a 4-yard run as the Eagles had a 293-73 advantage in total offense.

Bay 13, Toledo Libbey 7

BAY VILLAGE — The Rockets had a 78-yard kick return and added field goals of 16 and 20 yards to come away with their first win.

Rocky River 21, Westlake 20 (2 OT)

ROCKY RIVER — The Demons (2-1) failed to convert a 2-point conversion run following the game's last touchdown.

Jacob Kutz, Hanford Dixon and Jimmy Campbell had rushing touchdowns for Westlake against its former Southwestern Conference rival.

Clearview 34, Fairview 6

FAIRVIEW PARK — Anthony Hitchens had touchdown runs of 7, 32 and 14 yards for the Clippers (3-0) and also returned a fumble 33 yards for a fourth touchdown. Hitchens finished the game with 22 carries for 201 yards.

Edison 27, Wellington 26

EDISON — The Dukes (0-3) led a 26-7 lead slip away as the Chargers (3-0) scored three unanswered touchdowns in the fourth quarter.

Austin Gray scored two of Wellington's touchdowns on runs of 27 and 3 yards.

Highland 48, Brookside 7

MEDINA — The Hornets (3-0) led 42-0 at halftime before Rocky Radeff ran 45 yards for the lone touchdown for the Cardinals (0-3) with 8:40 left to play in the third quarter.

Manchester 50, Black River 12

SULLIVAN — The Pirates (0-3) gave up 44 unanswered points after leading 6-0 less than two minutes into the game.

Matt Joppeck scored Black River's touchdowns on runs of 67 and 17 yards.

Independence 32, Lutheran West 21

ROCKY RIVER — The Blue Devils scored 24 unanswered points for their first win after they trailed Lutheran West 15-8 in the second quarter.

Paul Fackler had touchdown passes of 14, 74 and 25 yards for the Longhorns (2-1).

Avon 42, Columbia 6

COLUMBIA STATION — Ryan O'Rourke threw touchdown passes of 6 and 29 yards to Garrett Gronowski and also ran 36 yards for a third touchdown for the Eagles (3-0). The Eagles did all of their scoring in the first three quarters before Anthony Jaeger caught a TD pass from John Banyasz for Columbia (0-3).

Cloverleaf 31, Southview 7

LODI — Anthony Browning recovered a fumble in the end zone for the touchdown for the Saints (1-2).