

LOOKING AHEAD TO WEEK 10

**Amherst at Avon Lake,
Friday, 7:30 p.m.
WEOL 930-AM**

The winner of this longtime rivalry gets to celebrate at least a share of the Southwestern

Conference championship.

The loser is left to wonder what could've been. Avon Lake (7-2) and Amherst (8-1) are 5-1 in the SWC heading into the finale. The Comets were knocked from their perfect perch by Brecksville on Friday night.

Brecksville (6-3), which also handed Avon Lake its SWC loss, is also 5-1 in the league and will be a big favorite against Westlake (2-7, 0-6) in Week 10. So Amherst and Avon Lake are likely left to battle for a co-championship and precious points

in the computer rankings. Entering Friday night, Amherst was third in Division I, Region 2 and Avon Lake was sixth in Division II, Region 6. The top eight teams in each region make the playoffs.

The Shoremen beat the Comets 42-3 in 2007 to finish an unbeaten regular season. The Comets haven't beaten Avon Lake since a 33-13 win in 2000.

Other games of interest in Week 10: North Ridgeville at Midview; Bay at Avon; Southview at Admiral King (Saturday).



AVON LAKE 31

WESTLAKE 14

Shoremen roll, ready for showdown

Chris Assenheimer
The Chronicle-Telegram

AVON LAKE — Looking ahead was not an issue for Avon Lake on Friday night. Now, it's a priority for the Shoremen.

With a workmanlike 31-14 victory over Westlake, Avon Lake improved to 7-2 overall and 5-1 in the Southwestern Conference, remaining on a collision course with Amherst for a regular season-ending showdown that will have league title ramifications.

Both teams can clinch a share of the SWC championship with a victory, as can Brecksville, which

upset previously unbeaten Amherst on Friday, throwing the Comets' SWC title hopes in limbo as they prepare to travel to Shoremen country for another pivotal Week 10 matchup.

"It's going to be a big one. Everything's on the line," said coach Dave Dlugosz, whose Shoremen have won 10 of the last 11 SWC titles. Brecksville won in 2006. "We're going to have six grand in the stands. I know our kids are looking forward to it and I'm sure (the Comets) are, too."

"That's what you want to do, play big games at the end of the

season."

The Shoremen earned the right to play for the title and an impending playoff appearance by staying focused on the task at hand — a Westlake team that entered the game winless in the conference and with an overall record of 2-6. Avon Lake scored the first 21 points, then added 10 more after the Demons scored their first touchdown with 4:06 left in the opening half.

It was a typical Avon Lake victory, with the Shoremen doing the majority of their damage on the ground behind junior running

back Mike Mansnerus, who had yet another big night. On the heels of consecutive 300-plus-yard games — the last (369 yards) to set a single-game school record (third most in Lorain County) — Mansnerus rushed for 224 yards and two touchdowns.

Of Avon Lake's 410 yards in offense, 357 came on the ground, with the Shoremen nearly doubling Westlake's total yardage.

"We came out and did our thing," said senior fullback/linebacker Cody Bennington, who scored Avon Lake's first points on an 8-yard run.

The Demons found most of their offensive success through the air, especially in the final quarter, when they went to an extreme version of the spread offense and were able to march down the field behind quarterback Scott Bishop to score the game's final TD with seven minutes remaining. Bishop threw for 165 yards and accounted for both Westlake touchdowns, one on a 40-yard strike to Nick Lowe, the other on a 9-yard run.

Bishop threw almost exclusively to Lowe, a senior wideout who accounted for all but two of

the Demons' receptions, hauling in 10 passes for 153 yards.

"They're a very good football team, but I really like how our kids played," said Westlake coach Mark Hollars.

The Shoremen have been vulnerable to the pass all season.

"That's been our Achilles' heel all season," Dlugosz said. "We know it, (the Comets) know it."

GENTLEMANLIKE GESTURE: During a second-quarter run, Mansnerus inadvertently knocked down a photographer on the track behind Westlake's sideline. Mansnerus showed his compassion by helping the man to his feet before returning to the huddle.

MIDVIEW 21

BAY 7

Holt paces victory

Steve Byrne
The Chronicle-Telegram

BAY VILLAGE — The first quarter Friday night was a breeze.

Midview and Bay ran 24 plays. Each team scored a touchdown. Josiah Holt ran with authority. Brendan Rehor passed with equal brilliance. No fumbles. No penalties.

Then things got ugly. They got sloppy. They got nasty.

Midview prevailed, 21-7, in a game that had little to recommend it after the first 13 minutes or so. The teams combined for 21 penalties for 211 yards, with eight of those penalties being personal fouls and one an unsportsmanlike conduct. Midview was flagged 14 times for 133 yards. The Middies had 13 penalties in the second and third quarters.

"That's not us," Midview coach Bill Albright said. "It was ugly on both sides. We'll have to look at the film and see exactly how things transpired. But it was a very emotional game and emotions got the better of people."

Bay had the turnovers issues. The Rockets fumbled four times and gave away possession twice, including one that resulted in a touchdown. Bay also suffered the game's only interception.

The win improved Midview to 5-4 and 3-3 in the West Shore Conference. Bay dropped to 2-7 and 1-5 in the WSC.

On the bright side, Holt had an outstanding game with 199 yards rushing, 48 yards receiving and two touchdowns — one running and another receiving.

"He's starting to get a little more healthy each week," Albright said. "He had a great push from the offensive line and good blocking by our fullback."

Another positive for Midview was that it took the Middies only 28 seconds and five plays to score the go-ahead touchdown with 58 seconds to play in the first half. Ryan Hengartner recovered Rehor's fumble at the Midview 47 with 1:26 remaining. Brett Whitesel completed a 20-yard pass to Holt and a 26-yarder to him for the TD.

Bay stopped Midview on fourth down at the 1-yard line, but two plays later Rehor fumbled and Mark Borsz recovered in the end zone, giving the Middies a 21-7 lead with 37 seconds left in the third quarter.

"We came out in the second half with more enthusiasm," Albright said. "We started to feed off that and we controlled the game much better."

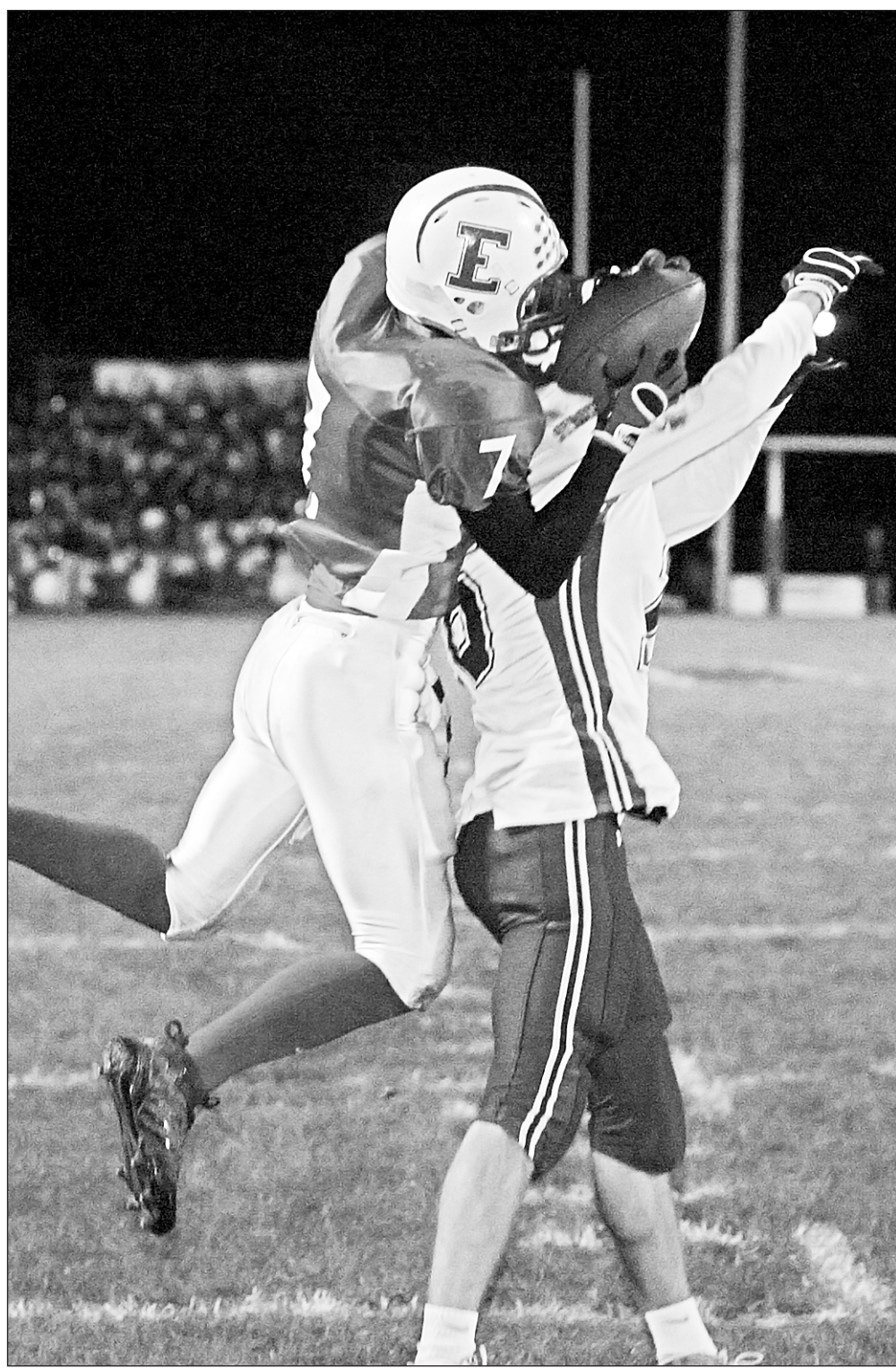
Holt gained 62 yards on seven carries as Midview scored on the game's opening possession. Bay came right back as Rehor completed three passes for 53 yards, the last one an 18-yard TD to Bryan Boss that put Rehor over 1,000 yards passing.

WILL IT EVER END? Midview and Bay ran 13 plays in the final 1:51 of the first half. Nine passes were attempted (four completed). Further slowing the action were five penalties.

Contact Steve Byrne at 329-7135 or ctsports@chroniclet.com.

STRONGSVILLE 49

ELYRIA 27



CHUCK HUMEL / CHRONICLE

Elyria's D.J. Hallauer makes a touchdown grab over Strongsville's Jeff Hajdin.

Pioneers fight, fall

Tim Gebhardt
The Chronicle-Telegram

ELYRIA — One thing's for certain when talking about Elyria's football team this year. It won't quit.

Elyria came out on the short end Friday to powerful, play-off-bound Strongsville, 49-27, but it didn't stop fighting until the bitter end. Travis Noble scored on the last play from scrimmage to finish with 199 yards on the ground and three touchdowns. Noble epitomizes Elyria's plight this season, playing both ways with a lot of heart and desire with little to show for it on the scoreboard.

"Everybody was hyped for the seniors," said Noble, playing his last game on the Ely Stadium turf. "It's all we got left. The team played well, we came together and put up a fight. That's all we can ask for."

Noble, D.J. Hallauer, Nolan Neuschaefer, Dan Poskocil, Tom Merrill, Greg Davison, John Reynolds, Brett Godfrey and Brian Perry pulled on their red home uniforms for the last time, joined by classmate Ryan Smith on crutches.

The spirited effort speaks well for coach Steve Hamilton, whose team has rallied behind its coach in spite of a rash of

injuries, illnesses, disciplinary actions and losses on the field. Elyria is 1-8 heading into next week's finale at Lakewood to follow up last year's 1-9 record.

The Mustangs, winners of eight straight after an opening-night one-point loss at Lakewood St. Edward, lead the Northeast Ohio Conference Valley Division race and can clinch the league crown and a home playoff game with a win against Solon next week.

"I'm proud of the way the kids played," said Hamilton. "It's 21-14 at halftime. Obviously some injuries have hurt us but I don't like making excuses. We just didn't have the horses (Friday). I can't blame the kids. My heart goes out to the seniors."

Elyria's defense couldn't contain Strongsville quarterback Kellen Pagel, son of former Browns quarterback Mike Pagel. He completed seven of 10 passes for 150 yards and three touchdowns before being relieved by John Hamilton for the fourth quarter. Strongsville scored quickly on three of its first four possessions — traveling 59, 63 and 38 yards in just three-, four- and two-play drives to stake its halftime lead.

Elyria answered two of the

three — an 18-yard Poskocil pass to Hallauer and Noble's 1-yard plunge — but the Pioneers couldn't keep up. Strongsville added two more scores early in the third quarter.

Apparently Strongsville coach Russ Jacques felt he couldn't rest his starting runners until the lead grew to 49-21. Matt Bianco and Eric Dworzniak were still running on Strongsville's final offensive series.

"It's a sandwich," said Jacques of playing Elyria. "It's right between Brunswick and Solon for us. We're just coming off an emotional game for us (Brunswick). We knew it. You watch (Elyria) on film and they have athletes, they play hard and we knew we would take their best shot."

"I give all the credit in the world to that coaching staff because those kids really have nothing to lose."

ZIP AT ELY: Elyria failed to win a home game for the first time since the 1962 season. The '62 team, however, had one of the more memorable ties in school history when the Pioneers — 1-7-2 for the year — came from 20 points behind to tie state-ranked Sandusky. Elyria's lone win that season came at Lorain to close out the year.

Contact Tim Gebhardt at 329-7135 or ctsports@chroniclet.com.

ADMIRAL KING 58

BEDFORD 27

King overcomes

John Taylor
The Chronicle-Telegram

LORAIN — On this night, nothing would stop the Admiral King Admirals. Nothing.

Not a malfunctioning time clock, weather more suited to the Olympic luge, a second 2008 Flag Day or, more importantly, the Bearcats of Bedford.

Behind the running — again — of Anthony Harrison, and a hat trick of big plays from Vincent Lee, Admiral King rolled to a 58-27 win over Lake Erie League foe Bedford.

"The last three weeks, we've really grown as a team," King coach Mark Campo said. "We're just on a roll."

Rolling was precisely what the Admirals (6-3, 2-1 LEL) did from the outset, jumping out to a 28-0 lead with 3:36 — we think — left in the second quarter.

After a John Gerber 1-yard touchdown run — possible because of a 67-yard run by Harrison earlier in the drive — staked King to a 7-0 lead, Lee made the first of what would be three huge plays.

With (insert time here) left in the first quarter, a Bruce Edwards pass intended for Leon Chambers was tipped by Chambers and another King defender before falling into the arms of Lee. The senior defensive back raced untouched 63 yards for a touchdown and a 14-0 lead.

A 34-yard pitch-and-catch from Chad Hall to Chris Kimbro and the first of Harrison's two touchdowns, this one from 5 yards out, put the Admirals up by a seemingly insurmountable four touchdowns late in the second quarter.

"Harrison's been great for us all year," Campo said of his senior tailback, who totaled 185 yards on 20 carries. "The line's been doing well for us all year, too."

"Seemingly" would be the key word as for the next 11 minutes and in spite of Harrison's efforts, Bedford regrouped and roared back into the game.

On the drive following Harrison's touchdown, two personal fouls on the Admirals and a pair of Edwards completions moved the ball inside the 1-yard line,

where Justin Willis plunged over the right side of the line. The 2-point conversion cut the lead to 28-8 at the half.

Bedford's first drive of the second half saw it cut even further into the lead after a 1-yard Jerrell Hodge run.

On the ensuing kickoff, Darnell Pettis recovered a perfectly executed squib quick and Bedford was back in business again at King's 34-yard line.

Unfortunately for Bedford, so was Lee. The defensive back made the second of his trifecta of game-changing plays.

He took advantage of an overthrown ball at his 2-yard line, thwarting Bedford's scoring attempt and returning it 42 yards to give King some breathing room.

The breathing turned into the holding of breath as three plays after the interception, Michael Taylor fumbled near midfield. The loose ball was picked up by Bedford's Mitchell Kelly and, 46 yards later, King's huge lead had been sliced to 28-21.

"The majority of the game we played with composure. (During that 11-minute stretch) we didn't," Campo said.

The King faithful, though, had nothing to fear as on the first play from scrimmage following the Bedford fumble return, Lee struck again for the third and final time.

And this time, it was a dagger to the visitor's heart. Lee caught a perfectly thrown ball from Hall and raced 80 yards into the end zone, breaking an attempted shoestring tackle at the 10-yard line.

"That play he made changed the momentum. We called his number and he turned the tide back in our favor," Campo said.

HE DID WHAT? On the Admirals' first drive of the game, which started at their 1-yard line following a Nathan McNeal fumble, Harrison ran for 101 yards on eight carries. The senior running back didn't even get to cap the drive with a touchdown as Gerber received the honor from a yard out.

Contact John Taylor at 329-7135 or ctsports@chroniclet.com.

ROUNDUP

Vermilion cruises

VERMILION — Vermilion's Ray Anthony and Jon Hawkins each scored two touchdowns as the Sailors kept their West Shore Conference co-championship hopes alive with a 27-0 victory over Fairview on Friday night.

Anthony opened the scoring with a 9-yard TD run and added a 3-yard touchdown catch from Tim Clark in the second quarter.

Hawkins scored on runs of 5 and 10 yards in the second half for the Sailors (5-4, 5-1).

**Rocky River 21,
Firelands 13**

HENRIETTA TWP. — The Falcons (2-7, 0-6 WSC) were doomed by a 40-yard interception return for Rocky River's (5-4, 3-3) winning points in the fourth quarter. Mitch Hagg scored both of

Firelands' touchdowns on runs of 10 and 3 yards.

**Lutheran West 49,
Columbia 6**

ROCKY RIVER — Sam Lempke caught touchdown passes of 9 and 33 yards from Paul Fackler to lead the Longhorns (6-3, 4-2 PAC), who scored all of their points before Columbia got on the scoreboard.

Zach Stover had 13 carries for 133 yards, and Ty Heinemann had 13 carries for 110 yards for the winners. Brandon Heidinger had a 3-yard touchdown run for the Raiders (1-8, 1-5).

**Midpark 33,
North Olmsted 16**

NORTH OLMSTED — Anthony Meriwether of the Meteors (4-5, 2-4 SWC) had two 86-yard kickoff returns, including one for a touchdown.

Pat Tomko and Damion Kirks had short touchdown runs for the Eagles (4-5, 2-4).