

# MISTAKES DOOM CAVS AS MUSTANGS ROLL 35-7



**Above:** Quarterback Grayson Lambert (1) looks for a Cav receiver from near his own goal line.



**Above:** Deuce Greenhill (0) cuts behind blocks by Jordan Rainey (70), Joseph Gould (71), and Preston Vernon (50) to pick up some of his 81 yards on 14 carries.

## By Ron Barry

When you accumulate a boatload of mistakes, sooner or later your ship is going to sink.

Such was the case this past Friday night when Crockett County's Cavaliers made too many miscues in football game eventually won by Huntingdon 35-7. In what was a battle of two good and touted teams, it was a simple tale of one of them executing well and the other one not.

The contest turned on a late first-half pass interception on a play in which the Cavs had a miscommunication on the route to be run. Quarterback Grayson Lambert threw it to the spot where he thought the receiver would be, but his intended wideout was headed in another direction. The only player in the path of the throw was Huntingdon defender Tyreke Hutch, who returned it 30 yards to the Crockett 12 with only 1:25 remaining before intermission and his club holding a tenuous 14-7 advantage.

Two plays later – with just 34 seconds left – Mustang quarterback Gray Eubanks crashed into the end zone from a yard out, Anderson Graycen kicked the extra point, and the hosts held a 21-7 edge and had sucked all the oxygen out of the Cav side of the field.

"We were on the verge of going into halftime only down one touchdown and about to receive the second-half kickoff," said Coach Kevin Ward. "We had hung in there right with them, and the momentum might have been swinging back in our direction. Then we had that miscommunication, and the whole thing swung the other way again."

That miscommunication was only one of several mistakes the Cavs made that led to their defeat. Dropped passes, open receivers missed, and four more fumbles (one lost) led to Crockett's first defeat after four opening-season victories, and Ward labeled them as a major ingredient in the loss.

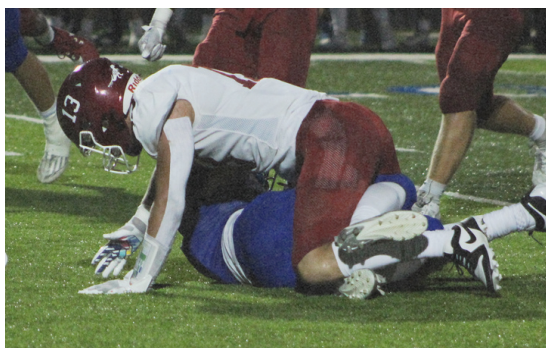
"Huntingdon outplayed us physically," he said, "and they're a really good football team, maybe the best team we'll play this season. But we had forced them to punt twice in the first quarter – nobody had done that to them all year – and we were right there until the mistakes started snowballing. Now we'll find out how good we really are by how we respond this week, because now Region play begins."

The Cavs will be home for their Region 7 opener this coming Friday night against Dyer County, coming into Cavalier Stadium with a 2-3 overall record after falling to Westview 41-19 this past week.

Huntingdon came into the contest having scored 58 and 48 points in its previous two games, but Crockett's defense forced punts on the first two Mustang possessions, keyed by tackles for losses by Cav linebacker Preston Lambert. But after the second punt, the Cavs moved the ball inside Huntingdon territory when they faced a fourth-and-one at the 44. The Mustangs held, stuffing a Carson Pruitt run at the line of scrimmage, and began a drive of their own.

Using a mix of three talented runners – Eubanks, Ashton Hutcherson, and Brady Warbritton – it took the hosts just seven plays to go the 56 yards, with Hutcherson breaking a 23-yard touchdown run in the opening minute of the second quarter. Graycen's extra made it 7-0.

After a short kickoff designed to be hard to handle, but which Preston Lambert dove on at the Cav 30, Crockett fumbled on the snap exchange on the very next play, and the Mustangs recovered at the 21. Warbritton tallied on the next play, and in the space of less than 30 seconds off the clock, Huntingdon had put 14 points on the scoreboard.



**Left:** Linebacker Preston Lambert (13) hit Huntingdon's Brady Warbritton so hard that one of their mouth guards went flying.



The resilient Cavs responded, however, even though it took a freakishly fortunate play to do so. Facing a third-and-nine from his own 16, Grayson Lambert was hurried on a long pass and threw the ball basically up for grabs as he was belted to the ground by two Mustang linemen. Fortunately, the "grabber" was Cav wideout Antuan Hobson, who outleaped a pair of defenders to gain 24 yards and a first down. Deuce Greenhill broke a 20-yard run shortly after that and then added a 17-yard scamper around the left side for a touchdown with 6:43 left in the half, and after Avery Hurst's extra point, it was a ballgame again.

It was looking even more that way when Huntingdon's Eubanks fumbled the ball away to Crockett lineman Zerafin Guardian at the Cavalier 20 with 2:31 before the half, and Hobson gained 12 yards on a pass from Lambert to get out to the 38. Then came the ill-fated miscommunication play, and the resulting interception returned all the momentum back in Huntingdon's direction.

Still, a 21-7 deficit isn't insurmountable with an entire half of football yet to play. But it didn't help matters when Crockett mishandled the third-quarter kickoff, forcing it to begin the possession from its own 11. An ensuing punt by Joseph Gould – albeit a good one – gave Huntingdon possession at its own 44, and after eight straight running plays to lure the Cav defense into fortifying the line of scrimmage, Eubanks threw a 22-yard touchdown pass to Warbritton on just his third throw of the game to put the hosts up 28-7.

Still, a quarter-and-a-half remained, and Demo Pickens gave the Cavs some hope by returning the next kickoff 40 yards, leaping over a tackler midway through it. Two penalties against the Mustangs got the ball down to the 23 when – yet again – the Cavs mishandled an option exchange and lost seven yards. Pass play misfirings then turned the ball over on downs, and that was pretty much it from there.

Huntingdon added a final score on a Eubanks-to-Tayshawn Rivers pass from 22 yards out with 6:36 on the clock in the fourth period.

The realigned Region 7 play begins this week. Crockett is now in a division with Dyer County, Fayette-Ware, Obion County, and Haywood. The Tomcats won a wild 64-57 contest with Obion Friday night to gain an early edge in the standings, and have also already defeated Fayette-Ware.

#### Final Statistics

**Rushes-Yards: CC** – Deuce Greenhill 14-81, Dakylan Woods 4-32, Gabe Dupree 3-8, Carson Pruitt 1-0, Ben Burgess 2-(-1), Grayson Lambert 6-(-24), **Team 30-96.** **HUNT** – Ashton Hutcherson 12-98, Brady Warbritton 9-70, Gray Eubanks 17-45, Meal Leavitt 9-37, **Team 47-250.**

**Passing (Comp-Att-Yds-Int): CC** – G. Lambert 7-15-72-1, Burgess 1-2-0-0, **Team 8-17-72-1.** **HUNT** – Eubanks 3-4-55-0.

**Receptions-Yards: CC** – Antuan Hobson 4-59, Willie Walker 2-7, Demo Pickens 1-6, Pruitt 1-0. **HUNT** – Warbritton 1-22, Tayshawn Rivers 1-22, Clayton Pelonero 1-11.

**Interceptions: CC** – None. **HUNT** – Tyreke Hutch 1-30.

**Total Yards: CC 168, HUNT 305.**

**First Downs: CC 9, HUNT 13.**

**Fumbles-Lost: CC 4-1, HUNT 1-1.**

**Penalties-Yards: CC 0-0, HUNT 4-35.**

**Punts-Yards: CC** Joseph Gould 4-167, **HUNT 4-165.**

#### Season Statistics (5 Games; Record 4-1)

**Rushes-Yards: CC** – Deuce Greenhill 93-714, Dakylan Woods 22-185, Gabe Dupree 25-176, Grayson Lambert 33-36, Carson Pruitt 5-31, Demo Pickens 6-14, Ben Burgess 4-(-1), **Team 188-1,155. Opponents 194-863.**

**Passing (Comp-Att-Yds-Int): CC** – G. Lambert 29-60-495-1, Ben Burgess 1-2-0-0, **Team 30-62-495-1. Opponents 23-52-446-5.**

**Receptions-Yards: CC** – Antuan Hobson 7-133, Willie Walker 8-106, Preston Lambert 3-79, Amarion Hobson 3-76, Demo Pickens 4-42, Carson Pruitt 3-36 Deuce Greenhill 2-23, **Team 30-495. Opponents 23-446.**

**Interceptions:** Demo Pickens 3-34, Antuan Hobson 2-31 (1 TD return), **Team 5-65. Opponents 1-30.**

**Points (TDs-2PC-XP-FG-P):** Greenhill 11-0-0-0-66, Antuan Hobson 3-1-0-0-20, Woods 3-0-0-0-18, Avery Hurst 0-0-15-1-18, Dupree 2-0-0-0-12, Preston Lambert 1-1-0-0-8, Grayson Lambert 1-0-0-0-6, Walker 1-0-0-0-6, Pruitt 1-0-0-0-6.

**Total Yards: CC 1,650, Opponents 1,309.**

**First Downs: CC 59, Opponents 53.**

**Fumbles-Lost: CC 12-3, Opponents 13-6.**

**Penalties-Yards: CC 14-96, Opponents 25-196.**

**Punts-Yards-Avg: CC** – Joseph Gould 13-527-40.5, **Opponents 18-498-27.7.**

**Points Scored: CC 160, Opponents 95.**



**Above:** Lilly Carter is ready to lead the team onto the field at Paul Ward Stadium in Huntingdon.



**Right:** On a third-quarter kickoff return, Demo Pickens (3) leaps over a Mustang defender as Crockett teammates Braden Park (27), Austin Carroll (56), Jacob Knox (42), and Ethan Allen (55) try to provide a running lane.



**Left:** Preston Lambert (13) made several tackles, bringing down this runner as Amarion Hobson (4) and Jacob Knox (42) come up to help if needed.







**Above:** Lineman Zerafin Guardian (76) celebrates after making a second-quarter fumble recovery for the Cavs.

**Far Right:** Antuan Hobson (2) splits a couple of Mustang defenders after making one of his four pass receptions.



**Above:** Zoey Burleson is ready to cheer the Cavaliers on.



**Above:** Dakylan Woods (32) disposes of one tackler with a stiff-arm while staring his next victim down as he continues the carry.



**Above:** Gabe Dupree (29) cuts behind the blocking of Ethan Allen (55) to pick up a few yards.

**Right:** Despite the blocking efforts of Zerafin Guardian (76), Kevin Garduno (74), Kentravian Price (57), Preston Vernon (50), and Noah Fitzhugh (9), fullback Carson Pruitt (34) was stopped by the Huntingdon defense on a fourth-down play after taking the handoff from Grayson Lambert (1), the first turning point of the game.



**Above:** During a timeout, Carson Pruitt (34) and Preston Vernon (50) share some strategy and encouragement.

