

# BENNETT, PURE RUN WILD IN 54-47 PINK-OUT GAME



**Above:** Quarterback Grayson Lambert (1) fakes a handoff to blocking back Carson Pruitt (34), who joins linemen Preston Lambert (13), Kentravion Price (57), and Joseph Gould (71) in clearing the way for a Deuce Greenhill touchdown.



**Above:** Senior Night captains were Sam Kalinisan (86), Preston Vernon (50), Joseph Gould (71), and injured back Grant Carroll (7).

## By Ron Barry

Don't be surprised if you drive by Cavalier Stadium sometime this week and see Eddie Bennett Jr running unhindered back and forth on the football field.

After all, he had so much fun doing it last Friday night against the Crockett County football team that he might not have boarded his team's bus to go back to Memphis.

Bennett – just about the only thing diminutive about the PURE Academy football squad – ran for an astounding 362 yards and four touchdowns on 31 carries as the visiting Royals spoiled the Cavaliers' Senior Night with a wild 54-47 triumph over their hosts.

The Memphis team came into the contest with the most misleading 0-8 record imaginable, having played five ranked Tennessee clubs and hanging close with each one of them. And when they opened the game by recovering an onside kick and prepared for their first snap, an offensive line that would be the envy of several college teams took the field.

Over the next three hours (the game took an interminable amount of time to play), PURE – which may stand for Pretty Unbelievable Rushing Experience – ran the same basic play and racked up a staggering 480 yards on the ground. Quarterback Hersel Key, in the shotgun formation, would take the snap and immediately hand it to the back standing right next to him (usually Bennett). That back would take one or two steps in one direction, then cut back the other way (most of the time) until being tackled, usually well downfield, if at all.

The play works for two reasons: (1) The offensive line is so massive – three of its members check in at over 300 pounds – that the defense can't even see the ball carrier for a while; and (2) Bennett runs like Barry Sanders, darting in and out, eluding tacklers when they could find him, and then kicking in the afterburners as he heads for the end zone.

His four touchdowns were on runs of 35, 80, 31, and 28 yards. He set the tone by scoring his first one on the initial play from scrimmage after the game-opening onside kick, and Crockett had to be so wary of his presence that it set up three rare passing plays for receiver Jaheim Johnson that covered another 116 yards and two more scores. All in all, PURE totaled 596 yards offensively.

Still – even after all that – the only reason the Cavaliers lost was a proclivity to shoot itself in the foot at the worst possible times. They allowed the Royals to recover two onside kicks even though they knew they were coming every time; they fumbled the ball away inside the 10-yard-line when driving for the tying touchdown early in the fourth quarter; they let PURE convert three straight fourth-down situations on the ensuing drive, which burned up most of the game's remaining time; and then, after Preston Vernon recovered a Royal fumble at the Crockett 20 with 1:54 left in the game, gave the ball back on an interception three snaps later.

Even with all that, Crockett put 47 points on the scoreboard against the Royals, the highest total PURE had yielded in any of its games. The Cavs scored more than Haywood, Cookeville, Nashville Pearl-Cohn, Lewis County, Blackman, and Hardin County, and the two Mississippi schools the Royals had faced.

So there's still reason for optimism as Coach Kevin Ward's squad prepares for this week's Region 7-4A duel at Haywood, which has given up an average of 27 points a game despite compiling a 6-2 record. Crockett can still actually claim the region's top seed by winning its final two games and having a couple of other results go their way.

Against PURE, the Cavaliers did several things well offensively. Deuce Greenhill – wearing Grant Carroll's jersey as a tribute to the senior who has missed the season with a knee injury – rushed for 119 yards and two touchdowns in 17 carries and turned a short pass from Grayson Lambert into a 65-yard score. The junior back now has 1,099 rushing yards in only 147 carries and has found the end zone 18 times.

Sophomore Demo Pickens intercepted a pass and returned it 30 yards to set up the Cavs' first score, then swept right end and dashed another 30 for the hosts' third tally. He finished with 69 yards on only six tries.

Receiver Amarion Hobson scored his first touchdown of the year, hauling in another short Lambert pass and scampering 66 yards to the house. Freshman Dakylan Woods accounted for Crockett's other touchdown on a one-yard plunge in the first quarter.

Vernon and Preston Lambert recovered Royal fumbles for the Cavs, but overall Crockett could just not contain PURE's offense. Bennett had 229 yards by halftime, even though the Cavs actually led 40-32 at the intermission. But the mistakes were too costly in the final two quarters, and Bennett received help from a 79-yard touchdown run from Dylan Jackson.

In addition to Senior Night, the game featured a "Pink-Out" organized by senior player Sam Kalinisan and his father Van as a tribute to the late Rachel Dillon Kalinisan and to raise awareness for Breast Cancer research. The evening also featured an appearance by alumni cheerleaders of past Crockett seasons, organized by Ellary Brewster.

**Final Statistics**

**Rushes-Yards: CC** - Deuce Greenhill 17-119, Demo Pickens 6-69, Grayson Lambert 8-22, Dakylan Woods 4-8, **Team 35-218. PURE** - Eddie Bennett Jr 31-362, Dylan Jackson 12-106, Hersel Key 8-12, **Team 51-480.**

**Passing (Comp-Att-Yds-Int): CC** - G. Lambert 5-9-153-1. **PURE** - Key 3-4-116-1, Bennett 0-1-0-0, Team 3-5-116-1.

**Receptions-Yards: CC** - Amaron Hobson 2-77, Greenhill 1-65, Antuan Hobson 1-6, Preston Lambert 1-5. **PURE** - Jaheim Johnson 3-116.

**Interceptions: CC** - Pickens 1-32. **PURE** - Bennett 1-15.

**Total Yards: CC 371, PURE 596.**

**First Downs: CC 9, PURE 12.**

**Fumbles-Lost: CC 3-3, PURE 3-2.**

**Penalties-Yards: CC 7-53, PURE 12-94.**

**Punts-Yards: CC Joseph Gould 1-37, PURE 0-0.**

**Season Statistics (8 Games; Record 5-3; Region 1-1)**

**Rushes-Yards: CC** - Deuce Greenhill 147-1,099, Dakylan Woods 34-248, Gabe Dupree 28-181, Grayson Lambert 61-162, Demo Pickens 16-93, Carson Pruitt 5-31, Ben Burgess 4-(-1), **Team 295-1,936. Opponents 307-1,745.**

**Passing (Comp-Att-Yds-Int): CC** - G. Lambert 44-88-767-2, Ben Burgess 1-2-0-0, **Team 45-90-767-2. Opponents 61-112-911-9.**

**Receptions-Yards: CC** - Antuan Hobson 12-181, Amaron Hobson 5-153, Deuce Greenhill 6-134, Willie Walker 9-113, Preston Lambert 5-102, Demo Pickens 5-48, Carson Pruitt 3-36, **Team 45-767. Opponents 61-911.**

**Interceptions: CC**- Demo Pickens 4-64, Antuan Hobson 3-64 (1 TD return), Gabe Dupree 1-13, Dakylan Woods 1-0, **Team 9-141. Opponents 2-45.**

**Points (TDs-2PC-XP-FG-P):** Greenhill 18-0-0-0-108, Woods 5-1-0-0-32, Avery Hurst 0-0-26-1-29, Antuan Hobson 3-1-0-0-20, Preston Lambert 2-1-0-0-14, Walker 2-0-0-0-12, Dupree 2-0-0-0-12, Grayson Lambert 1-0-0-0-6, Pruitt 1-0-0-0-6, Pickens 1-0-0-0-6, Amaron Hobson 1-0-0-0-6.

**Total Yards: CC 2,550, Opponents 2,540.**

**First Downs: CC 93, Opponents 95.**

**Fumbles-Lost: CC 18-7, Opponents 21-10.**

**Penalties-Yards: CC 29-208, Opponents 48-377.**

**Punts-Yards-Avg: CC** - Joseph Gould

**18-731-40.6, Opponents 20-557-27.9.**

**Points Scored: CC 251, Opponents 175.**



**Above:** Preston Vernon (50) squares up this PURE runner as Amaron Hobson (4) helps out from below.



**Above:** At the far right, the ball is on the ground, and Preston Lambert (13) is about to make the fumble recovery for Crockett. Stringing out the play are Cav defenders Antuan Hobson (2), Willie Walker (6), Jacob Knox (42), Preston Vernon (on ground), Dakylan Woods (32), and Clarence Luten (29).



**Above** Kevin Garduno (74) takes a break during a timeout.



**Above:** Senior Sam Kalinisan (86) organized the "Pink-Out" with his father Van.



**Above** The first play from scrimmage became the most common sight of the night: PURE's Eddie Bennett heading to the end zone.



**Above** Linemen Joseph Gould (71) and Jordan Rainey (70) are celebrating the man between them in the distance, receiver Amaron Hobson (4), who scored his first touchdown of the year on a 66-yard pass play.

**Below:** Ellary Brewster, one of the current cheer coaches with Brandi Wilson, still has the moves as she leads the alumni cheerleaders in a halftime dance routine.



**Above:** Goalline blocks from Zerafin Guardian (left), Joseph Gould (71), Willie Walker (6), Carson Pruitt (34), and Kentravion Price (57) allow Deuce Greenhill (wearing Grant Carroll's #7 jersey) to power into the end zone.

**Below:** Demo Pickens (3) intercepts this Royal pass and returns it 30 yards to set up Crockett's first score.



**Left:** In the second quarter, former Crockett County cheerleaders took over for the current squad and fired the crowd up with yells and stunts.



**Above:** Carson Pruitt (34) and Preston Lambert (13) sandwich PURE running back Dylan Jackson (12) as Kevin Garduno (74) and Zerafin Guardian (76) back up the play.

**Left:** Cheerleader Gracie Gaines and her squad mates were dressed in pink jerseys identical to those of the football team.



**Above:** Injured senior Grant Carroll (0) was paid tribute by Deuce Greenhill, who wore his #7 jersey for the game. Carroll is congratulating Greenhill here on his 67-yard touchdown run.