

CAV SOCCER INTO DISTRICT CHAMPIONSHIP GAME THURSDAY; REGIONAL BERTH ASSURED



Above: Chris Cerda had some chances early on, such as this play in which he dribbled his way past a startled defender as teammate Angel Garcia looks on from behind. But Cerda's shots didn't land until the second half. (Photo by Ron Barry)

By Ron Barry

Tick... tick... tick... tick... tick... tick... tick... tick... tick... tick... tick... tick... BOOOOOOOOOOOOM!!!

That's the sound you hear when you play against Crockett County's soccer team. Coach Stan Jamscek's Cavaliers are a ticking time bomb. Everything may seem relatively calm for a while, but you KNOW the explosion is going to come sooner or later.

Tuesday night in Cavalier Stadium in the second semifinal game of the District 13-AA Tournament, Crockett had completely dominated a determined but tiring Obion County squad for more than 67 minutes of the 80-minute match, but had only a 2-0 lead to show for it. It was still too close for comfort; strange things can happen in the final minutes on a soccer pitch.

But it's extremely doubtful that ANYBODY watching this contest was prepared for what happened in the next nine minutes and 31 seconds.

The Cavs scored SIX more goals in that span, beginning with a perfectly placed long-range dart from Edgar Juarez on a direct kick from the left wing with 12:30 to play and ending with a Braulio Marquez boot from the right side after Chris Cerda fed him a beeline pass with 2:59 remaining. A 2-0 nail-biter had become an 8-0 romp, and if you blinked, you missed it.

With that 8-0 final – and the Cavs actually almost scored again before the whistle sounded – came a berth in Thursday evening's 6:00 championship game against Dyersburg, a 1-0 victor over South Gibson in the night's first semifinal. The win also automatically advances Crockett into next week's Region 7-AA Tournament, and a triumph Thursday would allow the Cavs to host that first-round match as well.

While Crockett fans were happy with Tuesday's eventual cloudburst of goals, Jamscek is concerned that it's time for his team to break this recent pattern.

"I don't know what it is," he said. "I really don't have an explanation for it. But for some reason, we're taking too long to assert ourselves in the opening minutes of these games. We're not getting to the ball as fast as we do later in the games, and we can't afford to keep doing that as the competition continues to get better." Jamscek – who radiates positivity with his team – then stated a grateful addition to his statement.

"But," he smiled, "the good news is that we're figuring it out and making the right adjustments before the match ends. So I can't complain about it – we just scored eight goals in a district tournament game. But we will be in much better position if we get off to faster starts."

Despite probably spending in excess of 90 percent of the first half firing shots at the Obion goal – the ball rarely passed the midfield mark toward Crockett's defensive end – the Cavs only managed to have one kick settle into the net in the opening 40 minutes. That goal came when Juarez launched a long, high pass from near midfield and perfectly led streaking attacker Luke Carter into an instantaneous one-on-one encounter with the Rebel keeper, whom he easily beat for his team-leading 24th tally of the season. It came with 15:43 remaining before the intermission.

Crockett continued to apply relentless pressure as the second half began, but its barrage of shots was sailing high or wide. But with 32:06 left on the clock, Marquez fed Juarez in front of the box and the Cav captain slammed it into the next for a 2-0 edge.

"Obion managed a few shots of its own in the next 15 minutes or so, but Crockett's freshman goalkeeper Noah Mayfield efficiently turned everything away, including a leaping deflection of a direct kick that was heading top shelf directly under the crossbar. He poked it straight over the net, survived the ensuing corner kick scramble, and then... well, the magic began to happen on the other end of the pitch.

At the 12:30 mark, Juarez curled his direct kick from way out on the left wing around the diving Rebel keeper and just inside the right post. That made it 3-0, and suddenly it started raining goals.

Cerda – displaying the amazing footwork that often leaves spectators in disbelief – dribbled through a maze of Obion defenders and kicked one in from the right side. 4-0 Crockett. 10:07 to play.

Carter then carried a dribble all the way down the left side, cut toward the goal, drew in the defense, and then side-poked a perfect dump pass into the middle of the box, from where Cerda rammed it home. 5-0 Cavs. 9:02 to go.

In what could have passed for a perfect instant reply, Carter did the exact same thing on the next Crockett possession, although issuing a lengthier assist pass this time. But Cerda still threaded it through a handful of Rebel defenders with a slide shot into the right side of the net. 6-0 Cavs. 6:30 remaining on the clock.

Next, it was Eddy De La Rosa's turn. Pursuing the deflection by the keeper of a teammate's shot, De La Rosa beat the defense to the ball and rifled it into the cords. 7-0 Crockett. Still 3:56 remaining.

Less than a minute later, Cerda – who already had three goals – and Marquez, who had already been credited with three assists – reversed their roles. This time Cerda slipped a pass through the Rebel defense as Marquez streaked in from the right side and – suddenly, and unbelievably – it was 8-0. 2:59 remaining. Six goals in less than 10 total minutes. The final goal tally for Crockett: Cerda 3, Juarez 2, and Carter, De La Rosa, and Marquez 1 each. Assists: Marquez 3, Carter 2, and Juarez, Cerda, and Ozzi Sanchez 1 apiece.

The Cavs improved their season record to 13-1 record. Through their 14 games this season, here are the statistical totals for Crockett players: GOALS - Luke Carter 24, Christopher Cerda 19, Edgar Juarez 13, Eddy De La Rosa 9, Braulio Marquez 6, Angel Garcia 3, Leo Arreola 2, Angel Martinez 1, Jathen Young 1, Mason Wood 1; ASSISTS - Edgar Juarez 14, Christopher Cerda 12, Braulio Marquez 12, Luke Carter 8, Angel Garcia 4, Eddy De La Rosa 4, Ozzi Sanchez 2, Adrian Calderon 1, Santiago Santos 1, Leo Arreola 1, Eduardo Galvez 1, Camden Martin 1, Noah Mayfield 1.

TRACK & FIELD: On Day 1 of the West Sectional, Crockett's 4x800 relay team of Joy Evans, Avery Thornton, Casey Thornton, and Claire Evans finished second, thereby earning a berth in the TSSAA State Championships May 21 in Murfreesboro. Joy Evans has already also qualified for the State Pentathlon event, scheduled for May 15. The West Sectionals are scheduled to conclude Wednesday with sprint events.

SPORT TRYOUTS: Tryout dates and times have been announced for some of the CCHS teams for the next school year.

Golf tryouts will be held May 14 at the Crockett Country Club. All new and returning players must attend tryouts. Girls will begin at 3:20 and boys will follow at 3:40. Tryouts will begin on Hole #2. Please be on time and ready to begin. Anyone with a conflict for May 14 should email Coach Chris Eubanks at chris.eubanks@crockettcavs.net.

Boys high school basketball tryouts are also scheduled for May 14 for incoming freshmen and May 15 for Grades 10-12. Times each day are from 3:00 to 4:30 in the CCHS main gymnasium. These are closed tryouts; if there are questions, please contact richard.rudesill@crockettcavs.net.



Left: Crockett had several chances to score in the opening half, such as this attempted header by Eddy De La Rosa (2), leaping high on a Cav corner kick. But his header went above the goal post, and the game remained scoreless. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Luke Carter had this opportunity in the opening minutes, but his boot sailed high of the net. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Max Utlely almost set up a Crockett first-half goal with this centering pass, but the ensuing shot attempt by a teammate went wide to the left. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Luke Carter finally put the Cavs on the board when a long pass from Edgar Juarez found him streaking toward the goal, and Carter beat the Rebel goalkeeper for a 1-0 lead. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Left: Team captain Edgar Juarez netted the next two goals for Crockett, about 20 minutes apart in the second half. Juarez also added an assist to the offensive cause. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Right: A relieved Chris Cerda -- congratulated here by Angel Garcia -- finally got a shot to go when he dribbled in all the way from the right side after a night of several frustrating misses. (Photo by Ron Barry)





Above: Luke Carter became the pass master for the next two Crockett goals, drawing the defense toward him on this play before slyly nudging the ball to his right ... (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Crockett's sixth goal was a virtual carbon copy of the fifth, although Luke Carter carried his defender wider this time to provide more space in the middle of the box ... (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: ... and then capping off the magical play with a slide shot into the right corner of the net, past the helpless keeper for a hat trick. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Below: ... from where Chris Cerda was able to push it past a couple of defenders and the Obion goalkeeper for his second straight score. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Below: ... allowing Chris Cerda more time to somehow navigate his way through a maze of six different Rebel defensemen ... (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Eddy De La Rosa was next with a score off a save deflection, and he's returning to midfield here as the Obion defense tries to figure out how the score went from 2-0 to 7-0 so fast. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Left: Braulio Marquez, who had three assists of his own, capped off the Cav scoring binge by taking this pass from Chris Cerda and converting it into Goal #8 for the victors. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Edgar Juarez (9), Angel Garcia (8), and Ozzi Sanchez (12) return to their positions after one of Chris Cerda's goals during Crockett's second-half blitz. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Below: Jose Martinez (4) dribbles the ball upfield, outracing two Obion defenders to get another Crockett attack underway. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Luke Carter survived this rough collision with a Rebel defender and promptly supplied a pair of assists to Chris Cerda's hat trick. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Chris Cerda's speed and footwork continue to amaze opponents and spectators -- and he's still just a sophomore. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Left: Freshman goalkeeper Noah Mayfield (in green) posted a clean sheet -- a shutout -- in his first tournament start for the Cavaliers. (Photo by Ron Barry)