

CAVALIERS READY FOR PLAYOFFS WITH 51-8 DEMOLITION OF FAYETTE-WARE



Above: Dre Walker caught this first-quarter toss from Ben Burgess and turned it into a 19-yard touchdown play to give Crockett a 14-0 advantage. (Photo by Ron Barry)

By Ron Barry

When it's time for the postseason playoffs to begin, a coach wants his team to be hitting on all cylinders.

From what Coach Kevin Ward observed in the regular season finale, he believes his Crockett County Cavaliers are just about at that point.

Crockett's 51-8 rout of Fayette-Ware Halloween night featured standout performances in several areas as the Cavaliers improved their Region 7-4A record to 2-2 and their overall mark to 7-3. More importantly for Ward, his club didn't "play down to the competition." The Wildcats have just one win on the season, although Ward feels they are "much improved" over last year's squad.

"We played well tonight," Ward said. "We executed well. It would have been easy to let down after the loss to Haywood last week, but we didn't. And we could have been distracted because it was Senior Night. But we did everything we needed to do to get a good, solid win. There are always areas where we can improve, but this was a good showing heading into the playoffs."

And as Ward likes to say – and as he reminded his team Thursday night – everyone starts the playoffs 0-0, "and anything can happen in high school football."

The playoff road for Crockett begins Friday night in Memphis against Kirby High School, the number two seed from Region 8-4A. Kirby completed a 6-4 season by defeating Ridgeway 20-0. Fayette-Ware is the only common opponent on the Kirby and Crockett schedules; Kirby posted a 22-20 victory.

If the Cavs prevail in Memphis Friday, they would then face the winner of the Dyer County vs. Ridgeway game. Dyer County claimed the #1 seed from Region 7-4A by dominating Haywood 59-27 Thursday night, a margin virtually nobody expected. Haywood will now host Millington this week to begin the playoffs.

Ward was pleased not only with his Cavaliers' performance against Fayette-Ware but with the fact he was able to play several reserves and even reward a few seniors for their efforts. Laithon Bond caught his first pass of the season; lineman Travis Cork got to run the ball on a play in the fourth quarter; and Deuce Greenhill had a chance to handle his first kickoff return of the year – which he promptly carried 80 yards for a touchdown.

Crockett even threw a few new wrinkles into the offensive mix. DK Woods took a few snaps out of the Wildcat formation; Amaron Hobson gained a first down on a fake punt play; and holder Kris Phillips turned a fake 44-yard field goal try by Avery Hurst – who had just nailed a 37-yarder seconds before – into a 27-yard touchdown pass to Dre Walker following a Gabe Dupree interception just before the end of the first half.

The Cavs – who totaled 410 offensive yards (509 if you count returns) – were in control from the opening kickoff. Crockett drove it 61 yards in eight plays, featuring a 24-yard run by Greenhill, and Woods provided the touchdown from 23 yards out. Hurst's extra made it 7-0 with less than four minutes gone.

The hosts promptly forced a Fayette-Ware punt and then marched 59 yards in nine snaps. Tight end Dre Walker posted the score on a 19-yard pass play from Ben Burgess, and Hurst's conversion boosted the margin to 14-0.

On the Wildcats' very next play from scrimmage, Crockett's Ian Greenberg intercepted a Justin Price pass, giving the Cavs possession at the Fayette-Ware 38. Woods – who would finish the night with 196 yards on 13 carries – accounted for all the yards in the ensuing drive, finally scoring from seven yards out with 10:49 remaining in the half.

The visitors then constructed their first threat of the contest, using runs of 32 yards by Braylon Walker and 23 yards by Reynaldeus Raimsey to get the ball all the way down to the Cav two. Crockett's defense stiffened, however, stacking a runner up on two plays and deflecting passes on two more to regain possession at the Wildcat three.

From there, sophomore Woods took a handoff, knifed to his left, and thundered 97 yards for the longest run of his career as the Cavs went up 28-0 with 7:23 still to play in the second quarter.

After forcing another punt, Crockett's crew marched 56 yards to another score, keyed by Hobson's eight-yard gain on a fourth-down run from the punt position and a 22-yard scamper by Greenhill. The Cavs reached the Wildcat 20 before three straight pass attempts fell incomplete, bringing Hurst on for his 37-yard field goal. Crockett led 31-0 with only 19 seconds left in the half.

After the ensuing kickoff return and a Wildcat holding penalty, Dupree leaped in front of another Price pass and picked it off at the 27 with mere seconds remaining. The Cavs rushed Hurst onto the field to line up a 44-yard kick attempt, but as he strode toward the ball, Phillips jumped up from his holding position and calmly tossed a touchdown pass covering 27 yards to a wide-open Walker, who crossed the goal line with no time showing on the clock, giving the Cavs a 37-0 halftime advantage.

At that point, the teams agreed to play the second half as two 10-minute quarters with a running clock. The Wildcats then put together four plays of double-digit gains in driving 65 yards for a touchdown, which Raimsey scored from five yards out. A two point conversion pass from Price to 6-6 receiver Tarecous Stevens cut the Crockett margin to 37-8.

Fayette-Ware's joy was short-lived. Greenhill, whose offensive touches had been limited in recent games, lined up as the deep back on the kickoff for the first time this year, fielded a high boot at his own 20, zipped once to leave a defender in a twisted heap, and turned on the jets to cover the 80 yards in a flash. Hurst's extra made it 44-8 with 4:49 left in the third period.

Crockett forced another Fayette-Ware punt when Jake Knox nailed Raimsey for a three-yard loss on a third-down run, and the Cavs took over at their own 31. Lineman Cork gained a yard on his senior reward carry before Demo Pickens broke a 26-yard burst. From that point, Crockett turned the ball-carrying duties over to freshman Khalan Thomas, who eventually tallied on a 22-yard scamper at the 3:13 mark of the fourth, running behind a line of fired-up reserves.

Now it's playoff time.

"Every team is 0-0 now," Ward reiterated. "We all start from the same spot. Our success will depend on how well we prepare. So each player needs to build that mindset now."

Final Statistics

Rushes-Yards: CC - DK Woods 13-196-3 TD, Deuce Greenhill 3-56, Khalan Thomas 5-40-1 TD, Demo Pickens 2-25, Amarion Hobson 2-15, Dre Walker 1-6, Gabe Dupree 1-5, Travis Cork 1-1, Kris Phillips 1-(-3), Ben Burgess 3-(-12), **Team 32-329.** **FW** - Reynaldeus Raimsey 8-83-1 TD, Braylon Walker 10-54, Justin Price 4-16, Nakylan Hall 1-10, Adderius Mason 1-4, **Team 24-167.**

Passing (Comp-Att-Yds-Int): CC - Burgess 7-13-54-0, Phillips 1-1-27-0, **Team 8-14-81-0.** **FW** - Justin Price 4-14-73-2, Team 4-14-73-2.

Receptions-Yards: CC - Dre Walker 3-53-2 TD, Demo Pickens 1-13, Laithon Bonds 1-9, DK Woods 2-6, Amarion Hobson 1-0. **FW** - Tarecous Stevens 1-37, Layquan Armour 1-15, Arkavion Middlebrooks 1-14, Romeo Malone 1-7.

Interceptions: CC - Ian Greenberg 1-0, Gabe Dupree 1-0, **Team 2-0.** **FW** - None.

Kickoff Returns-Yards: CC - Deuce Greenhill 1-80-1 TD, Squirt Pickens 1-19, **Team 2-99.** **FW** - Deangelo Kee 4-61, **Team 4-61.** **Punt Returns-Yards: CC** - None. **FW** - None.

Total Scrimmage Plays-Yards: CC 46-410, FW 38-240.

First Downs: CC 11, FW 10.

Fumbles-Lost: CC 3-0, FW 2-0.

Penalties-Yards: CC 3-20, FW 5-35.

Punts-Yards: CC - None. **FW** - Braylon Walker 3-90-30.0.

Points (TD-2PC-XP-FG-P): Woods 3-0-0-0-18, Walker 2-0-0-0-12, Greenhill 1-0-0-0-6, Thomas 1-0-0-0-6, Avery Hurst 0-0-6-1-9, **Team 7-0-6-1-51.** **FW** - 1-1-0-0-8.

Season Statistics (Record: 7-3; Region 2-2)

Rushes-Yards: CC - DK Woods 159-1,078, Deuce Greenhill 38-416, Demo Pickens 16-100, Gabe Dupree 24-88, Amarion Hobson 11-80, Khalan Thomas 5-40, Dre Walker 5-20, Travis Cork 1-1, DJ Forrest 2-0, Kris Phillips 1-(-3), Bad Snap 1-(-26), Ben Burgess 72-(-17), **Team 335-1,777.** **Opponents 334-1,790.**

Passing (Comp-Att-Yds-Int): CC - Burgess 77-142-1,178-6, Phillips 1-1-27-0, **Team 78-143-1,205-6.** **Opponents 79-149-1,053-14.**

Receptions-Yards: CC - Dre Walker 29-453-5 TD, Greenhill 20-443-3 TD, Demo Pickens 12-140-2 TD, Kris Phillips 1-61, DK Woods 7-39, Amarion Hobson 3-24-1 TD, Squirt Pickens 2-17, Laithon Bonds 1-9, Karsen Burgess 1-8, Brody Parlow 1-7, Gabe Dupree 1-4, **Team 78-1,205.** **Opponents 79-1,053.**

Interceptions: CC - Dupree 3-55-1 TD, Demo Pickens 3-49, Walker 2-47, Ian Greenberg 2-0, Woods 1-12, Jake Knox 1-10, Randle Perry 1-8, Greenhill 1-0, **Team 14-181-1 TD.** **Opponents 6-160-2 TD.**

Kickoff Returns-Yards: CC - Demo Pickens 16-497-2 TD, Squirt Pickens 10-210, Greenhill 1-80-1 TD, Luke Beaird 1-8, **Team 29-795-3 TD.** **Opponents 29-712-1 TD.**

Punt Returns-Yards: CC - Demo Pickens 8-103, **Team 8-103.** **Opponents 9-167-1 TD.**

Total Scrimmage Plays-Yards: CC 476-2,982. **Opponents 484-2,843.**

First Downs: CC 102, Opponents 114.

Fumbles-Lost: CC 19-5, Opponents 30-11.

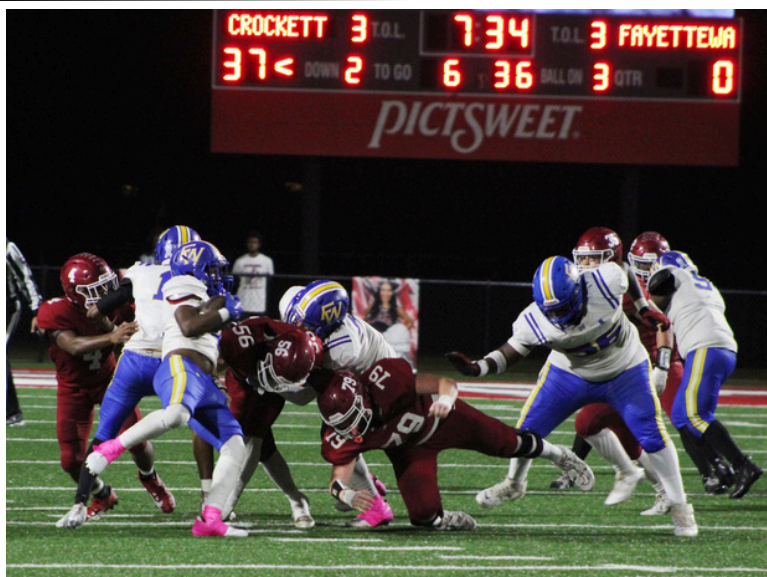
Penalties-Yards: CC 43-332, Opponents 77-577.

Punts-Yards: CC - Avery Hurst 19-729-38.4. **Opponents 27-920-34.1.**

Points (TD-2PC-XP-FG-P): Woods 17-1-0-0-104, Greenhill 8-0-0-0-48, Hurst 0-0-34-3-43, Walker 5-1-0-0-32, Demo Pickens 4-0-0-0-24, Hobson 2-0-0-0-12, Burgess 2-0-0-0-12, Dupree 1-0-0-0-6, Thomas 1-0-0-0-6, **Team 40-2-34-3-287.** **Opponents 24-5-11-3-174.**



Above: Even when he's going down, DK Woods looks like he's winning the battle. On his way to gaining 196 yards in 13 carries -- with three touchdowns -- Woods manages to occupy four Fayette-Ware tacklers. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: On Halloween night, Amarian Hobson (4), Austin Carroll (56), and Carson Bridger (79) decide to do a little haunting of Wildcat running back Reynaldeus Raimey, taking him for a short spin. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: When Deuce Greenhill (7) makes a quick cut, this is often the twisted-pretzel position suffered by the nearest defender. Greenhill contributed 136 all-purpose yards to the win over Fayette-Ware, including an 80-yard kickoff return for a touchdown. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Below: The tone for the night was set when a monstrous Gareth Rawson led the Cavaliers out through a darkened, spooky haze. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: One of Crockett's best plays of the night came right before halftime. Kicker Avery Hurst (85) -- who had drilled a 37-yard field goal just seconds earlier -- lined up for a 44-yarder after a Gabe Dupree interception. As Avery made his normal long-strided approach, holder Kris Phillips (16) pulled up from his crouched position, set his feet, and calmly ... (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: ... launched this pass to wide-open tight end Dre Walker, who concluded the 27-yard play by stepping into the end zone with no time left on the first-half clock. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: The touchdown off the fake field goal had been set up by this play, in which Gabe Dupree (29) -- celebrating here with Carson Bridger (79) -- picked off a Justin Price pass with seconds to go before intermission. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Ian Greenberg (19) also made a first-half interception, commemorated here both by the scoreboard and the celebratory lift from Carson Bridger (79). (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: The strange Halloween sights included this running play by lineman Travis Cork (72) -- carrying the ball like a loaf of bread -- but slamming ahead for a gain of a yard as Dre Walker (6) provides blocking. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Right: If this Fayette-Ware tackler thinks a one-handed grab of the jersey is going to bring down DK Woods, he's about to undergo a humbling experience ... (Photo by Ron Barry)



Below: The traditional Melanie Meza pre-game stunt was complicated by all of the Halloween goings-on, but she managed to gather enough of her crew to offer this final flight for Senior Night. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Another Crockett senior, Laithon Bonds (24), made his first pass reception of the season on this nine-yard gain. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: ... as Woods sheds him easily and continues to ramble on for yet another sizeable gain as Randle Perry -- wearing Colton Mayo's #52 jersey in tribute to his injured senior teammate -- attempts to add a block to the play. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Cavalier kicker Avery Hurst (85) drills his fourth extra point of the night over the outstretched arms of Fayette-Ware defenders. Hurst added a 37-yard field goal moments later and then helped carry off a beautifully-executed fake that resulted in a touchdown pass from holder Kris Phillips. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Below: Crockett's gang-tackling skills were on full display on this play as Jake Knox (35) and Dre Walker (6) headline a group that will also include Amarion Hobson, Randle Perry, Austin Carroll (56), and Nolen Turner (54). (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Deuce Greenhill (7) -- who hadn't returned a kickoff all season long -- took this 80 yards all the way to the house when he seized his opportunity. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Freshman runner Khalan Thomas (20) -- getting his first carries of the year as a varsity player -- took this handoff from Kris Phillips, found a hole behind the blocks of Grant Smallwood (77), Sebastian Garduno (63), Colin Smith (53), and Brody Jones (11) and raced 22 yards for a touchdown. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Jake Knox (35) hammered this Fayette-Ware running back for a loss almost immediately after taking the handoff. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Mason Dennis (12), Jake Knox (35), Nolen Turner (54), and Amarion Hobson (behind the runner) kept this Fayette-Ware ball carrier from getting into the end zone during a second-quarter goalline stand. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Below: Demo Pickens leaps onto the back of this Wildcat pass receiver to bring him down quickly after the catch. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: The Halloween theme of the night was evident even in the garb of student photographer Khaki Hail, who stayed busy as a pirate stalking the sidelines. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Left: The Halloweeners made it onto the field in the pre-game festivities, as this group of Crockett volleyballers lined up for the Cavs' entrance. (Photo by Ron Barry)