

OFFENSIVE LINE STANDS OUT AS CAVALIER FOOTBALLERS FLATTEN DYERSBURG 42-28



Above: Crockett County's offensive line was the key to Friday night's win over Dyersburg. Battling in the trenches on this play are Dre Walker (6), Garner Brown (67), Zerafin Guardian (76), Brooks Harris (73), and Sebastian Garduno (63). Center Carson Bridger is probably hidden behind some of these guys in this shot. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Coaches often like to say, "There is no 'I' in TEAM."

But if you're a football coach, you'd better hope you can find an 'O' in there somewhere.

And Crockett County has found it, in the form of an offensive line that is pancaking opponents, a running back who's almost impossible to bring down easily, and a quarterback whose improved prowess as a runner has opened up a lot of options for the Cavalier attack.

Coach Kevin Ward's club found the 'D' in TEAM much earlier this season, but Friday night against Dyersburg – on an evening when that normally reliable defense was bending more than usual – the Cavalier offensive line powered past the visiting Trojans to rack up a season-high 447 yards in rolling to a 42-28 victory, Crockett's sixth in seven starts.

It was a "Pink-Out" night at Cavalier Stadium in a salute to cancer awareness and survivors, but the Dyersburg defenders might have been developing Pink-EYE as they watched Crockett go up and down the field throughout the contest with little resistance.

Leading the charge with a four-touchdown performance was steamrolling running back DK Woods, who piled up 207 yards on 19 carries, including scoring sprints of 48 and 70 yards. Quarterback Ben Burgess added another 146 yards through the air, although he was less accurate than in previous games.

But he also ran for 57 yards himself, and scored a touchdown in the final 25 seconds of the opening half even though his helmet was ripped off at the goal line on the play.

Make no mistake, though: although several of the "skill position" players produced some gaudy statistics in the contest, it was Crockett's offensive line play that shone the brightest against the Trojans.

Several names were prominent in the Cav blocking corps, including Zerafin Guardian, Garner Brown, Brooks Harris, Carson Bridger, Nolen Turner, Sebastian Garduno, Dre Walker, Randle Perry, Grant Smallwood, and occasional blocking "backs" Austin Carroll and Jake Knox. Together, they helped Woods and friends ramble for 301 rushing in 33 tries and gave Burgess enough time to complete eight passes to five different receivers.

Ward called it a "great win for our team, although we didn't really play very well on the defensive side of the ball. Part of the problem was that Dyersburg runs a lot of different sets that can look confusing to a defense. It was a game of constant adjustments, but our offense pulled us through tonight."

Another part of the confusion is that the Trojan uniforms are a statistician's nightmare: barely legible gold numbers on white jerseys that are drawn so tightly around certain backs that half the numeral is hiding. Add to that the indistinctive block style of the numerals, and it's almost impossible to tell a 5 from a 9 or a 3, or a 6 from an 8. If you're a defender trying to key on a Trojan player, you might need a detective to help track him down.

Be that as it may, Crockett's offensive line had no problems identifying its purpose: clear a path and let Woods and Burgess do their things. It didn't take long.

On Crockett's fourth play from scrimmage, Woods broke off a 48-yard touchdown scamper after racing through a hole created by Garner Brown, cutting left, and then somehow escaping two Trojans who appeared to have him locked up. But his momentum was never stopped, and a spin or two by the burly junior freed him up for the final 35 or so yards. Noah Mayfield's extra point made it 7-0, and barely a minute had run off the clock.

The teams traded punts for the next nine minutes, with the Cavs taking possession at their own 39 with 2:16 left in the opening quarter. Woods carried twice for 25 yards and Burgess kept it once for 13 more, and then lifted a perfectly thrown pass into the left corner of the end zone to Titus Luten. The 23-yard touchdown, with Mayfield's extra tacked on, made it 14-0 Crockett with just nine seconds on the clock.

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A minute into the second period, Cav defensive back Gabe Dupree recovered a Dyersburg fumble at the Trojan 43, and it didn't take long for Crockett to cash it in. Burgess hit Kris Phillips streaking down the left sideline for a 31-yard gain to set up a seven-yard scoring run by Woods. Although the extra point was hooked left, the Cavs led 20-0 with 9:48 remaining before halftime.

Rather than hang their heads, the Trojans responded with a 70-yard touchdown drive of their own, highlighted by a 31-yard pass completion from Logston Morgan to Devin Hope. Peyton Hill got the score from five yards out, and Elian Gonzalez booted the extra point to narrow the Dyersburg deficit to 20-7 at the 5:57 mark.

That was enough time for Crockett to score again, matching the Trojans' 70-yard drive. A Ben Burgess-to-Karsen Burgess pass gained 21 yards; another throw to Dre Walker went for 33; Squirt Pickens took a carry nine more; and Ben Burgess punched it in from a yard out despite having his helmet ripped off on the play, scoring with just 25 second left. Mayfield faked the extra point kick as holder Phillips stood up and tossed a soft pass over the middle to a wide-open Walker for the two-point conversion, and the Cavs carried a 28-7 advantage into the locker room.

Dyersburg refused to give in still, and used almost the entire third period to construct a 64-yard touchdown march, taking almost 10 minutes off the clock. The drive took 15 plays, culminating with a three-yard tally by Necari Hall. Gonzalez added the extra point to make it 28-14.

Ward's crew responded quickly again. A first-down scamper of 31 yards by Burgess ignited the 71-yard march, which was kept alive by an eight-yard gain by Burgess on a fourth-and-three run. Woods took it in from the nine for his third touchdown, and Mayfield made it 35-14 with 11:55 remaining in the contest.

The teams traded scoring punches throughout the final period. Dyersburg scored twice more – on a 24-yard pass from Morgan to Kendrick Gourley and a one-yard plunge by Ty'Marion Hill. In between, Woods broke off a 70-yard touchdown ramble in which he plowed directly through his final Trojan tackler, pushing his yardage total above 200 in the process.

Following this Fall Break week, Crockett will look to grab sole possession of first place atop the Region 7-4A standings when it travels to Medina to battle the team it's currently tied with, the South Gibson Hornets. South Gibson has been on a tear after a slow start, defeating Dyer County 35-0 and Lexington 27-20 in last two games to get to 4-3 on the season.

"They have a lot of size and they're very physical," Ward said. "It's going to be a tough one for sure, especially playing at their place. We'll have to be a lot better defensively than we were against Dyersburg. But if we can keep our offense going like this, I'll be optimistic about our chances."



Above: The main beneficiary of the blocking was DK Woods (32), who cut through a path cleared by his line, then found himself sandwiched by these two Trojan tacklers, ... (Photo by Ron Barry)

Game Statistics: Crockett 42, Dyersburg 28

Total Offense (Plays-Yards): CC 51-447; DY 53-333.

First Downs: CC 16; DY 14.

Penalties-Yards: CC 6-60; DY 7-54.

Punts-Yards-Avg: CC 2-59-29.5. DY 3-107-35.7.

Fumbles-Lost: CC 1-0; DY 2-1.

CC Rushing (Carries-Yards): DK Woods 19-207, Ben Burgess 11-57, Squirt Pickens 2-34, Karsen Burgess 1-3, Team 33-301.

DY Rushing: Quincy Terry 11-55, Peyton Hill 7-43, Necari Hall 10-41, Kendrick Gourley 4-33, Jaden Harris 4-28, Terrell Ragland 2-6, Ty'Marion Hill 1-1, Logston Morgan 2-(-7), Team 41-200.

CC Passing (Completions-Attempts-Yards-Interceptions): Ben Burgess 8-18-146-0. **DY Passing:** Morgan 8-12-133-0.

CC Receiving (Catches-Yards): Dre Walker 4-63, Kris Phillips 1-31, Titus Luten 1-23 (1 TD), Karsen Burgess 1-21, Squirt Pickens 1-8. **DY Receiving:** Devin Hope 2-59, Isaiah Thomas 4-43, Gourley 1-24 (1 TD), Hall 1-7.

CC Pass Interceptions (Int-Yards): None. **DY Pass Interceptions:** None.

CC Fumble Recoveries: Gabe Dupree 1. **DY Fumble Recoveries:** 0.

CC Kickoff Returns (Returns-Yards): None. **DY Kickoff Returns:** Terry 7-176.

CC Punt Returns: None. **DY Punt Returns:** None.

CC Scoring (TD-2PC-FG-XP-Points): DK Woods 4-0-0-0-24, Ben Burgess 1-0-0-0-6, Titus Luten 1-0-0-0-6, Noah Mayfield 0-0-0-4-4, Dre Walker 0-1-0-0-2, Team 6-1-0-4-42. **DY Scoring:** 4-0-0-4-28.

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The Linescore:

DY 0 7 7 14 - 28
CC 14 14 0 14 - 42

Crockett – DK Woods 48 run (Noah Mayfield kick)
Crockett – Titus Luten 23 pass from Ben Burgess (Mayfield kick)
Crockett – Woods 7 run (kick failed)
DY – Peyton Hill 3 run (Elian Gonzalez kick)
Crockett – Burgess 1 run (Dre Walker pass from Kris Phillips)
DY – Necari Hall 3 run (Gonzalez kick)
Crockett – Woods 9 run (Mayfield kick)
DY – Kendrick Gourley 24 pass from Logston Morgan (Gonzalez kick)
Crockett – Woods 70 run (Mayfield kick)
DY – Ty'Marion Hill 1 run (Gonzalez kick)

Season Statistics (7 games; 6-1 record; 3-1 region):

Total Offense (Plays-Yards): CC 270-2,298; OPP 313-1,283.
First Downs: CC 81; OPP 61.
Penalties-Yards: CC 31-233; OPP 42-363.
Punts-Yards-Avg: CC 10-281-28.1; OPP 24-698-29.1 (1 blocked).
Fumbles-Lost: CC 13-9; OPP 9-5.
CC Rushing (Carries-Yards): DK Woods 87-768, Ben Burgess 45-217, Demo Pickens 28-183, Gabe Dupree 3-100, Amaron Hobson 4-86, Squirt Pickens 10-78, Khalan Thomas 6-75, Dre Walker 7-33, Davis Porter 2-18, Kris Phillips 3-17, Karsen Burgess 2-7, Chris Vance 2-1, Chris Mann 1-(-1), bad snap 2-(-31), Team 202-1,551. OPP Rushing: 205-612.
CC Passing (Completions-Attempts-Yards-Interceptions): Ben Burgess 45-74-790-1. OPP Passing: 58-108-671-10.
CC Receiving (Catches-Yards): Dre Walker 10-173 (1 TD), Squirt Pickens 9-173 (2 TD), Karsen Burgess 12-145, Kris Phillips 7-119, Titus Luten 3-114 (2 TD), DK Woods 3-59 (1 TD), Demo Pickens 1-7. OPP Receiving: 58-671 (8 TD).
CC Pass Interceptions (Int-Yards): Gabe Dupree 4-24, Ian Greenberg 2-17, Demo Pickens 1-36, Kris Phillips 1-5, Austin Carroll 1-1, Amaron Hobson 1-0, Team 10-83. OPP Pass Interceptions: 1-0.
CC Fumble Recoveries: Gabe Dupree 1, Demo Pickens 1, Amaron Hobson 1, team recovery 2 (1 for safety). OPP Fumble Recoveries: 9.
CC Kickoff Returns (Returns-Yards): Demo Pickens 4-108 (1 TD), Squirt Pickens 2-31, Amaron Hobson 1-17, Brody Parlow 1-5, Carson Bridger 1-1, Team 9-162 (1 TD). OPP Kickoff Returns: 32-710 (1 TD).
CC Punt Returns: Demo Pickens 5-35, Squirt Pickens 1-4, Team 6-39. OPP Punt Returns: None.
CC Punt Blocks: Kris Phillips 1.
CC Scoring (TD-2PC-FG-XP-Points): DK Woods 17-0-0-0-102, Ben Burgess 6-1-0-0-38, Noah Mayfield 0-0-1-29-32, Squirt Pickens 3-0-0-0-18, Dre Walker 2-2-0-0-16, Demo Pickens 2-0-0-0-12, Gabe Dupree 2-0-0-0-12, Titus Luten 2-0-0-0-12, Amaron Hobson 1-0-0-0-6, Khalan Thomas 1-0-0-0-6, team safety 2, Team 36-3-1-29-256 (includes 1 safety). OPP Scoring: 16-0-0-13-109.



Above: ... only to somehow escape their grasp and end up in the end zone past three more Dyersburg pursuers. Woods ran for 207 yards and four touchdowns on 19 carries. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Quarterback Ben Burgess (10) continues to show his toughness as a runner, scoring this one-yard touchdown despite having his helmet ripped off his head during the play. Burgess followed the blocks of Garner Brown (67), his brother Karsen Burgess (2), and Brooks Harris (73) to find his way into the end zone. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Wide receiver Titus Luten (38) snared this corner pass over the arm of Dyersburg's Quincy Terry (9) ... (Photo by Ron Barry)



Right: ... and tiptoed inside the sideline to make it a legitimate touchdown catch on the Ben Burgess toss. Luten's tally put Crockett up 14-0 with nine seconds left in the opening period. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Prior to the start of the game, Crockett's cheerleaders were in a festive mood, wearing pink to salute breast cancer survivors. From left in this shot: Marlee Kellough, Hadleigh McCoy, Layla Petty, Sophia McGowan, and Carrington Smith. Ava North-Hall is in the smoky background. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Cav linebacker Jake Knox (35) stops Dyersburg runner Terrell Ragland in his tracks on this play. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Amarion Hobson (4) and Squirt Pickens (23) put a double hit on Trojan running back Quincy Terry. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Left: Kris Phillips (16) hauled in this 31-yard bomb down the left sideline from Ben Burgess, setting up Crockett's third touchdown of the game. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: And after the Cavs' fourth score -- as kicker Noah Mayfield (25) deftly pretends to be kicking the extra point to his left -- holder Kris Phillips (16) throws a perfect two-point conversion pass to Dre Walker. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Jalisa Tate models one of the pink jerseys worn by Crockett's cheer team during Friday night's "Tackle Cancer" salute to survivors. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Below: The Cavalier crazies were out in full force during the "Pink-Out" contest, supporting Crockett while standing up for breast cancer survivors as well. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Left: Dre Walker (6) caught four passes for 63 yards from his tight end position and also latched on to a two-point conversion toss from Kris Phillips. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Gabe Dupree (29) celebrates his big fumble recovery at the start of the second quarter as he exits the field flanked by Dre Walker (6) and Austin Carroll (7). (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Zerafin Guardian (76) and Nolen Turner (54) combine for an early sack on Dyersburg quarterback Logston Morgan. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Karsen Burgess hauls in a 21-yard pass from his brother Ben to keep a drive going just before the end of the first half. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Quarterback Ben Burgess (10) takes off behind the power blocking of Garner Brown (67), picking up a 13-yard gain. Burgess ran for 57 yards and threw for 146 more in the victory. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Probably the most definitive picture of a typical DK Woods (32) run: he's already run over one guy; he's about to run over another one; and he'll be dragging the player clinging to him -- and the one about to join him -- for another 10 yards before he finally goes down... IF he does. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Left: Students who reached their Accelerated Reader goals through Save the Children's READ programs in Crockett's three elementary schools were honored at the end of the first quarter. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Dyersburg's Devin Hope (33) leaps high to catch this long pass between the defensive efforts of Squirt (23) and Demo Pickens (3), ... (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Squirt Pickens (23) ripped off a 25-yard gain on his first carry of the night and might have scored if he hadn't outrun his blocker, Dre Walker (6), allowing the Dyersburg defender to drag him down. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Right: ... hanging on for the reception even after being sandwiched hard by the Cavalier duo. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Below: Noah Mayfield hasn't had to punt too often for the Cavaliers this season, but drove his first one against Dyersburg down to the Trojan 12-yard line. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: As lineman Garner Brown (67) stands over the defender he knocked out of the play, DK Woods (32) cuts upfield past Sebastian Garduno and begins his fourth touchdown jaunt of the night, a 70-yard run ... (Photo by Ron Barry)

Right: ... which included completely streamrolling the last Trojan who had a chance to tackle him. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Below Right: Soon he was off to the races, with nobody else in the area to stop him. DK Woods now has 17 touchdowns on the season and has rushed for 768 yards in 87 carries. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Right: Garner Brown listens to Coach Kevin Ward's post-game huddle speech. The play of the Cavalier offensive line will continue to be key when Crockett faces South Gibson in Medina on October 17. (Photo by Ron Barry)

