FOOTBALL PLAYOFFS BEGIN FRIDAY: 9-1 CAVS HOST KIRBY AFTER ROUTING SOUTH SIDE 58-0



Above: Khalan Thomas (20) forces a fumble as he brings down this South Side kickoff returner. Peter Bosco (26) and Rylan Redding (18) lend support to the hit. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Everybody is now 0-and-0, and (allegedly) anybody can beat anyone else. It's TSSAA Football Playoff time.

And while the TSSAA has historically had a multitude of opening-round mismatches, it's that time of year when no coach worth his salt lets his team assume it's going to win just by showing up at the stadium.

Crockett County head coach Kevin Ward shouldn't have that problem. His Cavs host Kirby High School Friday at 7 p.m. at Cavalier Stadium, and memories of games the last two seasons with the Memphis-based school should alleviate any overconfidence problems.

"We've played them each of the last two years, and both games were close," Ward said. "They have a lot of talented athletes and a lot of speed. We just have to come expecting a battle. Nobody gets anything handed to them this time of year."

If Ward's crew shows up Friday with the same focus it had against South Side in Jackson in the regular-season finale, the Cavs should be all right. Crockett scored 37 points in the first quarter on the way to steamrolling the Hawks 58-0, a score kept that close only because the second half was reduced to eight-minute quarters and a running clock.

"We did exactly what we needed to do against a struggling team," Ward said. "We scored quickly, our defense put them in a hole and scored again, and we executed well enough to take away any positive thoughts they might have had. There wasn't much we didn't do right tonight, and I'm proud of our seniors for securing another home game. I hope every Crockett fan will be there Friday night cheering these young men on. 9-and-1 seasons don't happen very often."

The win over South Side couldn't have been more lopsided. Crockett gained 350 yards on just 31 plays from scrimmage and limited the Hawks to – and this is not a typo – minus 30 yards on their 29 snaps. In the first quarter alone, the hosts ran five plays that lost 10 or more yards apiece, plus a fumble that Cav linebacker Brody Jones returned 10 yards for a touchdown.

Sandwiching the Jones tally were a pair of Ben Burgess scoring passes, the first covering 46 yards to Squirt Pickens and the second going for 63 yards to Titus Luten. DK Woods ran for a couple of two-point conversions to make it 23-0 before four full minutes had ticked off the clock.

Woods – who only carried the ball five times during the contest, for 60 yards - scored from eight yards out shortly after that, Khalan Thomas zipped around left end for a five-yard touchdown that made it 37-0 before some fans had even settled into their seats.

Mason Dennis added a six-yard tally early in the second quarter and Chris Vance took another one in from 13 yards out as the Cavs carried a 51-0 advantage into the dressing room at halftime.

The shortened periods and running clock ended the duel mercifully quickly for South Side, although Crockett managed to score one more time in the fourth on another five-yard scamper by Vance. Noah Mayfield booted five extra points and Landeyn Catalan one to supplement the pair of two-point conversions by Woods.

In the other Region 7-4A finales, top seed Lexington hammered Dyer County 70-36; Jackson North Side defeated Chester County 42-13; and South Gibson edged Hardin County 13-7. Kirby dropped a 42-21 decision to Haywood in its last regular-season game.

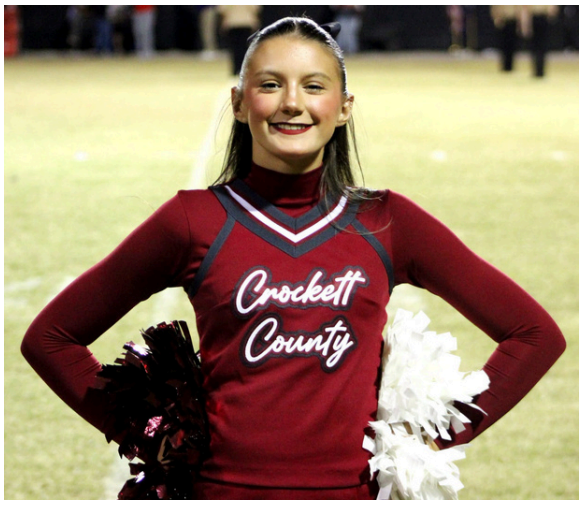


Above: Crockett's swarming defense held the Hawks to minus 40 yards rushing. Here, Chris Vance (15) hits a South Side runner low as Keyon Jelks (87) hits him high and Davis Porter (9) prepares to hammer his middle. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Friday, October 30

Game Statistics: Crockett 58, Jackson South Side 0

Total Offense (Plays-Yards): CR 31-350; SS 29-(-30).
First Downs: CR 12; SS 2.
Penalties-Yards: CR 2-15; SS 2-10.
Punts-Yards-Avg: CR: none; SS 4-152-38.0.
Fumbles-Lost: CR 0-0; SS 6-3.
CR Rushing (Carries-Yards): Chris Vance 9-62 (2 TDs), DK Woods 5-60 (1 TD), Mason Dennis 3-34 (1 TD), Titus Luten 1-30, Khalan Thomas 3-17 (1 TD), Davis Porter 2-15, Roman Barker 3-5, Ben Burgess 1-(-1), Team 27-222 (5 TDs). SS Rushing: Braylen Ross 5-25, Latoris Bond 1-5, Ma'Kai Anderson 1-0, bad snap 1-(-10), Kylend Hays 7-(-27), John David Carter 4-(-33), Team 19-(-40).
CR Passing (Completions-Attempts-Yards-Interceptions): Ben Burgess 3-4-128-1 (2 TDs). SS Passing: Carter 3-10-9-1.
CR Receiving (Catches-Yards): Titus Luten 2-82 (1 TD), Squirt Pickens 1-46 (1 TD). SS Receiving: Bond 1-5, Ross 1-3, Tyren Strode 1-1.
CR Pass Interceptions (Int-Yards): Chris Vance 1-13. SS Pass Interceptions: Ju'Quaveon Lewis 1-0.
CR Fumble Recoveries: Brody Jones 1-10 (1 TD), Dontavious Forrest 1-0, Khalan Thomas 1-0. SS Fumble Recoveries: none.
CR Kickoff Returns (Returns-Yards): none. SS Kickoff Returns: Hays 5-74, Jacoby Burton 2-16, Team 7-90. CR Punt Returns: Squirt Pickens 1-3. SS Punt Returns: none.
CC Scoring (TD-2PC-FG-XP-Points): Vance 2-0-0-0-12, Woods 1-2-0-0-10, Pickens 1-0-0-0-6, Luten 1-0-0-0-6, Dennis 1-0-0-0-6, Jones 1-0-0-0-6, Noah Mayfield 0-0-0-5-5, Landeyn Catalan 0-0-0-1-1, Team 8-2-0-6-58. SS Scoring: none.
The Linescore:
CR 37 14 0 7 - 58
SS 0 0 0 0 - 0
Crockett – Squirt Pickens 46 pass from Ben Burgess (Noah Mayfield kick)
Crockett – Brody Jones 10 fumble return (DK Woods run)
Crockett – Titus Luten 63 pass from Burgess (Woods run)
Crockett – Woods 8 run (Mayfield kick)
Crockett – Khalan Thomas 5 run (Mayfield kick)
Crockett – Mason Dennis 6 run (Mayfield kick)
Crockett – Chris Vance 13 run (Mayfield kick)
Crockett – Vance 5 run (Landeyn Catalan kick)



Left: Crockett's 58-0 win over South Side was the best present of the day for birthday girl Maclin Barry, who turned 16 as she cheered on her Cavaliers. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Season Statistics: Record 9-1 (Region 6-1)

Total Offense (Plays-Yards): CR 361-3,564; OPP 443-1,592.
First Downs: CR 105; OPP 88.
Penalties-Yards: CR 53-489; OPP 72-578.
Punts-Yards-Avg: CR 13-505-38.8; OPP 42-1,168-27.8.
Fumbles-Lost: CR 17-6; OPP 24-11.
CR Rushing (Carries-Yards): DK Woods 125-1,301 (21 TDs), Squirt Pickens 15-254 (3 TDs), Khalan Thomas 21-207 (4 TDs), Ben Burgess 57-171 (5 TDs), Mason Dennis 13-161 (3 TDs), Chris Vance 22-161 (3 TDs), Messiah McCurry 8-92 (1 TD), Jeremiah Young 4-54 (1 TD), Titus Luten 4-43,Chris Mann 5-23 (1 TD), Roman Barker 7-20, Davis Porter 2-15, Kris Phillips 3-10, bad snap from center 2-(-19), Team 288-2,493 (42 TDs). OPP Rushing: 299-873 (7 TDs).
CR Passing (Completions-Attempts-Yards-Interceptions): Ben Burgess 48-72-1,055-2 (19 TDs), Roman Barker 1-2-16-1 (1 TD), Team 49-74-1,071-3 (20 TDs). OPP Passing: 64-144-718-14 (7 TDs).
CR Receiving (Catches-Yards): Titus Luten 17-507 (9 TDs), Kris Phillips 11-242 (5 TDs), Squirt Pickens 11-208 (3 TDs), Brody Jones 2-53 (1 TD), Mason Dennis 2-19, DK Woods 3-18, Davis Porter 1-16 (1 TD), Ian Greenberg 1-5 (1 TD), Jeremiah Young 1-3, Team 49-1,071 (20 TDs). OPP Receiving: 64-718 (7 TDs).
CR Pass Interceptions (Int-Yards): Mason Dennis 3-85 (1 TD), Squirt Pickens 3-83 (2 TDs), Ian Greenberg 1-58 (1 TD), Squirt Pickens 2-27 (1 TD), Brody Parlow 2-15, Kris Phillips 1-13, Chris Vance 1-13, Brody Jones 1-6, Chris Mann 1-0, Jeremiah Young 1-0, Team 14-273 (4 TDs). OPP Pass Interceptions: 3-40.
CR Fumble Recoveries: Nolen Turner 1-16 (1 TD), DK Woods 1-12, Brody Jones 1-10 (1 TD), Brody Parlow 1-0, Rylan Redding 1-0, Peter Bosco 1-0, Davis Porter 1-0, Carson Bridger 1-0, Squirt Pickens 1-0, Dontavious Forrest 1-0, Khalan Thomas 1-0, Team 11-38 (2 TDs). OPP Fumble Recoveries: 6-72 (1 TD) [includes an onside kick recovery].
CR Kickoff Returns (Returns-Yards): Titus Luten 2-162 (2 TDs), Squirt Pickens 4-100, Mason Dennis 1-13, Jeremiah Young 1-10, Ian Greenberg 1-2, Team 9-287 (2 TDs). OPP Kickoff Returns: 58-911 (1 TD).
CR Punt Returns: Squirt Pickens 9-84, Khalan Thomas 1-21 (1 TD from end zone recovery after punt block by Rylan Redding), Titus Luten 2-16, Team 12-121 (1 TD). OPP Punt Returns: 4-31.
CR Scoring (TD-2PC-FG-XP-Points): DK Woods 21-2-0-0-130, Titus Luten 11-0-0-0-66, Noah Mayfield 0-0-0-54-54, Squirt Pickens 8-0-0-0-48, Kris Phillips 5-0-0-0-30, Ben Burgess 5-0-0-0-30, Khalan Thomas 5-0-0-0-30, Mason Dennis 4-0-0-0-24, Chris Vance 3-0-0-0-18, Ian Greenberg 2-0-0-0-12, Brody Jones 1-0-0-0-6, Jeremiah Young 1-0-0-0-6, Messiah McCurry 1-0-0-0-6, Chris Mann 1-0-0-0-6, Davis Porter 1-0-0-0-6, Nolen Turner 1-0-0-0-6, Dontavious Forrest 0-1-0-0-2, Landeyn Catalan 0-0-0-2-2, Team 71-3-0-56-488. OPP Scoring: 16-0-0-14-110.



Above: Quarterback Ben Burgess opened the game by lofting this 46-yard touchdown pass ... (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: ... to streaking wide receiver Squirt Pickens (3), who easily outran his defender. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Left: In between the touchdown passes, Cav linebacker Brody Jones (11) picked up this Hawk fumble and returned it 10 yards for another tally. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Brody Jones (11) then celebrated with several of the defenders who helped create the fumble: Grant Smallwood (77), Jacob Howard (52), Ian Greenberg (behind Howard), DK Woods (32), and Brody Parlow (5). (Photo by Ron Barry)





Below: Shortly after the touchdown pass to Squirt Pickens, Ben Burgess found speedster Titus Luten (4) for a 63-yard bomb and another score. (Photo by Ron Barry)





Above: The Cavaliers' constant touchdown scoring kept this group of Crockett cheerleaders smiling all night. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Chris Vance (15) had a big night, scoring two rushing touchdowns ... (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: ... and then intercepting this South Side pass, returning it with an escort from Peter Bosco (26), Keyon Jelks (87), Davis Porter (9), and Trevor Willis (14). (Photo by Ron Barry)



Left: DK Woods (32) is hard enough to bring down, but when he's also being pushed by Sebastian Garduno (63), Nolen Turner (54), and Brody Jones (11), he's going to get his yards. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Jayden Young (60) recorded this sack of South Side quarterback John David Carter. (Photo by Ron Barry)





Right: Grant Smallwood has been a mainstay of the Cavalier defensive line all season, helping achieve the outstanding 9-1 record. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Crockett now turns its attention to the playoffs, where offensive lineman Sebastian Garduno will get another chance to shine. (Photo by Ron Barry)







Above: Brody Parlow (5) almost cut this receiver in half after a short reception. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Carson Williams (24), Khalan Thomas (20), and Jeremiah Young (1) made things miserable for this Hawk receiver. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Nolen Turner (54) made like a steamroller for this sack of South Side QB John David Carter. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Below: Titus Luten (4) crashed into the rushing yards category Friday night, zooming for 30 yards on this end-around. (Photo by Ron Barry)





Above: Middle linebacker DJ Forrest (33) led the charge on this stuff, assisted by Jayden Young (60) and Grant Smallwood (77). (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Sebastian Garduno and his fellow Cavs continue to clear the way for DK Woods (32), who has amassed more than 1,300 yards on the ground this season. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Wide receiver Davis Porter (9) got in the rush column, picking up 15 yards on two carries. (Photo by Ron Barry)

