CAVALIER GRIDDERS CLINCH HOME PLAYOFF BERTH BY TROUNCING CHESTER COUNTY 62-21



Above: You can almost smell the smoke from the burger grill at Chester County as Crockett's Noah Mayfield boots this extra point out of the hold of Kris Phillips. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Crockett County's senior football players just earned themselves one more home game.

Coach Kevin Ward's explosive Cavaliers clinched a second-place finish in the Region 7-4A standings Friday night by pounding Chester County 62-21 in Henderson and ensuring a host role for the opening round of the TSSAA playoffs in two weeks.

Crockett rolled up 490 yards in total offense on just 44 plays, never had to punt, survived two lost fumbles, and returned a pass interception for a score in totally dominating the game's final 31 minutes after the hosts had forged a 14-14 tie with 7:13 to play in the second quarter. After that, it was all Cavaliers, all the time, as Ward's club improved its season record to 8-1 with one more contest remaining in the regular season.

"It's been a long time since we were 8-1 here," Ward said after the game. "We really turned that game around in the last seven minutes of the first half. We did a lot of good things from then on. There are a lot of reasons to feel good about this team, and the couple of reasons not to, we're going to fix."

For the second straight game, senior running back DK Woods eclipsed the 200-yard mark, going for 217 and four touchdowns on just 21 carries. Woods now has 20 tallies on the season along with 1,241 yards, averaging better than 10 yards per carry.

And when he's running that effectively, it opens up Crockett's passing game. Senior quarterback Ben Burgess completed 8-of-9 throws Friday night for 126 yards and two more touchdowns, bringing his season total to 17. Crockett also received a 62-yard scoring run from Mason Dennis; a 56-yard interception return for a touchdown by Squirt Pickens; and a total defensive effort that held Chester County's potent offense to under 175 yards.

The only serious blemish on the victory was the chippy behavior of both teams once Crockett had pulled safely ahead. The host Eagles were penalized 11 times for 123 yards in assessments. The Cavaliers were flagged 12 times for 104 yards, sometimes from retaliation moves but too often as instigators themselves.

But on the positive side, Burgess hit Pickens for a 36-yard touchdown pass less than a minute into the game, after Pickens had recovered a Chester County fumble on the opening kickoff. After the Eagles' Ethan Talley raced 72 yards with a Crockett fumble to tie it back up, a scrambling Burgess found Titus Luten open for a 30-yard scoring strike just 11 seconds into the second quarter.

The hosts responded with a 10-play, 87-yard touchdown drive aided by a pair of Cav penalties. Quarterback Grayson Stewart ran it in from five yards out, and the duel was deadlocked at 14-14 with 7:13 to go before the break.

Woods capped a 50-yard march with a seven-yard sweep of left end to put Crockett back up 21-14 at the 3:34 mark, and two minutes later Pickens pilfered a Stewart pass just beyond midfield and snaked his way through tacklers all the way to the end zone to push the margin to 28-14 with 1:14 to play.

Crockett wasn't through. Sandwiched by two incomplete passes, Cav lineman Carson Bridger sacked Stewart for a big seven-yard loss. Ward effectively used the Crockett timeouts to force an Eagle punt, and the Cavs caught a break when Chester punter Brayden Harrison planted his boot into the backside of one of his blockers, resulting in a two-yard kick that gave Crockett the ball at the Eagle 17 with 34 seconds still remaining.

After a 10-yard holding penalty against the Cavs, Pickens broke off a 25-yard run on a receiver sweep and Burgess executed a perfect quarterback sneak from the one to give the Cavs a 35-14 edge at the half. Cav kicker Noah Mayfield made all five of his extra-point attempts in the opening half. After Pickens returned the third quarter kickoff 47 yards to midfield, Woods broke a couple of 20+-yard rushes and then scored from the two, giving Crockett a 42-14 lead a minute into the period. The Eagles answered with a 33-yard scoring pass from Jaden Weaver to Jordan Hunt, but Woods tallied twice more before the end of the quarter on runs of four and seven yards. Dennis closed the scoring with his long jaunt at 5:21 of the fourth.

Lexington's 45-12 win over Hardin County Friday night gave the Tigers the top seed from Region7-4A for the playoffs. Crockett's 5-1 region mark secured second place. Jackson North Side defeated South Gibson 48-29 and Dyer County toppled Jackson South Side – Crockett's opponent in the regular-season finale – by a 42-12 count.

Friday, October 23

Game Statistics: Crockett 62, Chester Co 21

Total Offense (Plays-Yards): CR 44-490; CH 39-174.
First Downs: CR 15; CH 9.
Penalties-Yards: CR 12-104; CH 11-123.
Punts-Yards-Avg: CR: none; CH 4-118-29.5.
Fumbles-Lost: CR 4-2; CH 1-1.
CR Rushing (Carries-Yards): DK Woods 21-217 (4 TDs), Mason Dennis 2-64 (1 TD), Khalan Thomas 5-49, Squirt Pickens 4-27, Titus Luten 1-11, Ben Burgess 2-(-4) (1 TD), Team 35-364 (6 TDs). CH Rushing: Izaiah Armstrong 8-45, Grayson Stewart 7-18 (1 TD), Heath Stewart 1-16, Jatorijon Brown 5-10, Canaan White 1-9, Thomas Harris 1-2, Jaden Weaver 1-1, Konnor Austein 1-0, Team 25-101.
CR Passing (Completions-Attempts-Yards-Interceptions): Ben Burgess 8-9-126-0 (2 TDs). CH Passing: G Stewart 4-13-40-2, Weaver 1-1-33-0 (1 TD), Team 5-14-73-2 (1 TD).
CR Receiving (Catches-Yards): Squirt Pickens 4-66 (1 TD), Titus Luten 2-36 (1 TD), Kris Phillips 2-24. CH Receiving: Jordan Hunt 2-47 (1 TD), H Stewart 1-8, Weaver 1-6.
CR Pass Interceptions (Int-Yards): Squirt Pickens 1-56 (1 TD), Jeremiah Young 1-0. CH Pass Interceptions: none.
CR Fumble Recoveries: Squirt Pickens 1-0. CH Fumble Recoveries: Ethan Talley 1-72 (1 TD), Canaan White 1-0.
CR Kickoff Returns (Returns-Yards): Squirt Pickens 2-76. CH Kickoff Returns: Johntae McNeal 5-87, Weaver 3-48, H Stewart 1-27, Team 9-162. CR Punt Returns: Squirt Pickens 1-5. CH Punt Returns: none.
CC Scoring (TD-2PC-FG-XP-Points): Woods 4-0-0-0-24, Pickens 2-0-0-0-12, Noah Mayfield 0-0-0-8-8, Luten 1-0-0-0-6, Dennis 1-0-0-0-6, Burgess 1-0-0-0-6, Team 9-0-0-8-62. CH Scoring: G Stewart 1-0-0-0-6, Hunt 1-0-0-0-6, Talley 1-0-0-0-6, Brayden Harrison 0-0-0-3-3, Team 3-0-0-3-21.
The Linescore:
CR 7 28 20 7 - 62
CH 7 7 7 0 - 21
Crockett – Squirt Pickens 36 pass from Ben Burgess (Noah Mayfield kick)
Chester – Ethan Talley 72 fumble return (Brayden Harrison kick)
Crockett – Titus Luten 30 pass from Ben Burgess (Mayfield kick)
Chester – Grayson Stewart 5 run (Harrison kick)
Crockett – DK Woods 7 run (Mayfield kick)
Crockett – Pickens 56 interception return (Mayfield kick)
Crockett – Burgess 1 run (Mayfield kick)
Crockett – Woods 2 run (Mayfield kick)
Chester –Jordan Hunt 33 pass from Jaden Weaver (Harrison kick)
Crockett – Woods 4 run (Mayfield kick)
Crockett – Woods 7 run (kick failed)
Crockett – Mason Dennis 62 run (Mayfield kick)

Season Statistics: Record 8-1 (Region 5-1)

Total Offense (Plays-Yards): CR 330-3,214; OPP 414-1,622.
First Downs: CR 93; OPP 86.
Penalties-Yards: CR 51-474; OPP 70-568.
Punts-Yards-Avg: CR 13-505-38.8; OPP 38-1,016-26.7. Fumbles-Lost: CR 17-6; OPP 18-8.
CR Rushing (Carries-Yards): DK Woods 120-1,241 (20 TDs), Squirt Pickens 15-254 (3 TDs), Khalan Thomas 18-190 (3 TDs), Ben Burgess 56-172 (5 TDs), Mason Dennis 10-127 (2 TDs), Chris Vance 13-99 (1 TD), Messiah McCurry 8-92 (1 TD), Jeremiah Young 4-54 (1 TD), Chris Mann 5-23 (1 TD), Roman Barker 4-15, Titus Luten 3-13, Kris Phillips 3-10, bad snap from center 2-(-19), Team 261-2,271 (37 TDs). OPP Rushing: 280-913 (7 TDs).
CR Passing (Completions-Attempts-Yards-Interceptions): Ben Burgess 45-68-927-1 (17 TDs), Roman Barker 1-2-16-1 (1 TD), Team 46-70-943-2 (18 TDs). OPP Passing: 61-134-709-13 (7 TDs).
CR Receiving (Catches-Yards): Titus Luten 15-425 (8 TDs), Kris Phillips 11-242 (5 TDs), Squirt Pickens 10-162 (2 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 46-943 (18 TDs). OPP Receiving: 61-709 (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, Brody Jones 1-6, Chris Mann 1-0, Jeremiah Young 1-0, Team 13-260 (4 TDs). OPP Pass Interceptions: 2-40.
CR Fumble Recoveries: Nolen Turner 1-16 (1 TD), DK Woods 1-12, Brody Parlow 1-0, Rylan Redding 1-0, Peter Bosco 1-0, Davis Porter 1-0, Carson Bridger 1-0, Squirt Pickens 1-0, Team 8-28 (1 TD). 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: 51-821 (1 TD).
CR Punt Returns: Squirt Pickens 8-81, Khalan Thomas 1-21 (1 TD from end zone recovery after punt block by Rylan Redding), Titus Luten 2-16, Team 11-118 (1 TD). OPP Punt Returns: 4-31.
CR Scoring (TD-2PC-FG-XP-Points): DK Woods 20-0-0-0-120, Titus Luten 10-0-0-0-60, Noah Mayfield 0-0-0-49-49, Squirt Pickens 7-0-0-0-42, Kris Phillips 5-0-0-0-30, Ben Burgess 5-0-0-0-30, Khalan Thomas 4-0-0-0-24, Mason Dennis 3-0-0-0-18, Ian Greenberg 2-0-0-0-12, Brody Jones 1-0-0-0-6, Chris Vance 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 0-0-0-1-1, Team 63-1-0-50-430. OPP Scoring: 16-0-0-14-110.



Above: Cav lineman Grant Smallwood (77) drags down Chester County's Izaiah Armstrong. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: A sudden DK Woods cutback near the sideline sends one Eagle hanger-on flying and another potential tackler overrunning him. (Photo by Ron Barry)





Above: Quarterback Ben Burgess (10) had another incredibly efficient night, completing 8-of-9 passes for 126 yards and two touchdowns. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Right: Late in the first half, Carson Bridger (79) recorded this huge sack of Eagle quarterback Grayson Stewart, ... (Photo by Ron Barry)



Left: Crockett's cheer team was ready to put the host Eagles behind bars. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Squirt Pickens (3) is congratulated by Ian Greenberg (2) after catching a 36-yard touchdown pass in the game's opening minute. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Below: Later, Squirt Pickens picked off an Eagle pass and -- escorted by linebacker Dontavious Forrest (33) -- returned the interceptions 56 yards for another score. (Photo by Ron Barry)







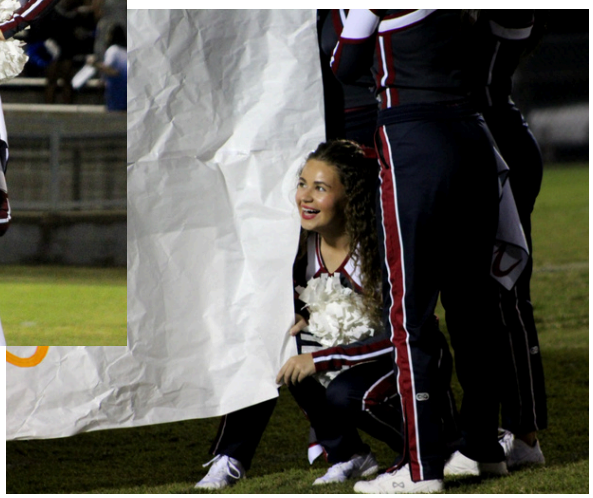
Above: ... helping Crockett score its third touchdown in a seven-minute span that broke the game open. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Noah Mayfield opened the contest with this kickoff, and Squirt Pickens came up with a Chester County fumble during the tackle. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Left: Cacie Jo McNeill (top) and Addie Hoover (base) were smiling much of the night as the Cavaliers scored nine touchdowns. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: Emmie Pickens hopes to avoid being squashed when the football team runs through the cheer squad's sign. (Photo by Ron Barry)







Above: DK Woods had a 217-yard, 4-touchdown night running behind his offensive line of Sebastian Garduno (63), Nolen Turner (54), Carson Bridger (79), Ittai Fry (57), and Brody Jones (11). (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Titus Luten (4) is brought down by a trio of Eagle defenders. Luten caught a 30-yard touchdown pass and this six-yarder in the duel. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: In addition to a fumble recovery, an interception return for a touchdown, four rushes for 27 yards, and four pass receptions for 66 yards and a score, Squirt Pickens (3) also returned two kickoffs for 76 more yards. (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: And speaking of touchdowns, DK Woods racked up his 20th of the season on this short burst. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Below: Capping off the touchdown parade for Crockett, Mason Dennis (7) cuts inside this Nolen Turner (54) block ... (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: ... completing a 62-yard touchdown scamper. (Photo by Ron Barry)

