

Bucks Roll Into 11AA Semis

Yankton Blasts Huron 43-21, To Face Harrisburg In Semifinals

BY NICK ROBINSON
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The Yankton Bucks won their 20th straight contest over the Huron Tigers 43-21 on Thursday night at Crane-Youngworth Field in the first round of the 11AA playoffs.

With the victory, Yankton also advanced to its second straight semifinal appearance, where it will host Harrisburg next Friday.

"We came out and did what we wanted to start off with," Yankton head coach Arlin Likness said. "But, later in the game, we had some mental breakdowns that you don't want happening going into the semifinal game with this much experience."

Yankton (9-0) started the game off the on fire, as Colton Diefenderfer recovered a fumble on the second play of scrimmage. On Yankton's first play, Parker Kuchta ran for 18 yards and trucked his way into the end zone.

Thanks to Diefenderfer, as he recovered the Huron (0-9, 0-7 in ESD) botched snap, the Bucks were able to score on a 15 yard touchdown run from Sheldon Gant. Yankton was able to score another touchdown in the first quarter, thanks to an 11 yard pass from Mason Strahl to Evan Greenaway. Yankton had a 22-0 advantage after the first quarter.

"That was big," Likness said. "We got great field position. Hopefully, the luck will stay with us and we continue to have this kind of success down the road."

With five minutes remaining in the half, Gant found the end zone again, on a 16 yard run. The Bucks were able to hold onto a 29-0 lead going into the second half.

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Bucks Blast Into Semifinals

ABOVE: Yankton's Colton Diefenderfer, left, Landon Binder and Evan Greenaway meet at Huron quarterback Sam Carr during their Class 11AA football quarterfinal on Thursday at Yankton's Crane-Youngworth Field.

LEFT: Yankton running back Parker Kuchta, left, picks up a block from teammate Jordan Lightner on the way to a touchdown early in the first quarter of the Bucks' Class 11AA quarterfinal football game with Huron on Thursday at Crane-Youngworth Field.

JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D



Creighton Coasts In D1 Opener

BY BRUCE VIERGUTZ
For The Press & Dakotan

CREIGHTON, Neb. — Explosive Creighton opened a 22-7 first-quarter opener at Twin Loup with a dynamite running attack.

The result left the Wolves defense in a 56-7 setback in Nebraska Class D1 state high school football playoff action Thursday night.

"We came out, made some mistakes and didn't play with a lot of intensity early on," Creighton coach Jeff Jensen said. "We had all of our freshmen gone at an FFA (Future Farmers of America) convention so it was kind of quiet on the sidelines."

Twin Loup, due to a rugged schedule, came into the contest with a meager 2-6 record. Creighton, now 9-0, entered the playoffs with the No. 1 seed in the western bracket.

Early on, it looked as if a mismatch was on the field as well as paper.

The Bulldogs struck in lightning fashion when quarterback Colten Boelter hit receiver Beau Schindler for a 60-yard touchdown pass for a 6-0 lead.

After a holding the Wolves on three downs, it took Creighton five plays to hit paydirt again when Boelter rambled 38 yards for a score and a 14-0 advantage.

Creighton again stopped Twin Loup on three downs before ensuing on an 11-play 42-yard drive and scored on a 5-yard touchdown pass from Boelter to Lane Walton to make it 22-0 with 36 seconds left in the first quarter.

"We've had nice weather up until tonight when it was windy and cold," Jensen said. "It kind of took away our play-action pass. But we definitely have things to work for next week."

The Wolves tried to make a game of it when Marshall Gibbens scored from 57 yards out on a fourth-and-three to put the Wolves on the board 22-7.

Twin Loup then recovered an onside kick, setting up shop at the Bulldog 37-yard line. The Wolves then ran a halfback pass and had a receiver all alone in the end zone but the pass was overthrown by about five yards.

Creighton answered with a 27-yard touchdown run by Reid Liska and a 1-yard plunge by Boelter to take a commanding 36-7 lead at halftime.

Liska paced the Bulldogs' attack with 80 yards rushing on 14 carries in the first half. Walton carried 12 times for 66 yards. Liska finished with 137 yards on 18 carries and Walton 95 yards on 17 tries.

The Bulldogs had 218 total yards to 61 for Twin Loup in the first half.

Creighton picked up where it left off in the second half. A 4-yard touchdown run by Walton made it 42-7 and got the running clock going due to the 35-point rule.

Boelter added touchdown runs of 12 and 1-yard to account for the final score.

"I don't know if we had the same intensity level tonight that we've had all year," Jensen said. "But we'll be ready to go in our next game, I'm sure of that."

Wildcats Upended By Clarkson-Leigh In D1 Playoff Opener

BY JEREMY HOECK
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HARTINGTON, Neb. — What eventually turned into an offensive shoot-out after halftime was decided by, of all things, two key defensive stops.

Clarkson-Leigh, a No. 11 seed, stopped sixth-seeded Hartington-Newcastle, a first-year consolidation, 34-26 in Nebraska Class D1 first-round playoff action Thursday night at Russ Hochstein Field.

The victory was the first in the post-season for the Patriots (5-4), who are in year three of a co-op.

"I was excited for our guys to finally step up and make a few big plays there at the end to finish it off," head coach Jim Clark said.

In a game that was 18-14 at halftime, the two teams scored

touchdowns on the first four drives of the third quarter.

Clarkson-Leigh went ahead 34-26 with 46.2 seconds left in the third, on a 33-yard touchdown run by Christopher Konicek — his third score of the night.

The hometown Wildcats then drove all the way down to the Patriots 4-yard line, but were stopped four times and gave the ball back to Clarkson-Leigh. The Patriots then also marched down the field, but had a pass to the end zone intercepted.

Needing a touchdown and conversion to tie the game, Hartington-Newcastle got all the way down to the 22-yard line, but a pass into the wind was intercepted. The Patriots then knelt twice to run out the clock.

"Red zone scoring was kind of an issue this year," said

Wildcats senior quarterback Kolby Jueden, who threw three touchdown passes and ran for a score.

"We just couldn't string it together."

The Wildcats, who finish the season 6-3, were able to consistently respond to Clarkson-Leigh's big-play offense — at least until the fourth quarter.

"We thought ball control would be kind of key, because they're pretty explosive," Hartington-Newcastle head coach Blair Kalin said.

"We just didn't make enough plays when we had the ball down in their territory. We could have had a couple more scores, but didn't."

The two teams each scored on their opening drive of the game, as the Wildcats jumped

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JEREMY HOECK/P&D

Hartington-Newcastle quarterback Kolby Jueden, far left, looks for a receiver during Thursday night's Class D1 first-round game against Clarkson-Leigh in Hartington, Nebraska.

Crofton Wins Mid-State Title

NORFOLK, Neb. — The Crofton Lady Warriors remained unbeaten on the season and added a Mid-State Conference Tournament title to their resume. Crofton beat Pierce 24-26, 25-19, 25-22, 25-21 on Thursday night in Norfolk.

No stats were reported for Crofton (24-0), which opens Sub-

District play against Hartington Cedar Catholic on Monday.

For the Bluejays (22-8), Kierstyn Wragge had 10 kills, Allison Koehlmoos had nine kills and Jaci Brahmaer had six total blocks.

PIERCE (22-8)	26	19	22	21
CROFTON (24-0)	24	25	25	25

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Lancers Blast Grace In Opener

OMAHA, Neb. — All 14 players scored as the Mount Marty College women's basketball team opened its season with a 102-43 rout of Grace University on Thursday night in Omaha.

Newcomer Alex Kneeland led the Lancers with 15

points, and was followed in double figures by Holly Hegge (13), Denae Veldkamp (10) and Ashley Green (10). Kellie Winckler grabbed six rebounds and had four steals, while April Winne dished out four assists.

Mount Marty shot 52 per-

cent from the field and made 12-of-24 three-pointers.

The Lancers open their home schedule with a Sunday night game against Dakota State. Tip-off is set for 6 p.m. at Cimpl Arena.

Bloomfield Outlasts Trojans In Class D1 Playoff Opener

BY VANCE JANAK
P&D Correspondent

BLOOMFIELD, Neb. — The Bloomfield Bees have qualified for the playoffs for 28-straight seasons. That's the second-longest active streak in the state.

But the Bees current seniors have never advanced past the first round. At halftime Thursday evening against No. 10 Scribner-Snyder, it looked like that trend was going to continue.

No. 7 Bloomfield faced an 18-point deficit after the Bees turned the ball over three times and couldn't consistently stop the Trojans' shotgun running game.

"We needed heart," Bloomfield senior Cody Beckmann said.

They got it, along with a second-round game Wednesday. The Bees scored on all seven of their second-half possessions and created a couple of key Scribner-Snyder turnovers to earn a thrilling 66-56 come-from-behind win.

"This win is huge, espe-

cially coming from three scores down" Bloomfield senior Quinn O'Brien said. "We didn't get down on our teammates and we picked each other up and we keep going. That's how we did it."

Beckmann and O'Brien provided plenty of Bloomfield's scoring. The 190-pound Beckmann was the workhorse back, carrying the ball 32 times for 156 yards and three touchdowns.

O'Brien, the Bees' quarterback, added 124 yards and three rushing scores — including the go-ahead touchdown on a 49-yard with 3:58 remaining. O'Brien also threw for 169 yards and three touchdowns. His final toss was a 29-yard touchdown on a shovel pass to junior Tyler Holz, who had a 35-yard score on a similar play call earlier in the game, with 46 seconds left. Beckmann's two-point conversion run gave the Bees a 10-point lead to seal the win.

"In the second half, it was about being bigger and more physical," Beckmann said. "We had to think that we were better than the guy across from us

and that we will score every time we touch the ball."

Bloomfield (7-2) needed points on every possession after struggling to hold onto the ball in the first half. Those mistakes made it difficult for the Bees to keep up with the Trojans (6-3) offense, led by 6-foot-5, 220-pound senior quarterback Bruce Schulenberg.

His 65-yard touchdown on Scribner-Snyder's first play from scrimmage answered Holz's touchdown reception on the Bees' first drive. A 47-yard touchdown run was how Schulenberg's next carry ended.

Schulenberg's 2-yard touchdown plunge — followed by Brandon French's two-point conversion run — gave the Trojans a 32-14 advantage with 1:53 left in the first half.

That left the Bees reeling at halftime.

"We knew that it was only a three-possession game," Beckmann said. "We knew that if we ran our offense, played our type of defense, we knew we couldn't be stopped."

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JAMES D. CIMBUREK/P&D

Bloomfield's McGwire Mackeprang catches a pass behind the defense of Scribner-Snyder's Brandon French during their Class D1 football playoff opener on Thursday in Bloomfield, Nebraska. Mackeprang escaped the Trojan defense for the touchdown in the Bees' 66-56 victory.