

SPORTS B

PERFECTION

Undefeated Saints now turn attention to playoffs

DUANE SHERRILL
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The DeKalb Middle School Saints ended their regular season by sending a message to the rest of their conference, hammering Macon County 50-14 to complete a perfect regular season and perch themselves atop the conference as they host the opening round of the playoffs this Thursday.

"We need a lot of people to come out," said Saints Head Coach Justin Poteete of the Thursday game which kicks off at 6:30 p.m. "The Thursday night winner goes to the championship game."

The Saints finished with an unblemished 6-0 record by going on the road and dismantling Macon County in what was a key region game when it came to claiming the regular season conference championship. The game itself was over by halftime as running back Colby Barnes kept his 100-yard streak intact and then some, galloping 224 yards on 15 carries for four touchdowns. His partner in crime, Josh May wasn't going to be left out of the fun as he went 176 yards on 11 carries and three touchdowns. Ari White contributed 19 yards on six carries and Gabe Hollingsworth three yards

on two carries in a game where the starters only played until half-time.

The Saints capped the regular season by outscoring their combined six opponents 224-58, shutting out Jackson County 42-0 and blowing out Upperman 62-6. They were also able to manhandle Smith County 34-8, challenged on the scoreboard in only two road games, beating Trousdale 20-16 and Avery Trace 16-14 in squeakers.

Their trip to the playoffs was the first goal set by Poteete at the beginning of the season. He now eyes the possibility of winning the conference championship if they can win the next two games. Their opponent for Thursday has not been set. They will play the winner of the Tuesday night game between Avery Trace and Livingston.

To celebrate their undefeated regular season, DeKalb Middle School will host a pep rally for its students at 2 p.m. Thursday at the school. Sixth graders are to wear red, seventh white and eighth blue. The public is encouraged to be part of a community spirit tunnel the players will run through on the way to the field Thursday night. Those wanting to participate can also bring signs if they wish. Those wanting to participate are encouraged to be there by 5 p.m.



Duane Sherrill photo

Josh May rushed for three touchdowns and over 100 yards in the Saints' blowout win over Macon County. The unbeaten Saints will play host to the first round of the playoffs Thursday night.



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While giving the Tigers their only lead of the night with a gorgeous 80-yard pass to Grayson Redmon, quarterback Axel Aldino did not find much running room as he was dumped on his head during one of his attempts to elude Lion defenders in DeKalb's 19-7 loss at Woodbury.

Lions topple Tigers

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Snapping a losing streak that went back to 2007, the Cannon County Lions clawed their way to victory a yard at a time, nickel and dime their way to a 19-7 victory over the DeKalb County Tigers Friday night in Woodbury.

"It's all about execution," said Tiger Head Coach Steve Trapp of the loss which saw the Lions control the clock and the ball, breaking off runs of three and four yards as they patiently stuck to the ground game behind DeKalb County product Tyler Bundy who rushed for over 100 yards and all three of Cannon County's touchdowns. "Until we fix our execution problems we're not going to have success."

Early on it appeared the Tigers would add another win to their streak and ruin homecoming for the Lions as Axel Aldino hooked up with Grayson Redmon, threading the needle between two Lion defenders for a 80-yard touchdown to give DeKalb a 7-0 lead in the first quarter.

The elation would not last; however, as Cannon County began patiently grinding the ball down the field behind Bundy and others, content to gain three yards at a time, often going for it on fourth down to continue drives. Their second drive of the evening ended in a five-yard Bundy run. They remained behind at the half 7-6 after missing the extra point.

The Tiger lead ended with the Lions' first possession of the second half as Cannon went on a 13-play, 77-yard drive that

chewed up most of the third quarter, culminating with a two-yard Bundy plunge into the endzone making the score 13-7.

While unable to resist the Cannon onslaught, the Tigers remained viable throughout the game, doing just enough to keep the Lions from tacking on another score. Aldino, who went over 100 yards passing for the game but threw a season-high three interceptions, was able to position his squad for a possible go-ahead score with just under five minutes to go in the game after driving into Lion territory. However, a desperation pass on fourth down was intercepted by a Cannon defender.

Aldino was able to chase down the Lion but his effort only shortly delayed the Lion score as Bundy carried Tigers on his back as he bulldozed into the endzone with three minutes to go in the game to give his team a happy homecoming and a 19-7 win.

"It's good to know beating us can be such a big deal for some teams," Trapp said of the celebration that ensued after the Lion victory. "For us, we're going to keep working, trying to get better."

Trapp said injuries continue to mount even as his squad sits at 2-4 on the season. "We have some dinged up and we're waiting on word about David Bradford's shoulder," the coach said of his workhorse running back who has been out since late in the Watertown game two weeks ago.

The Tigers play host to Livingston Academy this Friday for homecoming. Kick off begins at 7 p.m. and festivities at 6:30 p.m. at the field.