

# Arrows advancing to North Class 6A semifinals after big win

By Danny C. Davis

The Clinton Arrows had not been the playoffs in four years, but they sure made the playoff drought end in a big way by crushing Horn Lake 35-7 on Friday, November 13, in the opening round of the MHSAA North Class 6A playoffs. With the win, the Arrows advance to the North Class 6A semifinals against their old rival Warren Central at Arrow Field on Friday night, November 20, at 7 p.m. Tickets are available at GoFan.com. A win by Clinton, and the Arrows will either host Oxford at home on November 27 or travel to Hernando.

All Arrows fans are encouraged to fill the home stands Friday night to back the Arrows on the stellar season CHS has had that was not expected in the preseason.

CHS won their sixth game in a row and improved to 8-2, including forfeit wins to Jackson Murrah and Greenville. Clinton has not lost since falling to Madison Central 35-14 on September 25. The Arrows are ranked #3 in the Mississippi Max Preps Top 10 Class 6A poll, their highest ranking since winning the Class 6A state title in 2016.

Since 1987, when CHS played their first playoff game, the Arrows have only advanced to the north semifinals seven times and have won the north semifinals to advance to the north championship game only five times - in 1987, 1993, 2000, 2004 and 2016.

Clinton defeated Warren Central 31-16 on October 23, at Vicksburg but have not defeated the Vikings at Arrow Field since 2011.

CHS has been playing Warren Central since 1965, and the Arrows have played the Vikings every year, with the exception of 1984. That storied rivalry comes to an end Friday night due to district changes, unless the Arrows can play them in a non-district game.

"Horn Lake was a very physical team," said Arrows head coach Judd Boswell. "But our kids took care of business early on. We look forward to playing Warren Central again. They have had an easier path, with Starkville and Tupelo having to forfeit. I feel good, but we just have to stay healthy."

Against Horn Lake, the game was most unusual in that Horn Lake had the ball 32 minutes and 36 seconds and ran 75 plays, compared to the Arrows only having possession for 15:24 and running only 32 plays.

A big factor in the playoff win was the play of the Arrows defense. The Clinton defense has only allowed seven points in the last three games.

"We felt our defense play against Horn Lake was good," said junior linebacker Tywon Alexander, who lead the defense with eight solo tackles, including a sack. "It was a challenge being on the field for such a long time, but we made some big plays and got another defensive shut out."

"As a team, we are excited to move to the next round and play our rival Warren Central again," said Alexander. "It will be our seniors' last time playing them - and maybe our underclassmen's last time - with the district changes. We want to put them down for good and have our rivalry go out with a bang against them."



Against the Eagles, the Arrows did not have a sustained drive on the night, but scored on five big plays.

Clinton scored on their first two offensive plays to take a quick 14-0 lead over Horn Lake. Montavious Warren burst 70 yards on the game's first play, to put Clinton ahead 7-0. Just two minutes later, Arrows QB Caleb Miller ran 27 yards to score. Price Nixon was perfect on all five extra points on the night.

Clinton continued to score on big plays throughout the game. In the second period, with 4:22 left in the half, Miller found Jordyn Battee wide open for a 75-yard pass-scoring play. Less than three minutes later, with 4:22 left in the half, Miller ran up the middle 76 yards to make it 28-0.

But outside of Clinton's big offensive plays, it was the Arrows' defense that kept CHS in the game.

Late in the second quarter, Horn Lake had a drive from their own 6-yard line to the Arrows' 10-yard line, where the defense stopped Horn Lake on the 10-yard line as the first half time expired.

"That goal line stand at the end of the first half and another goal line stand by our younger players at the end of the game were big plays by our defense," said Arrows defensive coordinator Hammer Morgan.

Clinton did not have much offensive production in the second half, but didn't need to, the way the defense was playing.

After Horn Lake scored on a 13-yard fumble recovery to cut it to 28-7, Clinton answered with Miller finding sophomore Kyle Hutton open over the middle for a 67-yard pass scoring play to make it 35-7.

Horn Lake threatened on a late drive but was stopped by Arrow defensive reserves at the 4-yard line as time expired.

A week earlier, Clinton pulled one of the biggest upsets in Arrow football history, defeating perennial past state champion Starkville 35-7. Going into the game, Clinton was 2-9 in games against Starkville since the first meeting in 1997.

The win gave Clinton High their first Region 2-6A Championship since 2016, giving CHS the #1 seed in the Region and a home game to start the playoffs.

Clinton set the tone early, scoring on the Arrows' first drive on a one-yard run by Caleb Miller. The Arrows went on to take a 21-0 halftime lead. Miller, who threw for 174 yards in the game, threw a 46-yard touchdown pass to Michel Hughes and he scored again on runs of one and five yards. He finished with 18 carries for 108 yards. Warren carried 14 times for 80 yards.

After Starkville scored to cut the Arrows' lead to 28-7, Jamarea Briscoe sealed the upset win with a 45-yard interception return for a touchdown.

The Clinton defense made the night miserable for Yellow Jacket Luke Altmeyer, who was intercepted four times by the Arrows' defense.

For the Arrows, Kamarius Gibson had five solo tackles, and Tywon Alexander, Blake Williams and Braylon Burnside each had four solo stops.

## 2nd Annual Gingerbread House Competition announced

Special to The Clinton Courier

Clintonians are invited to grab their bakers' hats and put their skills to the test in the 2nd Annual Gingerbread House Competition.

Main Street Clinton and the Olde Towne Depot will host the Gingerbread House Competition on Saturday, December 5. The competition will be divided into three separate categories: Kids ages 12 and under, Amateurs, and Professionals, such as bakers and/or caterers. All ages and skill levels are welcome to



participate.

Participants may compete individually or as part of a team.

Registration is required for the event, and the deadline for registration is Friday, November 27.

Submissions must be delivered to the Depot on Friday, December 4, by 4:30 p.m. Entries will be on display at the Olde Towne Depot and will be judged at 1 p.m. on Saturday.

To learn more or to register, contact Main Street Clinton or the Olde Towne Depot at 601-924-0113.