

# Lions fall at Hirschi; face Burk at homecoming Friday

DANIEL WALKER  
VERNON RECORD

The Vernon Lions came into Thursday's game with Hirschi shorthanded -- missing their leading rusher, and knowing they would need to play near perfect to keep the 4A-DI Huskies' speed bottled up.

Perfection didn't happen as Hirschi broke open a tight early game and sprinted to a 62-14 win at Memorial Stadium.

"It was a complete loss, a humbling loss," Coach Kevin Sherrill said.

The Lions defense forced a 3-and out on the Huskies first possession, but the Lions offense took two penalties and went backwards.

"Our first possession, we got two penalties, one was a personnel foul for a high-low. That's 15 yards. Looking at the film you can clearly see it was not a high-low. It was a bad call and it hurt us," Coach Sherrill said.

With the lost yardage, Hirschi got the ball off the punt on the Vernon side of the field. That would be a theme throughout the night. Special teams played a key part in Hirschi's romp, as the Huskies enjoyed great field position, with an average start at mid-field on their 10 possessions. They also had a punt and a kickoff return for touchdowns.

The Huskies scored on the short field, taking a 7-0 lead after one quarter. Vernon's offense again could not get any traction, as the Huskies played a 5-man front.

"It sounds funny to say this, looking at the final score, but I felt like we showed improvement on defense early on. I think our defense is heading in the right direction," Coach Sherrill said. "Their first three drives, we stopped them twice. But we could not drive the ball. As the game wore on, I'm not going to say we quit, but we kind of lost hope. They hit some big plays against us, it was kind of like a snowball going downhill, getting bigger and bigger, and we were not able to recover."

The game was still tight, 14-0, until a flurry of snowballs in the final minutes of the half put the game out of reach.

The Lions misplayed a kickoff, after Hirschi went up 20-0, and Vernon started a drive at their own 6. The offense went backward, pinned on their own 1. A 15-yard punt from the endzone was scooped up and returned 16 yards for a touchdown and it was 27-0 with 4:16 left in the half.

"I can't fault our returners for having confidence and wanting to make a play. We schooled them up (after the game), if it is going deep, it's ok to let it go in the endzone, we'll take it at the 25. You've just got to be smart with location," Coach Sherrill said. "But that same aggressiveness, confidence you can take it back set up our first score with Elijah almost breaking it."



Elijah Maldonado returned the ensuing kickoff to the Huskies 28. Quarterback Kale Sherrill ran 11 yards inside the 20. Facing a 2nd and 12, Sherrill threw a strike to Tavares Gaines on a slant. Gaines took the ball in for a 19-yard score with just 2:35 left in the half.

The Vernon momentum was short-lived. Hirschi returned the kickoff 70-yards for the score and it was 34-7 at half.

The Lions received the ball to start the third quarter at their own 24. On the first play, T.J. Thomas found the corner and went 76 yards for the score to cut the lead to 34-14. But the Lions defense was worn down, and Hirschi turned up the speed to take the 62-14 win.

**UP NEXT: BURKBURNETT**

Friday is Homecoming with Burkburnett coming to Vernon.

"(Homecoming) comes at a good time for is, to kind of put the last two weeks behind us, and get us looking ahead. District is almost here, and we are using the next two games to prepare for that. Homecoming is exciting for the kids. There are some distractions but no one wants to lose their homecoming game. We need this to give us a refocus, maybe the excitement will give us a little extra go-juice," Coach Sherrill said.

Vernon owns the all-time series 48-21-3, which dates to 1922, but the Lions have lost three in a row to the Bulldogs. Burkburnett blew out the Lions 49-17 in 2019 and won a squeaker 28-22 last season, in a Vernon led at the half.

Coach Sherrill said the Lions staff scouted Burk's game with Old High last Friday and came away impressed with the Bulldogs attitude. The Bulldogs trailed 28-0 at half and lost 35-14.

"Coming out of half, Burk ran the kickoff back to old High's end and promptly found a way into the endzone. That stood out

(ABOVE) Vernon running back CJ Johnson finds a crease behind (60) Kian Garcia to pick up positive yards against Hirschi last Thursday at Memorial Stadium in Wichita Falls. (BELOW) Vernon quarterback Kale Sherrill call his own number on a run Thursday against Hirschi. Sherrill had 8 carries for 25 yards in the game.

Bret McCormick/Vernon Record



to me. Rather than rollover, they continued to play hard, they are scrappy," coach Sherrill said. "They have pretty decent skill kids. The quarterback (2) McCall runs around pretty well. He's slippery in the pocket. Kirkland (30) is really a bright spot – he runs hard. On defense, the safety, Stringfellow (9), is a hard hitter."

"They are 0-4 and we are 1-3. They certainly see us as a chance to get their first win. And we see this as a game we think we can win. It's going to be a dog fight," Coach Sherrill said.

VERNON	0	7	7	0	-14
HIRSCHI	7	27	28	0	-62
FIRST QUARTER					
H - A'MARION PETERSON 30 RUN (ELIAS BARRON KICK), 8:06					
SECOND QUARTER					
H - PETERSON 1 RUN (BARRON KICK), 11:19					
H - PETERSON 2 RUN (PASS FAILED), 6:36					
H - JEWELL FLETCHER 15 PUNT RETURN (BARRON KICK), 4:16					
V - TAVARES GAINES 19 PASS FROM KALE SHERRILL (JAVIER PEREZ KICK), 2:35					
H - JAMARION CARROLL 70 KICK RETURN (BARRON KICK), 2:25					
THIRD QUARTER					
V - T.J. THOMAS 76 RUN (PEREZ KICK), 11:45					
H - PETERSON 9 RUN (BARRON KICK), 9:59					
H - JAMARION CARROLL 53 PASS FROM JIMMELL MCFALLS (BARRON KICK), 8:05					

H - ETHAN HERBER 5 PASS FROM TERRIUS CAUSEY (BARRON KICK), 5:32  
H - CARROLL 23 PASS FROM CAUSEY (BARRON KICK), 1:53

TEAM STATS	
FIRST DOWNS:	(V) 5; (H) 19
RUSHING:	(V) 33-150; (H) 26-149
PASSING:	(V) 2-8-0—28; (H) 11-15-0—231
PUNTS:	(V) 7-22; (H) 2-42
FUMBLES:	(V) 2-1; (H) 0-0
PENALTIES:	(V) 3-15; (H) 7-45

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS	
RUSHING – (V) T.J. THOMAS 7-86, ADARIUS WILLIAMS 2-5, KALE SHERRILL 8-25, GARRETT PIERCE 12-31, C.J. JOHNSON 4-7.	
PASSING – (V) SHERRILL 1-7-0—19; PIERCE 1-1-0 --9.	
RECEIVING – (V) GAINES 1-19, WILLIAMS 1-9.	

# Prescott leads Cowboys to 1st win

Throughout his rehab from a broken ankle last season, Dak Prescott thought about what it would feel like to be on the field again and lead the Dallas Cowboys on a game-winning drive.

Prescott directed the Cowboys on an 11-play, 49-yard march against the Los Angeles Chargers, culminating in Greg Zuerlein's 56-yard field goal as time expired for a 20-17 victory on Sunday.

"I mean, that's what you do it for, for the ball in your hands for a chance to go win," said Prescott, who completed 23 of 27 passes for 237 yards and an interception. "I was talking to the offense in the huddle that now we've got the game in a position that we wanted. We were able to capitalize, get into field goal range and let special teams go out there and do their job."

Dallas (1-1) overcame the loss of five players who started its opener and ruined the Chargers' first game in front of home fans at SoFi Stadium.

"You see the best of Dak Prescott in those situations, and he knows those situations, puts a lot of time into it. I just really love his demeanor, his poise in two-minute drills, so it's good to get these ones on Sunday," Dallas coach Mike McCarthy said.

The Cowboys host Philadelphia next Monday night.



# Vernon tennis ranked No. 5 in Texas 4A

The mid season rankings for Texas High School Tennis were released last week. Vernon comes in at No. 5 in Class 4A. Boerne is ranked No. 1, Wimberly 2, Argyle 3, and Wills Point is No. 4. The Lions district foe, Burkburnett comes in ranked No. 10.

At the midway point, Vernon is seeded No. 2 in 4A Region 1 behind Argyle, with defending state champion Hereford at No. 3 and Burkburnett is No. 4. Vernon plays at Burkburnett on Sept. 28 with the district title on the line.

LEFT -- Vernon's Alexis DelaGarza concentrates on the backhand return in recent district action against Hirschi.

Daniel Walker/  
Vernon Record