

Vermilion wins Lakeland Conference title outright

By STEVE SADLER
Staff Writer

VERMILION — In keeping with the Halloween spirit, the Wellington-Vermilion football game featured tricks and treats Friday night.

Wellington had all the tricks, but it's Vermilion that gets the treat — an undisputed Lakeland Conference championship — with a 28-8 victory at Vermilion.

The Dukes, who got some unexpected help earlier in the day making it possible for them to make the post-season playoffs with a victory, reached deep into their bag of tricks. The Dukes used passes to a wide receiver who would then turn to another end and pitch him the ball; plays in which the offensive guard would carry the ball; and there was even a play which saw a wide receiver try to throw a pass.

Only one of the trick plays worked, as the Sailors dominated the

game throughout in claiming their third straight Lakeland title, but the first they haven't had to share with another team.

Vermilion finished the season 9-1 overall and 7-0 in the Lakeland, while Wellington finished 8-2 and 5-2.

Earlier in the day it was discovered that a team in Wellington's region had to forfeit several games because of an illegal player, and the changing of points thus made it possible for the Dukes to gain the playoffs with a win.

After a scoreless first period the action picked up, as Vermilion struck quickly with two Tony Budka touchdown runs, and Wellington countered with a touchdown pass set up by their only successful trick play of the night.

Budka's first touchdown came on the first play of the second quarter on a fourth-and-goal from the one, capping a 15-play, 53-yard drive. A

25-yard pass from Dan Hurd to Mike Virgin set up the scoring scamper.

Budka's second touchdown came just five plays after Ross Buckholz recovered a fumble on the Wellington 44. Budka broke a 26-yard run for the touchdown. Mike Brownell added two of his eventual four extra points, and the Sailors looked in command at 14-0 with just 4:21 remaining in the half.

But on a third-and-13 from their own 33, Wellington quarterback Tim Mitchell fired a quick nine-yard completion to Russ Novotny, who turned and pitched the ball to Ted Hardoby, who ran for 31 yards on the play.

On the next play, Mitchell fired a 27-yard touchdown strike to Novotny. Mitchell, the holder for the extra point kick, faked the hold and ran for the two-point conversion to make it 14-8 at halftime.

Then, as the second half began, Wellington coach Doak Markley

made what turned out to be a critical mistake.

Having his choice of receiving the second half kickoff or choosing to kick and take the wind in the third quarter, the second-year coach decided he wanted the ball. Vermilion obliged, and took the wind.

It was a wise choice for the Sailors, as the gusting wind kept the Dukes bottled up with their normally-potent passing game gone with the wind.

The Sailors capitalized with outstanding field position, and scored two third quarter touchdowns that capped the game.

Vermilion coach Paul Mentis said the wind was a tremendous factor in the game.

"In the first half, we won the toss and took the wind. In the second half, they had their choice, and took the ball, which was good because we wanted the wind (to our backs)," Mentis said. "I thought the wind

was a factor in the game. We took the game away from them in the third quarter."

Mentis admitted he was surprised Wellington wanted the ball.

"Really, I thought since they had some momentum right at the end of the half, if they took the wind, they might get us in a hole," he said. "I really don't know why he (Markley) chose to take the ball."

Budka scored on another fourth-and-one from the one yard line at 6:38 in the third quarter, finishing a nine-play, 42-yard drive after Bruce Novotny recovered a Wellington fumble.

Then, after a 17-yard Wellington punt, the Sailors struck for another touchdown in just four plays. Budka exploded for 29 yards to set up the score, which came on a pass from Dan Hurd to Randy Spencer for six yards out.

Wellington finally got the wind in

the fourth quarter, and passed nearly every down — except for an occasional run by the guard — but the game had been long decided.

"Our kids were mentally really ready to play," Mentis said. "We played a pretty solid football game. Our game plan went just the way we wanted it to. Our coaching staff had them (Wellington) scouted very well, and that gave us an advantage offensively and defensively. But our kids still had to execute, and they did very well."

Wellington fumbled the ball three times, and lost all three of them, with Vermilion turning two of them into touchdowns.

"No question about it, their fumbles killed them," Mentis said. "Defensively, we played well except for that one trick play. They ran that same thing on us last year so we should have been ready, but overall, they played well."

Sailors' Mentis calls title sweetest ever

By STEVE SADLER
Staff Writer

VERMILION — Paul Mentis has won his share of football titles, but none sweeter than the one he got Friday night.

The sixth-year Vermilion coach watched his Sailors demolish Wellington, 28-8, Friday night to earn an undisputed Lakeland Conference title, something that didn't seem possible to Mentis three months ago.

"I thought we would be maybe 6-4 or 7-3," Mentis admitted afterward, as his squad cheered wildly in the lockerroom. "Too many teams in our league looked like they had too much."

But Mentis, as he has repeatedly this season, pointed to hard work as the biggest reason the Sailors developed into champions.

"This team just wanted to do it so badly," he said. "They worked very hard. We made a lot of changes this season. We took a third-string tight end and made him an offensive tackle; we took a 155-pound sophomore and made him an offensive guard; we took a defensive tackle and made him an offensive guard."

"But these kids just accepted the changes on faith in the coaching staff," he said. "This one (title) is the most satisfying win I've had in my 19 years of coaching."

Last year the Sailors were unbeaten until the final week of the season, but lost at Wellington, 21-20, despite the fact the Dukes finished the season just 3-4-2. Because of that loss, Vermilion had to share the title with Clearview.

This year, however, the Dukes came into the game with much more on the line.

They were 8-1 overall and 5-1 in the conference, needing a win to force a tie for the title between the two teams. Also, a win may have put them into the computer playoffs.

But the Sailors dominated the game almost from the start, and left no doubt which was the better team.

Vermilion's only loss this year was to Norwalk in the final non-conference game of the season, a 10-0 loss to the Truckers. Mentis said the loss woke up the coaching staff.

"We came back after that loss at Norwalk and weren't down," he said. "I told the coaching staff after the game that it was our faults (the coaches) because we weren't prepared. We had our chances to score in that game; we were inside their five-yard line twice. But we didn't have our plays ready. That

woke up the coaching staff, and we realized that we've got to help our people."

Tony Budka finished the season with 1,061 yards rushing for the Sailors, capping off the season with a 171-yard, three-touchdown performance Friday. He scored 16 touchdowns for the season.

Quarterback Dan Hurd threw seven touchdown passes as well for the Sailors, giving them their most balanced attack in many years.

And Mentis was already looking forward to next season, just minutes after the game.

"We look pretty good for next year, too, because we have an unbeaten reserve team," he said. "It will all depend on how those people come along, but this soon after the season, I'd have to say we look pretty good for next year."

The Sailors celebrated the victory in somewhat strange style after the final gun sounded, as Mentis and his squad raced into the lockerroom without shaking hands with the Dukes. The reason was very simple.

"I'm not going to shake hands with anyone who's trying to dirty us up on purpose," Mentis said. "I've been coaching for 19 years, and I've never seen a team do the things they do after a play is over."

Late in the fourth quarter, with Vermilion simply running out the clock, the poor-sport Dukes were whistled for several unnecessary roughness and personal foul penalties.

"Any team that can play that dirty, their coach either doesn't care or he's not very observant," Mentis said. "I don't go for cheap shots. We try to do our fighting on the scoreboard. Maybe I'm an outspoken man, but I've been coaching for 19 years, so I think I deserve to be."

And in those 19 years, never has he had a sweeter championship.

STATISTICS

| | Wel | Ver |
|------------------------|-----|-----|
| First Downs (total) | 11 | 11 |
| net yards rushing | 82 | 264 |
| passes attempted | 18 | 10 |
| passes completed | 9 | 5 |
| had intercepted | 1 | 1 |
| net yards passing | 111 | 63 |
| Total Net Yards Gained | 193 | 327 |
| Fumbles (number) | 3 | 0 |
| ball lost | 3 | 0 |
| Penalties (number) | 3 | 5 |
| yards penalized | 35 | 50 |

SCORE BY QUARTERS

| | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Total |
|------------|----|----|----|----|-------|
| Wellington | 0 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 8 |
| Vermilion | 0 | 14 | 14 | 0 | 28 |

Scoring:
Vermilion — Tony Budka, 1 run. (Mike Brownell, kick).
Vermilion — Budka, 26 run. (Brownell, kick).
Wellington — Russ Novotny, 27 pass from Tim Mitchell. (Mitchell, run).
Vermilion — Budka, 6 run. (Brownell, kick).
Vermilion — Randy Spencer, 6 pass from Dan Hurd. (Brownell, kick).



(Register photo — LARRY KAYSER)

Quarterback Troy LaCourse (14) just manages to get touchdown pass to Gene Whaley off in fourth quarter before Fremont's Orlando Carter (44) arrives on the scene. Carter was one of the thorns in Sandusky's side all night long.

Colwell: Roof caved in

"The roof caved in on us." Sandusky coach Jim Colwell's brief comment said it all. The Blue Streaks' playoff chances went up in smoke Friday at Strobel Field in the 24-8 loss to Fremont.

"We didn't get off the ball on offense or defense. We didn't pick up their deals on offense and didn't seal down on defense. We were simply not aggressive. They hit us instead of us hitting them," Colwell assessed.

"We made too many mistakes. You can't fumble the ball that often (seven) and give up four interceptions and expect to win a game against a tough opponent, and Fremont was tough tonight," Colwell stated.

Fremont utilized an unbalanced line often, and with a great deal of success. "We would have a couple make the adjustment, but the other wouldn't and they executed that play well," Colwell noted.

"They also trapped out tackles to make the inside game go, and we couldn't contain Tony Gant and we were afraid of that. It came down to the fact Fremont did everything right, and we didn't much of anything the way we expected to," Colwell added.

"We're just tired of losing that last game and I hope we can start changing that around. It's a long time between seasons when you lose that last one," Colwell explained.

"When a team comes off the ball the way they did, it's difficult to win and I don't think they (Fremont) could have played a better one than the game they played tonight," Colwell continued.

"They certainly have had our number, but one consolation is we still have a share of the Buckeye Conference crown, and winning the Buckeye is our No. 1 goal. We wanted to win it all and then think about the playoffs, but we don't have to worry about that (playoffs) now," Colwell concluded.

The Streaks sorely missed senior tailback Melvin Brown in several areas, but the lack of blocking up front was one of the key factors in the Streaks winding up at 8-2, the same mark Fremont finished with.

Danbury pops Plymouth

LAKESIDE — Danbury behind the strong running of senior Mark Sauvey handed Plymouth their ninth loss of the season, 50-12. The win enables the Lakers to finish above the 500 mark at 6-4.

The hosts got on the scoreboard first on a 14-yard run by Steve Adams with 5:34 left in the period. The drive covered 66 yards in eight plays and began following a Plymouth fumble.

Danbury then put 23 points on the board in the second stanza with Pat Fontana going in from the one at the 10:17 mark. Sauvey ran in the two-point bonus. This drive covered 56 yards in eight plays.

Sauvey scored his first of two six-pointers on a 15-yard jaunt. Adams added the extra point on a run making the score 22-0.

The 168-pound tailback climaxed a 26-yard drive with a four-yard run with just 2:14 left in the half. Bill Bailey split the uprights making it 29-0 at the intermission.

The third period saw Danbury score three more times as Jim Mazur grabbed a 15-yard pass from Guy Tibbles. Fontana scored on a

three-yard plunge and Adams contributed a three-yard touchdown run.

The big story of the period, however, belonged to Sauvey as on his 21st carry of the evening he entered his name in the Danbury High record books as he passed the 1,014 yard rushing mark set by Gary Twarek in 1977.

He finished the night with 163 yards and the season with 1035 to set the all-time rusing mark for Danbury.

Adams also came close to the 100-yard mark as the 180-pound junior racked up 95 yards in just 11 carries. The Lakers finished the night with 280 yards on the ground and added 40 thru the airway for a 320 total yard game.

Plymouth scored their first touchdown with just ten seconds left in the third quarter as Jeff Jacobs raced 29 yards to end a 60-yard drive.

Their final score came at the 6:37 mark of the final period with Joe Messer busting in form the one.

This victory was the sixth in a row for Coach Jeff Warnicke who seems

to have a patent on the fact that his squad comes on strong in the second half of the season.

His teams' three-year record in the final five games of each of the campaigns stands at 12-2-1. Warnicke's overall record at the helm is 19-10-1.

The loss by Plymouth runs their streak to 21 straight games without a victory. Their last win came on October 13, 1979 in a 12-6 nod over Seneca East.

STATISTICS

| | Ply | Dan |
|------------------------|-----|-----|
| First Downs (total) | 17 | 17 |
| net yards rushing | 135 | 280 |
| passes attempted | 9 | 3 |
| passes completed | 3 | 2 |
| had intercepted | 0 | 0 |
| net yards passing | 30 | 40 |
| Total Net Yards Gained | 165 | 320 |

SCORE BY QUARTERS

| | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Total |
|----------|----|----|----|----|-------|
| Plymouth | 0 | 0 | 6 | 6 | 12 |
| Danbury | 6 | 23 | 21 | 0 | 50 |

Scoring:
Danbury — Steve Adams, 14 run. (kick failed).
Danbury — Pat Fontana, 1 run. (Mark Sauvey, run).
Danbury — Sauvey, 15 run. (Adams, run).
Danbury — Sauvey, 4 run. (Bill Bailey, kick).
Danbury — Jim Mazur, 15 pass from Guy Tibbles. (kick failed).
Danbury — Fontana, 3 run. (Bailey, kick).
Danbury — Adams, 3 run. (Tibbles, run).
Plymouth — Jeff Jacobs, 29 run. (kick failed).
Plymouth — Joe Messer, 1 run. (run failed).

Edison perfect ...again

COLLINS — The senior members of the Edison football team bowed out as winners Friday night.

But, it's been that way throughout their prep career.

"The seniors are 29-1 in three years," said Edison mentor Jim Whittington.

"It's a real credit to the kids. They play with a lot of pride. Even as sophomores, they were factors in our success. Many of them played on the special units and others earned starting spots in their first year of varsity football."

Edison, following its' 54-0 rout of Western Reserve, capped off a second straight undefeated season.

It marked the first time the Chargers had come up with back-to-back unbeaten seasons and they finished 10-0 for the third time in six years.

"Our goal is always to go 10-0 and let the rest take care of itself. It's been a rewarding season. I hate to see the present seniors go. They are a first-class group and have been great to work with. You win with seniors and the leadership they've offered has been outstanding."

Edison has not lost since the third game of the 1979 season, a 17-6 setback at the hands of St. Mary's Central Catholic. Since then, the Chargers have reeled off 27 wins in succession.

The victory over Western Reserve also extended Edison's unbeaten string in the conference to 27, dating back to the FC opener in 1978 when they lost to New London, 15-6.

Another first for Edison occurred Friday when both John Field and Mike Moyer finished with 1,000 yards rushing for the season.

"We've had some outstanding backs here, but this is the first time we've had two reach the 1,000 yard mark."

Moyer, on the strength of a 150-yard effort against Western, finishes as the season leader with 1,017 while Field has 1,011.

"Our line has been doing the job all season and that's a big reason why we have two backs with that amount of yardage. Also, the blocking of Tim McIlrath out of the backfield has been very instrumental. He doesn't carry the ball much, but paves the way for the others."

McIlrath concluded the year with 362 yards.

Players cited for their blocking effort were tackles Glenn Shupe and John Otto, guards Craig Stower and Tim Cox, center Justin Proctor, tight end Scott Palmer and split ends Tim McCoy and Jeff MacKay.

The tempo for the evening was established on the first play of the game... a 70-yard counter run for a touchdown by Moyer.

"He's broke a lot of counter plays for big gainers all season and it's really been a big play for us."

The Chargers added two more scores before the first period ended as Chris Hoffman plunged over from the one and John Garlock reached paydirt from the three.

In the second quarter, Edison added two more scores. First, Moyer scored on an 85-yard punt return and Scott Palmer later hauled in a five-yard pass from Dennis Fernandez.

Jon Haldeman opened the second half scoring with an 81-yard kickoff return and John Field (five yards) and Tim McIlrath (10 yards) also reached the end zone in the last 24 minutes of play.

STATISTICS

| | Ed | WR |
|------------------------|-----|-----|
| First Downs (total) | 13 | 9 |
| net yards rushing | 304 | 82 |
| passes attempted | 6 | 9 |
| passes completed | 2 | 2 |
| had intercepted | 0 | 1 |
| net yards passing | 13 | 29 |
| Total Net Yards Gained | 317 | 121 |