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St. Pius Ends Bearcats Season With 44-35 Win

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Festus, Missouri – Who could have imagined that the Dexter Bearcats would have tallied a season-high 557 yards offensively and come up short on the scoreboard? What an amazing season they have had doubling their wins from last year. It was a bitter-sweet night in the Class 3, District 1 quarterfinals. St. Pius was able to defeat the Bearcats 44 – 35.

“It was a good game,” commented Dexter head football coach Justin Peden. “Both teams were ready to play. St. Pius made a lot of big plays and when it comes to the playoffs, you make big plays you win the game. That’s what they did. They were able to make more big play than us and that’s the story of the game.”

It was the Bearcats who put the first points on the board. Jason Jarrell caught a 27-yard pass from quarterback Peyton Pollock. Jarrells kick was good giving the Bearcats a 7-0 lead, but not for long. On the kick-off return Issiah Hennessey returned the ball 70 yards to even the score 7-7.

Both teamed committed tow turnovers in the second quarter. St. Pius scored with a 49-yard pass to Hennessey, a 4-yard run by Lance Ervin and a 35-yard pass to Tryson Thornton. Dexter fought back scoring on 5-yard run by Dylan Bazarian and a 75-yard pass by Pollock to Ethan Stevens. It was tied 28-28 going into the locker room at half-time.

"We played well for a stretch there, defensively," Peden said. "When they started trying to throw the ball we were able to get in there and get those two interceptions. Turnovers are

key in a game like this and we were able to capitalize on both of them. It was good, and then they kind of got away from the passing and started putting the ball on the ground and we weren't able to respond."

Dexter took their second lead of the game when Pollock ran 15 yards to score a touchdown with 2:17 left in the 3rd quarter. Jarrell's kick was good. 35-28 Bearcats!

It didn't take the Lancers long to score. They were quick at that! With just 11:55 left in the game, Hennessey ran 4 yards for a touchdown; however the conversion failed. Six minutes later the Lancers added a field goal to the mix. Withrow hit a 40-yard field goal between the uprights.

"Their kicker is outstanding," commented Peden. "He is probably the best kicker I have ever seen in the 10 years I have been coaching. Every kickoff was out of the end zone. We never had a chance for a return and he kicked a field goal."

Jarrell missed a 34-yard field goal with  4:30 left in the third period.

"We have a good kicker too in Jason Jarrell," continued Peden. "We tried a field goal for the first time this year. It didn't work out. He hooked it a little bit, but he is an excellent kicker. I think he has missed two extra points all season and both of those were blocked. He's an excellent weapon to have and next year we will really focus a lot more on using him in field goal situations and will be able to have that added dimension."

The last touchdown of the season for the Bearcats came when Peyton Pollock through a short 3-yard pass to Austin Chesser with 2:22 remaining. There was still a chance, but the clock was against the Bearcats. Then St. Pius did what they do well and that's score fast! With just 30 seconds left Thornton ran 66 yards for another Lancer touchdown.

Peyton Pollock was 15 of 27 yards throwing. He had three touchdown passes, threw for 269 yards and rushed for 183 yard against St. Pius.

Ethan Stevens had five catches for a team-high 158 yards. He also rushed for 85 yards and scored a touchdown.

"Offensively, we did really well," Peden said. "We threw the ball pretty well and we put the ball on the ground and were probably able to run it better than we had all year. Offensively, I was very pleased with what we were able to accomplish. This is a good football team and they obviously got a home playoff game for a reason. They were 6-3 in the regular season and being able to put points on the board against them was good. I liked our offensive performance, overall."

Peden said that quarterback Peyton Pollock tallied more than 2,000 yards offensively and Kronk had over 100 tackles. Ethan Stevens racked up over 1,000 all-purpose yards this season.

Noah Kronk had 16 tackles and Jake Adams had 13 tackles for the Bearcats against St. Pius.

Dexter finished their 10 game season with a record of 4-6. The Bearcats also tied for their Conference Title! What a season!

The Bearcats will graduate 17 seniors this year: Dylan Bazarian, Drake Mitchell, Peyton Pollock, Dalton Twomey, Noah Kronk, Austin Aldridge, Tim Spence, Jacob Murdock, Aaron Sandlin, Jackson Hubbard, Dakota Southerland, Matt Sims, Jacob Gonzales, Brandon Quertermous, Cameron Craft, Caleb Rae and Jason Mattison.

“This group of seniors is awesome!” commented Peden with a smile. “I said one time in a radio interview ‘the highest compliment I can give is that I would let any of them watch my children. I would let them look after my kids because they are a good group of kids.’ They have worked hard and are great young men. I am proud to have been a little part of their lives just for a little while and hopefully the relationships I have with them will keep going into their adulthood and any time they need me they know I ma there for them. It has been a real pleasure getting to know these guys!”

Final Score Dexter 34, St. Pius 44

Dexter 7 14 7 7 - 35

St. Pius 7 21 0 16 - 44

First Quarter

D - Jason Jarrell 27 pass from Peyton Pollock (Jarrell kick), 4:49

S - Issiah Hennessey 70 return (Brendan Withrow kick), 4:38

Second Quarter

S - Hennessey 49 pass from Mickey Karoly (Withrow kick), 11:42

S - Lance Ervin 4 run (Withrow kick), 6:51

D - Dylan Bazarian 5 run (Jarrell kick), 2:54

D - Ethan Stevens 75 pass from Pollock, 0:54 (Jarrell kick), 0:54

P - Tryson Thornton 35 pass from Karoly, 0:10 (Withrow kick), 0:10

Third Quarter

D - Pollock 15 run (Jarrell kick), 2:17

Fourth Quarter

P - Hennessey 4 run (conversion failed), 11:55

P - Withrow 40 yard field goal, 5:09

D - Austin Chesser 3 pass from Pollock (Jarrell kick), 2:22

P - Thornton 66 run (Withrow kick), 0:30

Team Stats

<u>Stat</u>	<u>Dexter</u>	<u>St. Pius</u>
First downs	28	23
Rushing-yards	37-288	45-304
Passing yards	269	188
Comp-Att-Int	15-27-2	11-22-2
Total yards	557	492
Fumbles-lost	1-1	0-0
Penalties-yards	5-41	2-61
Punts-Avg.	2-24.5	2-30.5
Possession Time	22:28	25:32

Individual Stats

Rushing - (Dexter) Peyton Pollock 18-157, Dylan Bazarian 16-85, Ethan Stevens 3-46. (Pius) - Lance Ervin 23-78, Issiah Hennessey 12-126, Tryson Thornton 8-94, Mickey Karoly 1-6, Andrew Sale 1-0.

Passing - (Dexter) Peyton Pollock 15-27-2 = 269. (Pius) Mickey Karoly 10-21-2 = 167, Issiah Hennessey 1-1-0 = 21.

Receiving - (Dexter) Ethan Stevens 5-158, Austin Aldridge 4-48, Noah Kronk 2-24, Jason Jarrell 1-27, Dylan Bazarian 1-4, Austin Chesser 1-3, Peyton Tinnin 1-5. (Pius) Hennessey 6-106, Tryson Thornton 3-67, Lance Ervin 2-15,

Punting - (Dexter) Ethan Stevens 2-49. (Pius) 2-61.

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