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Dexter Dominates Fredericktown, Maintains Perfect 10 - 0 Season

NOVEMBER 11TH 2024 BY DEE LOFLIN

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The Dexter Bearcats hosted the Fredericktown Blackcats in semifinal action at Charles Bland Stadium on Friday, November 8, 2024 hoping to punch the ticket to the district championship.

Fredericktown led 7-6 in the first quarter with a 68-yard touchdown pass and successfully kicking the extra point to take the lead. The Bearcats struggle early the game, but managed to keep the score close before exploding in the second half to defeat the Blackcats 56-20 breaking a school record of the most points scored in a season.

The Bearcats led six to nothing in the first quarter when Lee-Michael McDonald ran in putting the first points on the board; however they missed out on the 2-point conversion. Fredericktown answered with their own touchdown and were successful on the extra point with only about 3 minutes left in the first.

The Bearcats weren't going to let one touchdown interfere in their goal to win this game. Quarterback Jackson Howard handed off to Lee-Michael McDonald with a 6-yard touchdown run followed by a successful two-point conversion with 5:54 remaining in the second quarter. Nolan Alford then created some space and ran in for a 13-yard touchdown with only 3:38 left in the first half. Parker King kicked the extra point giving the Bearcats a comfortable 21-7 lead going into the locker room at the half.

"Credit to Frederictown. They came out in the first half and did some good things, especially in the first quarter," commented Dexter head coach Chad Jamerson. "They weren't able to run the ball. We made them aware very early that they weren't able to run that ball, but they were able to do some thing in the passing game, slow route and then they crossed some dudes up and it just kind of confused us a little. We did a poor job on the back four of communicating in the first, in the odd quartering the first and the third quarter. We didn't communicate very well on the back end and that kind of is what led to a lot of our breakdowns in the past defense."

"It was a hard fought football game, and their quarterback, Easton Wood, did a nice job for Fredericktown," continued Jamerson. "We told the guys all week long, hey, just because you have played really good football for nine games doesn't guarantee that you are going to play it for the 10th. And it doesn't guarantee that you can just put a whooping on people. This 10th week it's going to be different. It is different. This is not regular season. You know, the most dangerous man in the world is a man that's got nothing to lose!"

"We told the guys that all week. These guys had nothing to lose. They did some things that confused us, so we are going to make sure we kind of reset, refocus and get ready for Friday," Jamerson said.

The Blackcats narrowed the gap to 21-14 with a touchdown pass in the third. Dexter responded with a 56-yard run by Alford increasing the lead to 28-14.

Fredericktown would not give up and responded with their final touchdown of the game with a 41-yard pass late in their third quarter.

The Bearcats again responded with a 1-yard run by McDonald making it 35-20.

Dexter owned the fourth quarter with three more touchdowns. Langston Wernick scored a 10-yard touchdown run, Jackson Howard kept the ball and ran two yards and Jett Grams added a 6-yard touchdown run bringing the final score to 56 - 20.

The Bearcats had an impressive performance with a total of 619 yards of which 542 were rushing yards. Jett Grams had 19 carries for 187 yards and two touchdowns. Lee-Michael McDonald had 10 carries for 150 yards and three touchdowns. Nolan Alford had six carries for 104 yards and two touchdowns.

King had a pretty good night as well. He kicked six for six extra points.

On defense, Jackson Miller got some great hits out there. "It's hard to imagine that he is just a sophomore," stated Jamerson. "He doesn't mind bringing it. Brining the boom a

little bit, and you know he was hitting some dudes out there."

"We had a punt return where Christiaan Wirz absolutely destroyed a kid down here around the 35 on or near the hash mark," Jamerson continued. "And then he had a big tackle where he fell down and the kid was on his back, he reached up and pulled the return man down. He made some really big plays on special teams, which made up for some mistakes that he made defensively and then had that big carry at the end of the game. Anytime you got a kid as fast and as strong as Christiaan, you got a good kid."

"The coaches and I were talking on the sideline. Most teams would be happy with giving up only 20 points. Most teams would be ecstatic. But at the end of the day, that's not our standard," stated Jamerson. "Our standard is to play with perfection. We have high expectations."

Two other players who had a great night were Lee-Michael McDonald and Jett Grams. Both came up big for the Bearcats Friday night.

"You know what I see is what you get with Jett, 230 pounds of rocking soccer robot! I mean this kid just runs with an exuberance and a joy and a fury unmatched. He's hard to tackle. Even when you think you got him boiled up in the backfield, he manages to run," stated Jamerson. "There were kids that had him wrapped up around the net, knees and kids that were wrapped up around the ankles, and he just pulled his leg right out of the grip. Finally took about four kids to slow him down tonight. Just a man among boys at times."

"I talk about Lee-Michael, I am out of words. Over three years, lighting in a bottle, tackling things like trying to eat tomato soup with a fork, you come up with something that's describing what it's like to see Lee-Michael play. The way the kid stops on a dime, reverses field, makes kids miss. My goodness, what a blessing we have in this athlete."

"He has desire and a lot of it. He plays with intensity. He gets ramped up and I get a little ramped up and at the end of the day, he's a competitor and he comes out and gives us all his way. He just loves the game," stated Jamerson of Lee-Michael.

Jamerson this was the biggest game of his career thus far. Next week will be even bigger! The Dexter Bearcats will host Ste. Genevieve in a District Championship at Charles Bland Stadium. It will be a big game! Coach Jamerson's biggest game yet and the community is supporting the Bearcats big this year.

"It will be a big game, probably the biggest game Dexter has had in the last decade!" Jamerson exclaimed. "The community has been outstanding. They have done a tremendous job of coming out and supporting us. So I expect nothing less than what we've already seen and probably a little bit more on Friday night."

Dexter has been here before. Last year Ste. Gen defeated the Bearcats, by only one point, 29-28.....so they are hungry for a win and maybe a little revenge! In 2022 Ste. Genevieve beat Dexter in the first game of district play 56-17. The last time the Bearcats beat Ste. Gen was in 2018 when the Bearcats defeated them in triple overtime 25-19.

"At the end of the day I am not gonna stop coaching," continued Jamerson. "No matter what, I am not going to not coach. You have got to realize that the standard has been raised and 20 points might be good enough for other teams, but not good enough for us."

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