

Rockets lose to Russell, 47-13, in district opener

By: Doug Ponder

The Rockcastle County Rockets lost their district opener and homecoming game to the Russell County Lakers 47-13 last Friday night.

The Rockets dominated the Lakers in the time of possession category as their offense was on the field for 27 minutes and 35 seconds compared to the Lakers 20 minutes and 25 seconds.

However, several other factors went against the Rockets during their first district loss but none was more significant than the

average starting field position. The Rockets average offensive drive started on their own 30 yard line while the Lakers average drive started on their own 49 yard line. The Rockets also had eleven penalties for a loss of 70 yards compared to the Lakers four penalties for a loss of 20 yards.

The Rockets were first to get on the scoreboard when quarterback Corey McPhetridge connected with receiver Kyle Denny for a 16 yard touchdown pass. The extra point attempt was no good giving the

Rockets the early 6-0 lead.

The Lakers answered on their next possession with a 9 yard touchdown pass from quarterback Austin Smiddy to receiver Nick Coffey. The extra point attempt was no good tying the score 6-6 at the end of the first quarter.

The Lakers scored again on their next possession—a 5 yard touchdown by running back Evan Fletcher. The extra point was good making it 13-6 at the beginning of the second quarter.

But the Rockets put the ball in the end zone on their next offensive drive, after

McPhetridge connected with receiver Chayse McClure for a 22 yard touchdown pass. The extra point was good once again tying the game 13-13.

However, the Lakers managed to score again in the final minutes of the second quarter when quarterback Blake Ellis connected with Fletcher on a 28 yard touchdown pass. The extra point attempt was no good extending their lead 19-13.

After halftime, the Rockets would never see the end zone again as the Lakers took over the game and put up an unanswered 28 points making the final score 47-13.

The Rockets were led on offense by McPhetridge who was 10 out of 22 passing for 172 yards and two touchdowns with four interceptions. McPhetridge also had a big night rushing with 30 yards on nine carries.

Freshman Devon Robinson led the Rockets in rushing with 39 yards on six carries. Other Rockets picking up rushing yards were junior Isaiah Adams with 7 yards on four carries, McClure, 3 yards on seven

carries and junior Chance Ansardi with 3 yards on three carries.

Senior Tyler Harper led the receiving corps with two catches for 68 yards. Other Rockets catching passes were Denny with 3 catches for 37 yards and one touchdown, senior John Hughes with two catches for 25 yards, McClure with one touchdown grab for 22 yards, Adams with one catch for 22 yards and senior Brandon Jones with one reception for four yards.

The Rocket defense was led by Adams with seven tackles and one sack. Other Rockets picking up tackles and assists were Ansardi with 6, Jared Lake with five including one sack and a fumble recovery, R.C. Kirby and McClure got five each, Austin Mills four, Brandon Jones and Austin Emery three each, Dylan Rowe with two tackles and one interception, Hughes and Denny with two each, Hunter Hines got one and Koty Bengé with one tackle and one fumble recovery.

Bengé led the Rockets special teams with six punts for a total of 208 yards and

an average of 34.7 yards a punt.

Head Coach Scott Parkey said that despite the loss, he was happy overall with the Rockets performance, especially on defense.

“A lot of times the defense is judged solely by the scoreboard but that is not always indicative of how well they are playing,” Parkey said. “Coach Josh Martin puts together super game plans each week. But this one for Russell County couldn’t have turned out better for them as our offense put our defense in a short field for much of the second half.”

Parkey said that Russell County had an extremely talented team and that he knew the Rockets were going to have a hard time moving the ball, especially with their running game.

“We tried to get our ground game going right after half time but the Lakers continued to play it strong,” Parkey said. “But we continued to play with heart and guts the entire game. I

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Eighth grader Brent Lovell leaves several Foley defenders in the dust during last Tuesday night’s win against Foley. The eighth grade Rockets were the regular season conference champions and were 12-6 on the season and were undefeated in conference play.



Eighth grader Holdan Barnett reaches out to make a catch during last Tuesday night’s 12-6 overtime win against Foley. The eighth grade Rockets will play Clark Moore at home in the first round of the playoffs this Thursday night. Kick-off is at 7:30 p.m.



Seventh grader Jordan Casteel looks for running room while Logan Kidwell blocks for Casteel during their 52-0 win against Foley last Tuesday. The seventh grade Rockets were the regular season conference champions with a 5-1 season record.



Seventh grader Jaden Payne tackles a Foley running back during their 52-0 blowout win last Tuesday. The seventh grade Rockets will play Caudill at home this Thursday night in the first round of the playoffs. Kick-off is at 6 p.m.

*Photos by
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The RCHS Marching Band performed their “Flight” show during halftime of last Friday night’s game. The show features performances by senior piccolo soloist Shelby Ponder and Colorguard soloists Caitlin Daugherty and Allison Renner. The Marching Rockets recently qualified to compete in the KMEA Regional Quarterfinals this Saturday at Bourbon County High School in Paris. The Rockets will perform at 1:30 p.m.



Senior Koty Bengé recovers a Russell County fumble during last Friday night’s 47-13 loss. Bengé also led the Rockets on special teams with six punts for a total of 208 yards and an average of 34.7 yards a punt.



Freshman Chayse McClure jumps to deflect a pass intended for Laker running back Evan Fletcher. Also pictured are senior Brandon Jones, junior Kyle Denny and senior John Hughes.



Freshman Austin Mills tried to run down Russell County’s quarterback Blake Ellis during last Friday night’s 47-13 loss. The Rockets will travel to Barbourville on Friday night to take on the Knox Central Panthers. Kick-off is at 7:30 p.m.