

2017 Berry Write Up

Written by Allen J. Dunavant

Friday, 22 September 2017 00:00 - Last Updated Tuesday, 03 October 2017 13:09

The Hubbertville Lions paid a visit to Berry on Friday night with high hopes of earning their visit win of the season by defeating their cross-county rivals.

The home-standing Wildcats won the coin toss electing to receive the opening kick from the Lion's Mario Gonzalez.

Johnathan Locke made the opening kick reception at the 34-yard line with Tanner Upton on the stop at the Berry 43-yard line. Quarterback Cameron Bonner called his own number on first down advancing to the Lions 46-yard line but with the snap of the ball both teams were penalized resulting in an off-setting infraction and a replay of down. Jeremiah Gann took the hand-off around the right end with Zach Hubbert on the stop at the 41-yard line. The Lions jumped off sides before the ball was snapped giving the Wildcats a first down deeper on the Lions side of the field but the opening possession came to a quick halt for the Wildcats with the snap of the ball following a fumble which was recovered at the Lions 31-yard line by Aaron Cribb.

Ethan Nichols led the Lions offensive front to the line and utilizing the rushing attack of Upton, Hubbert and Lathan Holliday, Hubbertville slowly moved the ball across midfield to the Wildcats 45-yard line. Sticking with the rushing game, Hubbert and Upton inched the ball deeper on the Wildcats defense and facing second down at the 37-yard line Upton took the hand-off over the left side of the line of scrimmage for an 18-yard gain. The rushing attack put the Lions in the Berry red zone with a first down at the 19-yard line setting up for their first scoring opportunity of the game. Sticking with the rushing attack by Hubbert and Upton the Lions advanced to the 9-yard line facing first down and goal. Bonner made the stop on Hubbert on second down forcing him out of bounds at the 10-yard line, but on second down Nichols connected with Hubbert on his first pass attempt of the night with Hubbert fighting his way into the end zone for the touchdown with 4:17 remaining in the opening quarter. The Lions lined-up for the PAT kick, but Nichols who serves as the holder attempted a pass connection with Gage Alexander in the left corner of the end zone but the ball fell incomplete leaving the score 6 - 0.

Gonzalez's ensuing kick was fielded by Samuel Franklin near the 21-yard line following a bobbling catch and advanced to the Wildcats 28-yard line where Hubbert made the solo stop.

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The Berry possession was once again cut short following two plays as the ball was fumbled and recovered by Nichols at the Wildcat's 35-yard line.

Upton took the hand-off on first down and was met for the stop by Locke and Max Miller. Flags followed the play and the Lions were penalized moving the ball back to the Wildcats 43-yard line after a holding call. Facing first down and 18-yards, the Lions returned the favor and fumbled the ball back to the Wildcats.

Berry started their third possession of the game at their own 42-yard line with Gann taking the ball around the right end where he was forced out of bounds by Nichols after a three yard gain. Demarcus Johnson advanced the ball on second down for the first down at the Lions 49-yard line. With the snap of the ball, Johnson was met at the line of scrimmage for the stop by Nick Selman and a host of other Lions but the Lions were penalized for a face-mask infraction advancing the ball to the Lions 35-yard line. Rushing attacks by Bonner, Johnson and Gann advanced the ball deeper to the Lions 24-yard line but Upton and Blake Anthony made their way into the backfield to sack Bonner on first down for a 8-yard loss. Bonner called his own number on second down rushing the ball around the left end but Gage Key and a host of defenders made the stop as the first quarter came to an end.

Starting the second quarter, Facing third down and fifteen, Bonner went to the air attack and connected with Franklin who fought his way down to the 20-yard line for a ten yard gain leaving the Wildcats facing fourth down and five at the Lions 20-yard line. Bonner attempted a quick pass over the middle but Nichols stepped up and intercepted the ball at the 2-yard line bringing the hard fought possession to an end for the Wildcat offense.

Sticking with the rushing attack Upton, Nichols and Holliday moved the ball out to the 20-yard line. Swapping out carries by Holliday and Upton the Lions offense slowly and precisely moved the ball deeper to their own 30-yard line and following a time-out by the Lions, Upton took the hand-off around the right end for what appeared to be a large gain but the Lions were penalized moving the ball back to their own 22-yard line. Facing first down and 18-yards, Hubbert got the call to fight for yardage and was met for the stop at the 30-yard line by Franklin to bringing up second down. Upton took the ball over the right side of the line of scrimmage for the first down before Locke could bring him down for the stop at the Lions 48-yard line. Misery almost struck for the Lions as the ball was fumbled on the exchange on first down but Nichols made the recovery at the 49-yard line. Back to back rushing attacks by Hubbert left the Lions facing fourth down and five at the Wildcats 47-yard line and sending Holliday into the backfield to punt the ball away. Holliday's punt rolled out of bounds setting the Berry offense up for their possession at their own 35-yard line.

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Johnson was brought down in the backfield on first down for a 6-yard loss with Upton, Cribb, and Hubbert on the stop. Second down brought Gann scrambling around in the backfield with Nichols and Key on the tackle for a three yard loss but the Wildcats gained some of the yardage back with the snap of the ball as the Lions were penalized for jumping off-sides. Facing third down and fourteen at their own 31-yard line, the Wildcat offense gained additional yardage at the hands of the Lions who once again were penalized for jumping off-sides. The replay of downs brought Bonner attempting a pass connection downfield but the pass fell incomplete leaving the Wildcats facing fourth down and nine and forcing the Wildcats to punt the ball away.

Nichols lined the Lion offense up at their own 35-yard line for the closing possession of the first half. Hubbert advanced the ball for five yards on first down and Holliday was met for the stop by Cannon, Gann and others on second down as the Wildcats called time-out in an effort to save time on the clock. Facing third down and three, at their own 42-yard line Upton took the hand-off and was met immediately by Bonner and a host of other Wildcat defenders for the stop after a one yard gain with the Wildcats coaching staff electing to utilize their last time out of the half in an effort to have another opportunity for the offensive front to return to the field before the half time break but the Wildcat defense jumped off-sides prior to the snap of the ball giving the Lions a first down at their own 49-yard line. The opening half came to a close following back to back rushing attempts by the Lions with time expiring sending the teams to their respective locker rooms with the Lions holding the lead 6 - 0.

Zachary Smith's second half opening kick was fielded by Hubbert and advanced to the Lions 42-yard line where Tyler Smith made the saving tackle. Nichols and the Lions offense continued the rushing attack on the opening possession of the second half with carries by Upton, Holliday and Hubbert advancing the ball across midfield to the Berry 35-yard line. Facing third down and four, Nichols scrambled in the backfield where he was brought down by Miller and others bringing up fourth down and four for the Lions. Electing to fight for the needed yardage was unfruitful for the Lions as the Wildcats took over possession following a completed pass short of the first down marker.

The turn-over was short lived for the Wildcats as two plays later G. Alexander intercepted Cannon's pass at the 30-yard line returning the possession to the Lions at the Berry 30-yard line. First down brought Holliday with the carry but he was met for the stop by Johnson and Bonner after a three yard gain. Upton got the call to fight for yardage on second down but he was met immediately by a host of angry defenders resulting in no gain on the play and leaving the Lions facing third down and seven at the Wildcats 27-yard line. Hubbert took the hand-off and fought his way around the left side of the line of scrimmage with Franklin on the stop for the Wildcats. Following an official measurement, the Lions were left facing fourth down and inches.

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With the snap of the ball Holliday took the hand-off up the middle to the 19-yard line where Jones and others made the stop. First down brought misery for the Lions as they were penalized for a false start moving the ball back to the 23-yard line. Holliday once again took the hand-off up the middle where Isaac Darty and Bonner made the tackle after a three yard gain. Second down brought Hubbert out of the backfield around the left end but Miller remained in position forcing him out of bounds after a five yard gain. On third down, Nichols called his own number and once again Miller made the stop leaving the Lions facing fourth down and six yards. Following a time-out, Gonzalez took the field in an attempt to add points for the Lions with a field goal attempt but the ball sailed out side of the uprights leaving the score 6 - 0 in favor of the Lions with 3:00 remaining in the third quarter of play.

Bonner and the Wildcat offense took possession of the ball at their own 20 yard line but misery continued for the Wildcats as the possession never gained positive yardage. First down Anthony across the line of scrimmage to sack Bonner on first down resulting in a two yard loss. On second down, Johnson was met at the line of scrimmage by Hubbert and a host of defenders and following a time-out by the Wildcats, Bonner connected thru the air with Franklin but Brady Tucker made the immediate stop leaving the Wildcats facing fourth down and thirteen at their own 17-yard line forcing Johnson to punt the ball away with Nichols back to receive for the Lions. The Lions were penalized on the punt and on the replay of down, Nichols made the reception at midfield advancing to the Wildcats 44-yard line.

Hubbert was met for the stop by Johnson and a host of others after a one yard gain on first down as the third quarter came to a close. The Lions couldn't capitalize on the short field advantage as the Wildcat defense stood ground with Johnson stopping Hubbert in the backfield for a four yard loss. Facing third down and thirteen, Zane Cannon burst across the line and made the sack resulting in an eight yard loss leaving the Lions facing fourth down and twenty one at their own 45-yard line. Holliday lined-up and punted the ball away with the Wildcats starting their offensive possession at their own 24-yard line.

First down brought Hubbert and Anthony rushing into the backfield for the stop on Johnson resulting in a five yard loss. On second down Bonner was once again intercepted following a deep pass down field as Nichols made the reception at the Lions 43-yard line. The Lions offense was held to three and out on their possession following a dead ball penalty and a sack by Brandtley Barrentine. Facing fourth down and long yardage, Holliday once again punted the ball away with the ball rolling out of bounds at the Wildcats 47-yard line.

G. Key made the sack on Bonner on first down resulting in a four yard loss and on second down Bonner connected with Darty who advanced to the Lions 47-yard line with Upton on the solo

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tackle. Third down brought Gann out of the backfield with the hand-off but he was met immediately at the line of scrimmage by Upton, Hubbert, Anthony and a host of others for the stop. Facing fourth down and five, the Wildcats elected to fight for the needed yardage but Upton made the sack on Bonner after a ten yard loss giving the Lions possession at the Wildcats 42-yard line.

The Lion coaching staff called on Holliday to handle the rushing attack on the final possession of the game and he precisely took the hand-off moving the ball down field back to back first downs and keeping the ball in possession of the Lions. Facing fourth down and one yard following the official measurement and a time-out by the Wildcats, Holliday took the ball over the right side of the line for the first down at the Wildcats 17-yard line. Continuing his rushing attack, Holliday moved the ball deeper on the Wildcats defense advancing the ball to the three yard line where Lions Head Coach Lamar Harris signaled for Nichols to take a knee on the next three snaps allowing for time to expire on the game clock and awarding the Lions the win by the score of 6 - 0. The victory gives the Lions their first win on the season.

Friday night the Lions will travel to Hackleburg to face-off against the Panthers. Game time is 7:00p.m.

Comments from Head Coach Lamar Harris:

"Hat's off to both teams. These guys played really hard on both sides of the ball tonight and I'm extremely proud that we are able to exit here tonight with the much needed win. Our defense played exceptionally well throughout the game tonight. Both teams defensive fronts played an important role in the outcome of tonight's game, but I'm extremely proud that our guys were successful and able to halt several of their offensive drives. Turn-overs were an issue as well and those had a reflection on the outcome of the game. We didn't have a really great game on the offensive side of the ball, but that first possession drive which led to the touchdown paid off for the win. I'm proud of our players for gutting it out and I'm really proud of these young guys for containing their focus throughout the game and fighting deep from within for the win. We're glad to depart the field with this win. It's an important achievement for this team as we continue building confidence in some of our young guys who haven't had the opportunity to play the game. The upcoming game this week will be another hard fought contest and we've got to continue our pursuit of working together and building ourselves up as a team to reach our overall goals."