

2012 Tharptown Write Up

Written by Allen J. Dunavant

Monday, 27 August 2012 09:02 - Last Updated Sunday, 02 September 2012 22:32

Varsity Action: The Lions traveled to Franklin County on Friday night to battle the Tharptown Wildcats in a preseason jamboree. Aaron Dillard received the opening kick advancing up field for an 11-yard gain to set up the Lion offense at the 32 yard line. With the snap of the ball, Dillard advanced up the middle of the line of scrimmage for a 17-yard gain reaching mid-field to set up another first down. Dillard who is returning as the starting quarterback this season once again called his own number moving the ball to just near the Wildcat 40 yard line to set up second down and inches. Corey Stewart took the hand-off from Dillard on second down and rumbled his way deep into Wildcat territory before being brought down at the 11-yard line. First down brought Landon Miller with the carry over right tackle to the 5-yard line before being stopped. Miller wasn't denied on his second carry of the game crossing the goal line untouched for the first score of the evening. On the PAT attempt Aaron Dillard's kick sailed left leaving the Lions a score of 6-0 with 9:33 remaining in the first quarter.

Sam Key booted the ensuing kick deep where the Wildcats offensive front took the field starting at their 16-yard line. Kelby Hallmark scrambled for a 5-yard gain on first down and picked up an additional 3-yards on second down. Facing third down and 2, Hallmark called his own number once again moving the ball to the 30-yard line for the first down. First down brought a passing attempt but pressure by Blayke Hill ensured the attempt was overthrown. On second down, Hallmark connected with his receiver along the side-line moving the ball across mid-field to the Lion 32-yard line. First down brought Mike Rice with a carry where he was stopped by a host of Lions after an 8-yard gain. Second down brought Hallmark with a keeper where he was knocked out of bounds by Zack Jenkins to bring up third down and 3 at the Lion 27-yard line. Hallmark called his own number once again advancing to the 21-yard line where T. J. Pratt and Jenkins made the stop for the Lions. On first down Mike Rice was brought down in the backfield by Aaron Dillard for a 5-yard loss. Dillard continued to haunt the Wildcats by intercepting Hallmarks pass on second down to turn the ball over to the Lions.

Facing first down at their own 11-yard line, Dillard attempted to connect on a passing attempt with David Aldridge but the ball fell incomplete. Second down brought Dillard with a quarterback keeper rushing around the left side of the line of scrimmage behind his blockers racing untouched to the end zone for his first score on the evening. Following the successful kick on the PAT attempt, Dillard kicking with Austin Palmer holding, the Lions were leading 13-0 with 5:07 remaining in the first quarter.

Sam Key's kick was fielded at the 32-yard line by Christian Smith where he was met by a host of Lions for the stop following a 2-yard gain. First down brought Smith with the carry but once again he was stopped following a short yardage gain. On second down Pratt, rushed into the

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backfield pressuring Hallmark to release the ball early but Corey Stewart was on the receiver at the line of scrimmage to make the tackle for no-gain setting up third down and 8. Rice was tackled after a three yard gain by Miller setting up fourth down for the Wildcat offense. Jordan White and Stewart lined up to receive the punt with Stewart advancing the ball to the 34-yard line for a 6-yard return.

Stewart took the hand-off on first down and advanced for 9-yards. Second down brought Dillard connecting on the passing attempt with Pratt who fought his way across mid-field to the Wildcat 32-yard line. White took the hand-off on first down and fought his way around the left side line for a first down at the 27-yard line. With the snap of the ball Miller continued the fight picking up another first down at the 15-yard line. Miller advanced to the end zone on the next play rushing over the right side of the line of scrimmage with .23 seconds remaining in the first quarter. Following the PAT attempt, an unsuccessful kick by Dillard, the Lions were leading 19-0.

Dakota Dozier rushed down field on the ensuing kick and recovered the ball which was fumbled by the receiver deep in Wildcat territory setting up first down for the Lions at the 28-yard line. On first down the Lions were loss yardage following a penalty setting up first down at the 36-yard line. Anthony Dillard took the hand-off from David Aldridge on first down picking up 5-yards following blockers over the right side of the line of scrimmage. On second down, White advance to the 19-yard line before being dragged down for the stop just inches short of the first down marker. Anthony Dillard was brought down in the backfield on third down by Hallmark, Rice and others to set up fourth down. Aldridge's pass was intercepted and returned to the Lion 33-yard line setting up Hallmark and the Wildcat offense with excellent field position.

Rice got the call to carry on first down but Kris Parson was on the spot for a 1-yard loss. Facing second down, Hallmark called his own number but was brought down after a 4-yard gain by a host of Lion defenders after attempting to rush up the middle. Third down brought Hallmark attacking thru the air but the ball was over thrown to set up fourth down. Attempting the passing attack again on fourth down yielded the same results as the pass was overthrown turning the ball over on downs to the Lions at their own 30-yard line. Aaron Dillard quickly moved the ball back into Lion territory on first down by rushing around the left side line with a keeper to reach the Cats 48-yard line. Miller took the hand-off on first down and burst his way over right tackle to the 39-yard line to bring up second down and 1. Dillard once again connected with Pratt who fought off would be tacklers moving his way to the 1-yard line before being stopped. Stewart then took the ball to the end zone for the touchdown. Dillard's kick was unsuccessful on the PAT and the Lions led 15-0 with 6:10 remaining in the first half of play.

The ensuing kick by Key was deep with White making the stop at the 22-yard line where Hallmark and the offensive unit returned to the field. Following a defensive stop by the Lions for no gain on first down, White burst across the line of scrimmage sacking Hallmark to bring up third down. Dozier battled his way across the line of scrimmage to bring Hallmark down for a 1-yard loss on third down and fourth down brought more misery for the Wildcats as the punter mishandled the ball with the Lions making the recovery at the 15-yard line. First down brought Vess Benton to the end zone untouched for the score. Dillard's kick, with Aldridge holding on the PAT was perfect building the Lion lead 32-0 with 4:27 remaining.

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Following the booted kick by Key, Hallmark and the Wildcat offense set up for the drive at their own 31-yard line. First down brought a pass completion to Rice who battled for 8-yards before Justin Franklin made the stop. Smith took the hand off on second down reaching the 42-yard line for a first down with Franklin making the stop for the Lions. On first down Dozier broke thru the line of scrimmage to sack Hallmark for a 10-yard loss setting up second down and 21 at the 31-yard line. Hallmark called his own number rushing around the right side line where Nathan Young and a host of Lions brought him down. Facing third down and inches, Hallmark called on Rice who rushed up the middle to the Lion 48-yard line for the first down. Rice got the call to carry again and picked up 2-yards where Dozier and a host of Lion defenders made the stop. Hallmark connected with his receiver on third down who made the catch near the side lines before being shoved out of bounds by Franklin at the Lion 35-yard line. First down brought Rice with the carry again but Young made the stop at the 25-yard line to save the touchdown. Hallmark scrambled in the backfield before finally connecting with Smith just across the goal line for the touchdown with .42 seconds remaining in the first half. Following the successful kick on the PAT the score stood 32-7 in favor of the Lions.

The onside kick by the Wildcats was recovered by Pratt setting up the Lion offense at their own 33-yard line. White got the call to carry on first down but the ball came loss during the carry and the Wildcats recovered at the Lion 42-yard line. With time expiring on the first half the Wildcat coaching staff elected to pursue the passing attack. First down brought an incomplete pass deep down field with Franklin on coverage for the Lions. Gabe Stidham was on coverage for the Lions on second down and once again on third down forcing the incomplete pass to set up fourth down. Vess Benton intercepted the deep pass on fourth down bringing the first half of play to an end with the Lions in the lead 32-7.

The Wildcat offense started the second half at their own 45-yard line following a successful 24-yard kick return. Rice got the call to carry on first down but Calan Robertson and Devin Marcum made the stop after a 4-yard gain. Miller burst his way into the backfield to sack Hallmark on second down. Third down brought Rice with the rushing attempt but Miller and Hill made the stop at the Lion 48-yard line and on fourth down Hallmark attempted another deep pass but the ball fell incomplete turning the ball over to the Lions on downs.

Aldridge led the Lion offense to the line and on first down Stewart took the hand-off and scrambled his way around the left side line to the Wildcats 36-yard line before being stopped. Dillard connected thru the air with Aldridge for a 36-yard touchdown reception. Following the successful PAT kick by Dillard with Aldridge holding, the Lions were in the lead 39-7 with little time off the third quarter of play.

The ensuing kick by Key was returned to the Lions 40-yard line before Miller and others made the stop. Successful defensive stops by Jenkins and Parson on first and second down and a pass broken up by Austin Palmer on third down put pressure on Hallmark and the Wildcat offense. Facing fourth down and 10, Hill burst his way across the line of scrimmage and sacked Hallmark for a 5-yard loss to turn the ball over on downs to the Lions.

This drive brought numerous substitutions to the Lion offense as Vess Benton and Austin

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Palmer lined up at quarterback before McKain Hubbert punted the ball away deep to the Wildcat 10-yard line with no return on the punt. Hallmark and the Wildcats battled to their own 38-yard line as the third quarter of play came to an end. Facing second down and 15, Hallmark with a keeper scrambled around the left side line before being forced out of bounds near mid-field. Hallmark called his own number once again and picked up the first down before being stopped at the Lion 42-yard line. Rice was stopped by Miller and Parson for no gain on first down. Second down brought an incomplete pass and third down brought Hallmark with a keeper around the right side line of scrimmage to the end zone for the score. The PAT kick was successful and the score stood 39-14.

The ensuing onside kick was recovered by Anthony Dillard and advanced to the Cats 47-yard line. Following a penalty against the Cats, Athony Dillard took the hand-off and advanced over right tackle to the 30-yard line. The Lions were penalized for delay to bring up first down and 15 at the 35-yard line. Following a bad snap the Wildcats recovered the loss ball at the Lion 42-yard line.

First down brought Rice with the rushing attack but Anthony Dillard was there for the stop after a 1-yard gain. On second down the passing attempt sailed out of bounds with Dax Benton on cover for the Lions. Sticking with the passing attack, Hallmark attempted another deep pass but

Franklin and Jenkins were covering the receiver. Facing fourth down and 9, Hallmark called his own number and rushed across the right side of the line of scrimmage before cutting back across field racing to the left corner of the end zone for the score. The PAT attempt was unsuccessful as Brandon Smith broke across the line to block the kick leaving the score at 39-20 in favor of the Lions with 5:57 remaining in the game.

On the ensuing kick the ball did not travel the required yardage so quarterback Dax Benton brought the Lion offense front to the field. Benton called his own number on first down and advanced 3-yards to the Cats 46-yard line. Second down brought Anthony Dillard with a 24-yard rushing attack moving the ball deep down field to the Wildcat 22-yard line. Dax Benton scrambled his way to the 16-yard line before being tackled on first down. Palmer lined up as quarterback on second down but the Lions were unable to gain yardage setting up fourth down. Anthony Dillard was brought down in the backfield to turn the ball over to the Wildcats on downs.

Hallmark on a keeper advanced the ball to the Wildcat 44-yard line on first down. With a new set of downs, Rice got the call to carry and advanced up the middle where Anthony Dillard made the stop after a 3-yard gain. Hallmark called his own number once again and advanced to the Lion 39-yard line for the first down before Gabe Stidham made the stop for the Lions. With a first down at the Lion 39-yard line and time expiring on the clock the Wildcats called time out. Following the time out Hallmark took the ball to the 21-yard line for another first down before Franklin and Stidham made the stop. On first down Hallmark was pressured by Dozier forcing a throw out of bounds to stop the clock with 9 seconds remaining on the game clock. Hallmark once again called his own number and was brought down by Chuck Ginther and Dozier as time expired ending the game. The Lions will travel to Bear Creek on Friday night to open regular season play against the Phillips Bears. Game time is at 7p.m.

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B-Team Action

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The Lion B-Team started action by lining up on the defensive side of the ball. No kicking game was utilized during the one quarter of the B-Team's pre-season game. The Wildcat offense lined up at the Lion 30-yard line to start the game following the coin toss. Misery started early for the Wildcats as the ball was fumbled away on first down with Nathan Young recovering the ball for the Lions at the Wildcat 27-yard line.

First down brought Dax Benton with a quarterback keeper up field for a 6-yard gain. Gabe Stidham got the call on second down and fumbled but managed to recover the loose ball setting up third down at the 27-yard line. Benton on a keeper advanced down field for a 14-yard gain to set up another set of downs for the Lions. Sticking with the quarterback keeper, Benton advanced another 9-yards to the 5-yard line setting up second down and 1. Stidham took the hand-off from Benton and rushed up the middle to the end zone giving the Lions the first score of the game with 9:05 remaining. Going for two points on the PAT, Benton was brought down in the backfield leaving the score standing at 6 - 0.

The Wildcat offensive front returned to the field and on first down the Cat's quarterback scrambled for a 14-yard gain before being forced out of bounds at the 44-yard line by McKain Huubbert. First down brought Nathan Young bursting his way across the line and into the backfield for the sack and an 8-yard loss. Dax Benton made the stop on second down and third down brought an incomplete pass setting up fourth down and 18. The Wildcats were unsuccessful in picking up the first down and the Lions took over possession at the 33-yard line.

Benton handed the ball off to Young on first down for a 4-yard gain. Young got the call to carry again on second down and rushed up the middle to pick up the first down at the Wildcat 49-yard line.

First down brought a penalty against the Lions moving the ball back to the Lion 46-yard line setting up first down and 15. Benton was quick to gain the needed yardage back rushing to the Wildcat 35-yard line before the saving stop was made. Young carried again on first down and was brought down by a host of Wildcats after a 5-yard gain. Benton connected thru the air with Justin Hancock on second down with Hancock battling to the 10-yard line before the stop was made. First down brought Young with the rushing attack up the middle for a 6-yard gain. On second down G. Stidham was held for no gain to bring up third down and goal at the 4-yard line. The Lion drive broke down as the Wildcats held on third down and on fourth down the Lions were penalized for delay of game moving the ball back to the 10-yard line. The Lions were penalized once again moving the ball back deeper to the 15-yard line where Benton attempted to connect with Stidham thru the air but the pass fell incomplete turning the ball over

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on downs to the Wildcats.

After a 1-yard gain on first down the Cats went to the air attack but the pass fell incomplete on second down. Facing third down and 9, on a quarterback keeper the Wildcats signal caller advance deep down field to the Lion 41-yard line before Ryan Breubaker chased him down for the tackle to save the touchdown. Connecting thru the air on a pass the Cats picked up another 3-yards on first down. Second down brought another quarterback keeper around the right side lines where Breubaker once again made the saving stop at the 3-yard line. The Wildcat quarterback carried the ball to the end zone by rushing up the middle for the touch down to even the score with .53 seconds remaining in the game. The two point conversion was successful to put the Wildcats in the lead 8 - 6 with little time left for the Lion comeback.

Lining up at the 30-yard line, Benton called on Young to advance the ball but he was stopped after a 2-yard gain. Facing second down and 8, the Lions were penalized moving the ball back to the 28-yard line. With one second left on the game clock, Benton attempted a deep pass to Gabe Stidham but the pass fell incomplete leaving the score in favor of the Wildcats 8 - 6. The B-Team schedule has not been confirmed but all players will continue to dress with the Varsity Team for the season.