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SPORTS & CLASSIFIEDS

Cardinals look to slow down NHW in first round of state

By Rocky Hulne sports@austindailyherald.com

The Cardinals are ready for a change of pace as they will face off against a pass-happy team in the Minnesota Class Nine Man State Tournament quarterfinals at 7 p.m. Thursday at Macalester College in St. Paul.



After locking down run-heavy Lanesboro by a score of 30-6 in the Section 1 Nine Man title game last Friday, the Cardinals will try to slow down Wheaton/Herman-Norcross (9-2 overall), which likes to spread it out and pass the ball.

L-O (9-2 overall) hasn't played a lot of offenses like WHN this season, but Carrier said that Mountain Lake and Spring Grove both had similar looks. L-O held those teams to just six points each in regular season matchups.

"They want to throw the football around. They're very similar to Mountain Lake in terms of their philosophy on offense," Carrier said. "They're going to try and spread us out. Our D line has to push the pocket and play big. We'll continue to do what we've done in the past."

A lot of the Cardinals haven't played a varsity football game on turf before last week's game in Triton, and now they'll be taking it up to the Twin Cities.

Cardinal spirit is running rampant in LeRoy-Ostrander, where the community, the school and the administration have rallied behind the team.

"The excitement is real in small town America," Carrier said. "We're in a situation that we haven't been in for a long time. Everyone is excited."

WHL beat Vernadale 14-12 in the Section title game after losing to Verndale 38-31 on Oct. 15.

This is the Cardinals' first trip to a state football tournament in 15 years.



LeRoy-Ostrander's Gavin Sweeney chases the play against Lanesboro Friday night in the Section 1 Nine Man title game at Triton High School in Dodge Center. Eric Johnson/photodesk@austindailyherald.com

'That's all heart'

By Eric Johnson eric.johnson@austindailyherald.com

DODGE CENTER — What started out looking like a low-scoring, back-and-forth affair in the Section 1 Nine Man title game Friday night, turned into something quite different. No. 3 seeded LeRoy-Ostrander found their legs in the second half and the defense stifled most anything No. 1 seed Lanesboro tried to do to claim the section title and return to the Minnesota State Football Tournament for the first time since 2004, with a 30-6 win at Triton High School.

Cardinal's quarterback Chase Johnson exploded in the second half with three touchdown runs of 73, 53 and 38 yards and galloped to 248 yards on 19 carries, pushing the game out of reach for the Burros, who struggled to move the chains for most of the night.

"We saw some things we just weren't getting down right," said head coach Trevor Carrier. "We made a little bit of correction on the blocking schemes and we have Chase Johnson back there. He's going to find a gap. He doesn't need a lot of room."

That was certainly true of Johnson's first score in the second half, as he wound his way through and out of several tackles before busting it down the sideline for the score.

A large part of what Johnson was able to do started with the of-

fensive line, which gave him and running back Tanner Olson the necessary lanes.

"Our offensive line came up big time," Johnson said. "They're big, fast, strong and we get good blocking."

L-O didn't take long to get on the board in the first half. After stopping Lanesboro on 4th-and-2 during their opening drive, the

Online

Photo gallery can be found at: www.austindailyherald.com/2021/11/thats-all-heart-cardinals-overpower-burros-for-first-state-tournament-berth-since-2004/

Cardinals pounded it on the ground until Johnson dropped a 28-yard touchdown pass over the shoulder of Layne Bird to take a 6-0 lead with just over five minutes left to play in the first quarter.

Lanesboro answered in the second quarter when the Burros' Hayden Lawstuen ran it in from 10 yards out to tie the game at 6-6, but it was about the last bit of significant offense Lanesboro could put together the rest of the night.

From there on out the Cardinal defense suffocated the Lanesboro offense, even after the Burros attempted to go to the air late in the second half.

"Look at that defense," Carrier said. "That's one of the best

teams in nine man football and (the defense) held them to six points."

The end result was a sweet turn from earlier in the season, when Lanesboro beat L-O 38-27 on Sept. 17.

"They beat us in the regular season, but that's what hard work does," Johnson said. "It sets us up for a better chance."

The Cardinals ran for 280 yards and racked up 321 yard of total offense on the night.

This is the Cardinals' first state tournament berth since 2004, when L-O was robbed of an upset of then perennial power Stephen-Argyle in the semifinals on a last-second passing touchdown.

The idea of being back in the tournament has far-reaching effects for the community and school.

"It means absolutely everything," Carrier said. "You see this crowd? It's just a sea of red. We beat the No. 6 ranked team, Grand Meadow, at their place. We beat the No. 2 ranked team in a neutral place on the road. That's all heart."

"I think our team has a big heart and we played it like we should," Johnson said.

The Cardinals will play the champions of Section 4, Wheaton/Herman-Norcross, at 7 p.m. on Thursday, at Macalester College in the first round of the state tournament.

SCHEDULE

Wednesday Swimming and diving: Austin at Section 1A meet in Rochester, TBA
Thursday Class nine man state quarterfinals: LeRoy-Ostrander vs. Wheaton/Herman-Norcross at Macalester College in St. Paul, 7 p.m.
Friday NAHL hockey: North Iowa Bulls at Austin Bruins, 7 p.m.
Swimming and diving: Austin at Section 1A meet in Rochester, TBA
Saturday NAHL hockey: Austin Bruins at North Iowa Bulls, 7:30 p.m.
Girls hockey: Austin at Rochester Century, 1 p.m.

BRIEFS



Bruins earn split over St. Cloud over the weekend

The Austin Bruins held off a late push to beat the St. Cloud Norsemen (8-5 overall) 4-3 in Riverside Arena Saturday.

Ryan O'Neill finished with a hat trick for St. Cloud as he scored two power play goals in the last five minutes of the game, but Austin held for the win.

Damon Furuseth had a pair of third period goals for the Bruins (11-3-1-1 overall).

Klayton Knapp had 25 saves in net for Austin.

The win earned the Bruins a split on the weekend after they were blanked by St. Cloud by a score of 3-0 Friday in St. Cloud.

Hudson Hodges had 32 saves for the Bruins (10-3-1-1 overall).

Friday Box Score SCORING SUMMARY: Austin 000 - 0, St. Cloud 120 - 3

First period (SC) Nick Young (Ethan Lindahl, Peyton Hanson) 19:13

Second period (SC) Nik Hong (Chase Freiermuth, Sam Duerr) (power play) 11:08 (SC) Blake Perpix (Blake Mesenburg, Ryan O'Neill) (power play) 18:20

Third period No scoring

Shots: Austin - 22; St. Cloud - 35 Power plays: Austin - 0-for-4; St. Cloud - 2-for-6

Saturday Box Score SCORING SUMMARY: St. Cloud 102 - 3, Austin 112 - 4

First period (SC) Ryan O'Neill (Nick Hong, Brandon Lajoie) 16:04 (A) Matys Brassard (John Larkin, Carlson Riddle) (power play) 10:36

Second period (A) Jack Malinski (Carson Riddle, Jens Richards) 10:36

Third period (A) Damon Furuseth (Isaak Brassard, Matys Brassard) 2:10 (A) Furuseth (Carson Riddle, Jack Malinski) 9:09 (SC) O'Neill (power play) (Brandon Lajoie, Sam Duerr) 15:11 (SC) Ryan O'Neill (Blake Perpix Duke Kiffin) (power play) 16:18

Shots: Austin - 22; SC - 28 Power plays: Austin - 2-for-4; SC - 2-for-6

Minnesota State High School Football Tournament Nine Man

Quarterfinals Friday, Nov. 12 At Moorhead High School Ogilvie (7-3) vs. Kittson County Central (8-2), 7 p.m.

At Macalester College LeRoy-Ostrander (9-2) vs. Wheaton/Herman-Norcross (9-2), 7 p.m.

At Grand Rapids High School Fertile-Beltrami (11-0) v s. Mountain Iron-Buhl (9-1), 6 p.m.

At Southern Minnesota State University, Marshall Renville County West (8-3) vs. Hills-Beaver Creek (9-2), 7 p.m.

Semifinal At U.S. Bank Stadium Thursday, Nov. 18 Ogilvie/KCC winner vs. LeRoy-Ostrander/WHN winner, 11:30 a.m.

Friday, Nov. 19 Fertile-Beltrami/MIB winner vs. RCW/HBC winner, 9 a.m.

Championship Saturday, Nov. 27 At U.S. Bank Stadium Semifinal winners, 10 a.m.

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Eagles push their way past Awesome Blossoms

By Rocky Hulne sports@austindailyherald.com

JANESVILLE — The top-seeded Awesome Blossoms couldn't hold the line as Maple River was able to run behind its big offensive line for much of the night in a 40-18 win over Blooming Prairie in the Section 2AA title game Friday.

The Eagles (10-1 overall) finished with over 400 rushing yards and scored the last three TDs of the game to end BP's 28-game winning streak.

"On the defensive side we kind of got things going and we made some adjustments, but halftime they got back on top of us," BP head coach Chad Gimbel said. "We kind of ran out of adjustments. They're big and they're strong and we missed some big plays. That was the game. Unfortunately we got ourselves in a hole where they were able to get in a coverage that was tough to beat."

BP pulled to within 19-18 when Drew Kittelson scrambled for a 12-yard score on the first possession of the second half, but the Awesome Blossoms struggled to move the ball for the rest of the game. The Eagles took a commanding 33-18 lead when Mason Frank hauled in a 40-yard TD pass from Landon Fox to start the fourth quarter.

Kittelson scrambled for a two-yard TD run on fourth and goal late in the first half to bring BP within a score at 19-12.

The BP defense set up the big drive as it made two defensive stops inside their own 15-yard line on back-to-back possessions while trailing 19-7 to keep the team in the game.

"We weren't very battle tested until this game and we just didn't come through," Gimbel said. "I haven't had under classmen this broke up after a loss. That tells me that these seniors did a lot of



Blooming Prairie quarterback Drew Kittelson scrambles for a two-yard TD run on fourth and goal near the end of the first half against Maple River in the Section 2AA title game Friday.

Rocky Hulne/sports@austindailyherald.com

right things. These guys made a lot of plays and they were fun to watch this year. They are great kids."

Senior Colin Jordison had 64 receiving yards in his final game for BP (10-1 overall). He is part of a group of players who had back-to-back unbeaten seasons and who also brought home BP's first state title in 2019.

"It all starts with the underclassmen learning the Blossom Way from the upper classmen," Jordison said. "It started in our freshman year with Seth Peterson, Payton Simon, Trent Swenson and Timmy Wolf. They set a good example on how to be a good leader and how to put your heart and soul into it. We came up short here, but at the end of the day, it's a game and you've got to use these skills for life. Everyone's got things that are going to happen later in life and you learn very valuable life lessons from this sport."

SCORING SUMMARY: Blooming Prairie 6 6 6 0 -18, Maple River 19 0 7 14 -40

First quarter (MR) Mason Schirmer 8 run (Fox kick) (3 plays, 60 yards) 11:15 (BP) Cade Christianson 52 pass from Drew Kittelson (kick blocked) (2 plays, 52 yards) 7:11 (MR) Tim Buckholtz 1 run (kick blocked) (13 plays, 80 yards) 2:14 (MR) Schirmer 63 run (pass failed) (1 play, 63 yards) :55

Second quarter (BP) Kittelson 2 run (kick failed) (12 plays, 92 yards) :38

Third quarter (BP) Kittelson 12 run (run failed) (8 play, 65 yards) 9:18 (MR) Boden Simon 2 run (Fox kick) (5 plays, 62 yards) 7:15

Fourth quarter (MR) Mason Frank 40 pass from Landon Fox (Fox kick) (2 plays, 44 yards) 11:51 (MR) Simon 2 run (Fox kick) (7 plays, 39 yards) 8:10

BP STATS Rushing: Tyler Archer, 12-for-52, TD; Drew Kittelson, 11-for-29, 2 TD; Cole Wangen, 1-for-10; Carson Brennecke, 0-for-0 Passing: Drew Kittelson, 11-for-29, 192, TD, 3 INT Receiving: Cade Christianson, 2-for-59, TD; Archer, 3-for-54; Colin Jordison, 3-for-64; Brennecke, 2-for-14; Xavier Rennie, 1-for-3 Penalties: 7-for-65

MR STATS Rushing: 412 Passing: 76 Penalties: 7-for-70



Austin's Marissa Shute competes in the Minnesota State Cross Country Meet this past Saturday.

Photo provided

Area runners compete at state CC meet

Austin Daily Herald newsroom@austindailyherald.com

A pair of area runners had strong finishes at the Minnesota Cross Country State Meet at St. Olaf College in Northfield Saturday.

Austin freshman Marissa Shute took 65th place in the girls Class AA race with a time of 20:43.10.

Pacelli freshman Kirsten Koopal took 57th overall with a time of 20:43.04.

Amanda Overgaauw of Murray County Central won the girls Class A race with a time of 18:09.13 and Isabelle Schmitz of Hutchinson took first in the girls Class AA race with a time of 17:59.44.