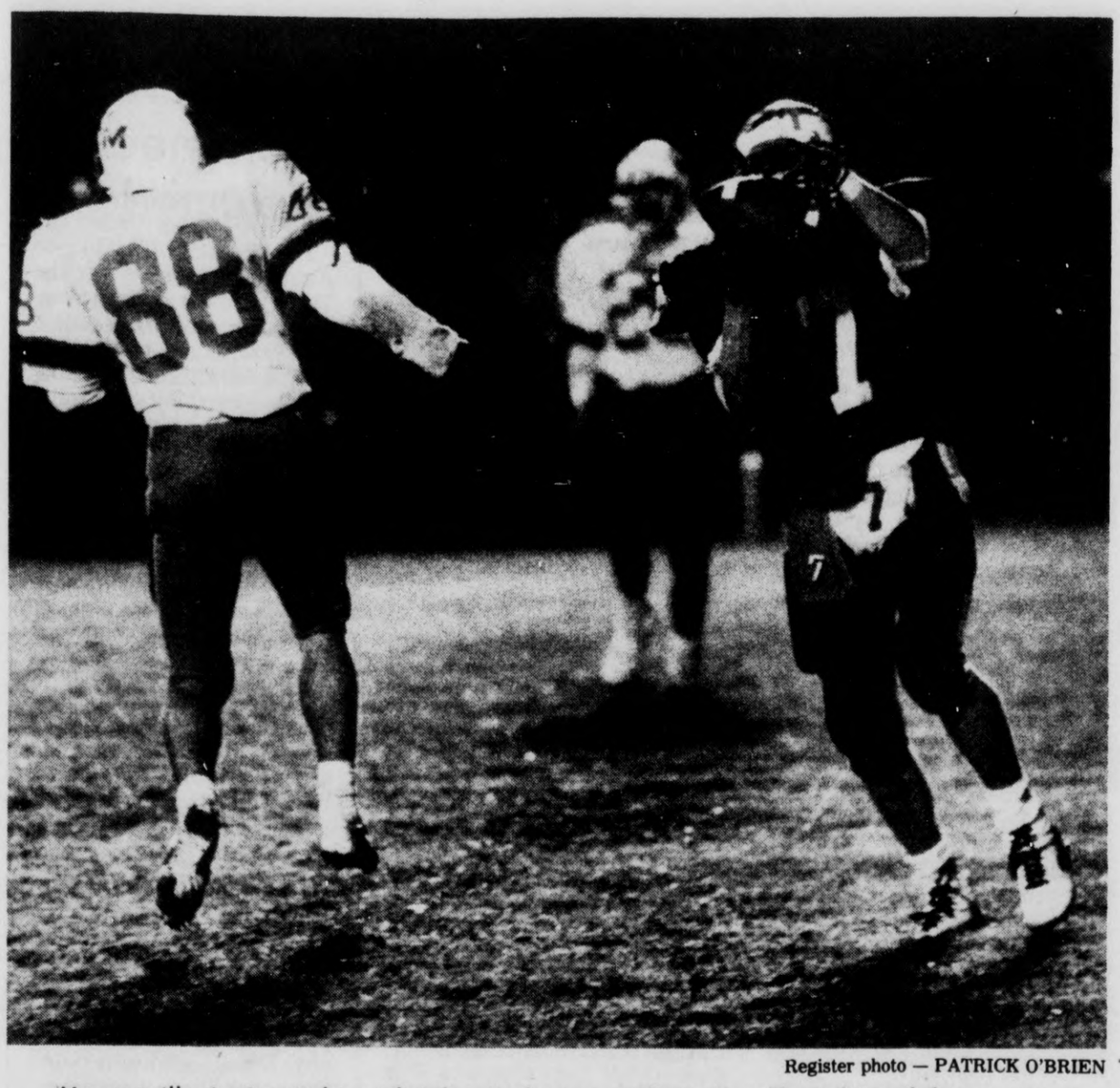


Register photo — PATRICK O'BRIEN

Monroeville junior tight end John Anderson gathers in a 9-yard touchdown pass from quarterback Joe Lindenberger in the fourth quarter. The Eagles remained unbeaten at 8-0 following a 21-0 blanking of Mapleton Friday night in Firelands Conference action.

Polar Bears hold off stubborn Port Clinton

PORT CLINTON — It should have been a lot easier. But as far as Margaretta is concerned, a win's a win.

In spite of racking up 361 yards in total offense, the Polar Bears had to sweat out 7-6 squeaker over winless Port Clinton Friday night.

"We made a lot of mistakes which kept us from scoring more, but we're just happy to have one in the winning column," stated a pleased John Zang, Margaretta's head coach. "We did a lot of good things as a team and individually."

At the top of that list would be junior quarterback Mike Lyons, who continues to improve as the offense's leader. Lyons carried the ball 21 times for 135 yards, and added 58 more yards on 4-of-9 passing.

"Lyons just had a tremendous game," smiled Zang. "He's seems to be gaining confidence week by week, plus he's getting used to our receivers."

The visitors (2-3 in the SBC, 3-5 overall) showed early that they were going to move the football.

After returning the opening kickoff to their own 26, the Bears roared down the field to the Redskins' 11-yard line. But, in what was to become a recurring problem, Margaretta would not score, when a fumble was recovered by the hosts.

On their next drive, Margaretta would score their only touchdown. Taking advantage of good field position, the offense drove 55 yards, the last 14 coming on a Keith Miller touchdown run. Brian Holbrook added the extra point to make the score 7-0 with 1:26 left in the first period.

That might have been the Polar Bear's only score, but don't think they didn't have any more opportunities.

Margaretta penetrated to the Port Clinton 29-yard line late in the second quarter, but fumbled again. And two second half possessions reached the Redskins' six and 15-yard lines.

"We're a hungry football team," reasoned Zang, "and all of our fumbles came when the ball carrier was fighting for that extra yard. That happens sometimes. But we can still concentrate more to make sure that problem doesn't occur more often.

Still, it took Port Clinton until 7:05 of the fourth quarter before they made the visitors pay for their errors. After stopping a Margaretta threat, the Redskins put on a sustained drive of their own, ending with Mike Sorg's six-yard run to paydirt. Now, trailing by only one, 7-6, first-year coach Pete Moore was faced with a dilemma: go for the tie or take the lead?

It appeared Moore had chosen the former, as his team lined up for the extra-point kick; instead, it was a fake, and a pass incompletion ended the gallant effort on a sour note. A final possession in the game's final two minutes resulted in only one first down as an interception ended any hopes that Port Clinton had for earning their first victory.

Margaretta will look for their third straight win next Friday when they host Edison. Zang doesn't expect the win to come easy.

"On the film we've seen, Edison is a good football team. Just take a look at (Friday night's) scores. That shows just how competitive the SBC is".

Port Clinton hopes victory number one will come next Saturday, when they battle slumping St. Mary's at Strobel Field.

Monroeville pockets piece of Firelands Conference

MONROEVILLE — For the third time in four weeks, Monroeville brushed aside a potential contender.

The Eagles remained unbeaten at 8-0 and improved to 6-0 in the Firelands Conference following a 21-0 blanking of Mapleton at Marsh Field Friday night.

And, they got a little help from their friends as Plymouth downed Black River, 27-7.

The win by the Eagles, coupled with Black River's loss, helped Monroeville clinch at least a share of the conference title.

With two weeks left, they have a two-game lead over Black River, Mapleton and Plymouth.

It's the third time that Monroeville has clinched at least a share of the crown in the last four years and fourth FC title for the school since Steve Ringholz took over as mentor in 1978.

Next Friday, the Eagles venture to Black River with eyes on winning the crown outright. After Black River, Monroeville will close out the season at Ashland Crestview.

"We're getting better and better each week. Mapleton was much stronger defensively than we had anticipated," said Ringholz.

"But, our defense did a heck of a job, too. We stopped their fullback (Hickey) which we felt would be a key and also had a decent pass rush on their quarterback.

"We've faced some tough teams in recent weeks and our defense has met the challenge."

The shutout of Mapleton was the second this season for the Monroeville defense and the Eagles have yielded just 33 points in eight games. And, no opponent has scored more than once.

"I thought our offensive line was in control and wore them down. We had a couple of other scoring opportunities but weren't able to cash in. Buddy Draper blocked his second punt of the season in the first quarter but we couldn't reach the end zone. And, we got inside the Mapleton 5-yard line in the third quarter and came up empty," added Ringholz.

At halftime, the Eagles held a 7-0 lead following a two-yard scoring run by fullback Jerry Morrow in the second quarter.

That proved to be the only score until the final period when the Eagles struck twice.

First, John Anderson hauled in a 9-yard scoring pass from Joe Lindenberger and fullback Rick Bryant capped it off with a 9-yard run to paydirt later in the same period.

Eric Dickman split the uprights on the PAT after each score.

The Eagles piled up 233 yards on 44 rushes with Morrow leading the way with 103 on 21 carries while Bryant checked in with 72 yards on 10 tries.

Also, quarterback Lindenberger completed 11 of 20 passes for 123 yards and suffered just one interception.

His favorite target was J.D. Pothorski who hauled in five passes for 41 yards.

Meanwhile, Mapleton totaled just 105 yards with 48 on the ground and 57 through the air.

FIRELANDS CONFERENCE

SCHOOL NAME	OVERALL G	W	L	PF	PA	LEAGUE G	W	L	PF	PA
Monroeville	8	8	0	207	33	6	6	0	168	24
Mapleton	8	6	2	192	67	6	4	2	115	61
Plymouth	8	6	2	207	95	6	4	2	113	55
Black River	8	5	3	152	90	6	4	2	123	63
New London	8	5	3	178	107	6	3	3	127	107
Western Reserve	7	4	3	106	96	5	2	3	72	70
Crestview	7	3	4	93	98	5	2	3	62	68
St. Paul	8	2	6	57	203	7	2	5	50	169
South Central	8	0	8	26	240	7	0	7	20	233

Plymouth 27 Black River 7

PLYMOUTH — Chuck Deskins scored three touchdowns and rambled for 104 yards on 18 carries while pacing Plymouth to a 27-7 win over Black River.

The win helped the Big Red gain a share of second place in the Firelands Conference along with Black River and Mapleton, the latter a 21-0 loser to Monroeville.

However, Black River grabbed the early lead on a 2-yard run by Gary Ward and conversion by Jamie Maslanka in the second period.

But, Plymouth proved to be the stronger team in the second half with a pair of scores in both the third and fourth periods while running their record to 6-2 overall and 4-2 in the conference.

Deskins scored the first of his three touchdowns early in the third quarter and Roger Keese's conversion knotted the score at 7-7.

On their next possession, the Big Red broke the deadlock on a 35-yard pass from Chuck Kesse to James Helcher.

Then, Deskins scored on runs of nine and four yards in the final quarter.

St. Paul 10 South Central 0

GREENWICH — Norwalk St. Paul notched its second win in three weeks with a 10-0 blanking of winless South Central Friday.

A 33-yard field goal by Larry Fisher with 5:51 left in the first period was the only scoring until the final period when the Flyers iced the decision with a 7-yard run by Craig Coe and Fisher's conversion with 11:21 to play.

St. Paul featured a balanced attack with 106 yards rushing and 132 passing for 238 total while South Central totaled just 58 yards, all coming on the ground.

New London 26 Columbia S. 0

NEW LONDON — Cory Dendinger became the first New London running back to gain 1,000 yards since 1978 after picking up 208 on 18 carries Friday night in a 26-0 win over Columbia Station.

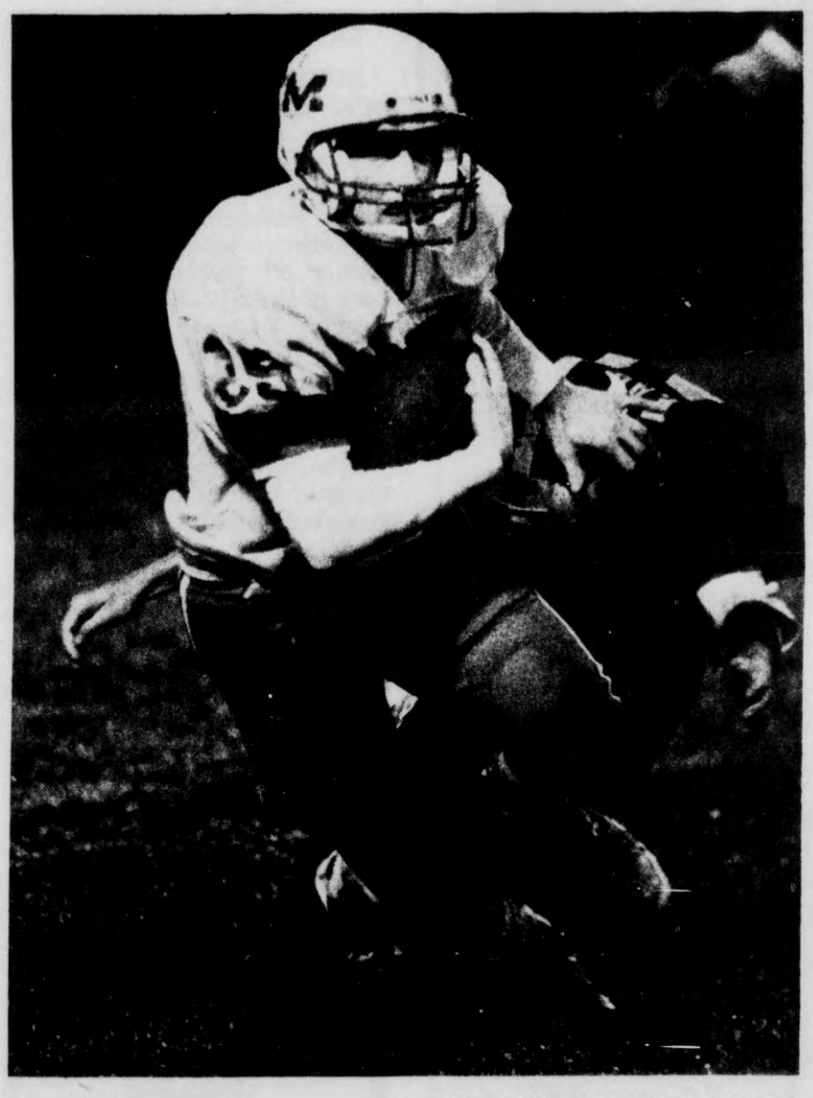
Dendinger has 1,101 yards with two games to play.

In 1978, Virgil Harris rambled for 1,266 yards for the Wildcats.

Dendinger wasted little time getting the Wildcats on the board, racing for a 73-yard score with just 52 seconds gone in the contest.

In the fourth period, he scored twice on runs of 30 and five yards. Sandwiched between was a 6-yard scoring pass from Mike Abfall to Bobby Wilson.

The win lifted the Wildcats to 5-3 for the season.



Register photo — PATRICK O'BRIEN

Mapleton running back Bill Rutherford (35) attempts to break away from Monroeville defender Scott Tjan early in Friday's Firelands Conference game.

Ranked teams underdogs in showdowns

United Press International

On a weekend when their fellow Top 20 teams are all favorites, most by huge margins, No. 11 Arkansas, No. 14 Indiana and No. 18 Washington face pivotal conference showdowns todau as road underdogs.

Houston is a one-point favorite over Arkansas in a Southwest Conference tilt, Michigan is considered six points better than Indiana in a Big Ten affair and Washington is a 2 ½-point underdog to Oregon in a Pacific-10 matchup.

Arkansas, at 6-0 overall and 3-0 in the league, is a clear front-runner to capture the SWC's automatic bid to the Cotton Bowl for the first time since 1976. The Razorbacks' major remaining hurdle is high-scoring Houston, 4-1 and 1-1.

Houston, which scored 82 points last week, has the nation's second-rated passing attack and two of the three most prolific receivers in the land.

The Big Ten picture should come into focus this weekend, also. Indiana, 5-0-1 and 3-0 in the league, faces Michigan, 3-2-1 and 2-0-1. Only upstart Illinois, 4-2 and 3-0, would seem able to challenge the Hoosiers or Wolverines for the conference title.

Indiana is looking to beat Michigan in back-to-back years for the first time since 1958-59. The Hoosiers will try to do so behind Anthony Thompson, the nation's second-leading rusher (964 yards).

Michigan Coach Bo Schembechler angered the Hoosiers when, after Indiana's 14-10 win last year, he blamed everything except the skills of the opponent.

"We have something we have to go up there and prove," Thompson said.

Washington has something to prove as well — to the bowl scouts. With losses already to No. 1 UCLA and No. 3 Southern Cal, the Huskies' Pac-10 title chances are slight at best.

But the high-profile Huskies, 4-2, are shooting for a 10th straight bowl appearance. Oregon, 5-1 and 2-1, wants to stay on course for its first bowl since 1963.

"You think in terms of what's left, what accomplishments can be made," Don James said.

PC duo bows in state tennis

COLUMBUS — Port Clinton's Kelly Coffin and Jennifer Hiegel were eliminated from the Class AAA state tennis tournament in the opening round at Ohio State University Friday.

The Redskin duo were defeated in straight sets by Holly Vandervort and Beth Young of Upper Arlington, 6-2, 6-0.

"The kids were trying to hit such good shots, I think they tried too hard," said Port Clinton coach Karen Coffin. "The Upper Arlington team was an excellent team, but it was a great experience and we're all excited to get to the state."

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