



Coldwater Defeats West Jefferson To Advance to Title Game

The Coldwater Cavaliers arrived at Piqua's Alexander Stadium for their Division 5 State Semifinal matchup with the West Jefferson Roughriders loose and ready to play their 14th football game of the season. One would think that as this post season progressed a team trying to get to their fifth straight state final would start to show signs of pressure from ever increasing expectations. But not these Cavaliers. They were relaxed and ready to take on the next challenge and let tomorrow take care of itself.

By the end of the evening, the Cavaliers won a hard fought 35-10 victory over West Jefferson and a trip to the title game for a rematch with Columbus Bishop Hartley whom the Cavs defeated in Week 2 by a score of 41-16.

West Jefferson (12-2) established themselves early with a good mix of run and pass while their defense stymied the Coldwater offense. The Riders scored first with 4:31 left in the first quarter when senior quarterback Logan Stepp scored on an 8-yard run. Later in the second they drove to the Coldwater 8 looking to put Coldwater down by two scores. But on fourth down the Cavalier defense came up big and nailed Stepp inches short of a first down.

Brody Hoying and the Cavalier offense used that momentum to mount a 10 play 92 yard drive which ended when Hoying found Derek Thobe at the five yard line and Thobe fought his way into the end zone to tie the score at 7-7 after Matt Kremer kicked the PAT.

Jefferson got the ball again with just over three minutes remaining in the half. Coldwater burned their remaining timeouts to extend the quarter and the defense stiffened, forcing Jefferson to punt. It was a killer of a punt that stopped on the Coldwater 3 yard line with just under one minute remaining. Then Brody did what Brody does. He pulled the Cavs out of the hole with a 13 yard gain to the 16. Then on the next play he ran off right tackle, spun out of the grasp of a Rider defender and broke into the secondary leaving the other 21 players in his dust and sprinted 84 yard s for the go ahead score. After Kremer's PAT, Coldwater led at half time 14-7.

In the second half, Coldwater established its dominance. Hoying scored on a 6 yard run. Jefferson's last score of the game followed with a 29 yard field goal by Steven Lollo and Coldwater led 21-10.

Jefferson's last serious drive occurred late in the third but ended at the Coldwater 23. Hoying struck again on the first play with another dash to pay dirt, this time covering 77 yards and Coldwater led 28-10.

Mitch Schoenherr added an insurance touchdown with 5:42 to play on a 20 yard run. Matt Kremer added his fifth PAT in five attempts and Coldwater punched its ticket to Massillon.

Hoying, the MAC and Northwest District Offensive Player of the Year, proved his worth, running the ball 20 times for 236 yards and three touchdowns. He was 8-14 passing for 90 yards and a touchdown.

Mitch Schoenherr gained 32 yards on 3 carries and one touchdown plus 28 yards receiving. Drew Otten caught 3 passes for 29 yards and

Adam Klosterman was held in check by the Rider defense catching just one pass for 12 yards.

The Coldwater defense bent but did not break, allowing 220 yard passing but only 83 yards on the ground. They forced and recovered two fumbles and Derek Thobe intercepted one pass. The Rider rushing attack was hindered when Stepp suffered a leg injury in the third quarter, but to his credit he soldiered on and finished the game.

The victory moves Coldwater to 12-2 on the season and West Jefferson ends it season also at 12-2.

So after 14 weeks the Cavaliers, for the 5th year in a row, advance to the State Title game to be played in Massillon at 11am on Saturday. Waiting there will be 13-1 Hawks of Bishop Hartley who defeated Akron Manchester 49-22 to earn their fourth trip to the state finals. The Hawks were runners up in 1984 and took home the gold trophy in 1986 and 2010. They have been in the playoffs 12 times and posted 24-9 record.

Coldwater and Hartley are familiar with each other as the two schools met just 12 weeks ago when they met for the first time in Columbus. The Cavaliers won 41-16 but the game was much closer than the score indicated. Hartley played well early and led 16-13 at halftime. But a second half shutout performance by the Cavalier defense and an offense that finally got on track after not scoring in week 1 found the Cavs on the winning end. The state final meeting will be much tougher. Both teams are vastly improved and are undoubtedly are the two finest teams Division 5 has to offer. It will be an exciting final to watch.

Playoff Success Continues...

- ◇ 17 consecutive playoff appearance
- ◇ Coldwater playoff record: 54-15 (78%).
- ◇ 5th straight title game appearance. Nine total.
- ◇ Second senior class in state of Ohio to Play 60
- ◇ Chance to win Back-to-Back State Titles

MAC Playoff Success Continues...

Marion Local defeated Delphos St. John 35-6 and the Flyers will try to 'three-peat' and win the first D7 state title.

- ◇ 11th straight season a MAC team plays for a state title.
- ◇ MAC has won 28 football titles.
- ◇ Mercer County owns 15 of those titles.
- ◇ MAC has won 105 state titles (all sports).