

Bulldogs to be leashed tonight

BY TARA COX

School spirit is soaring high this year, and with a very remarkable reason. For the first time in Rockcastle County football history, the Rockets have completed a perfect season, ending with 10 wins and 0 losses.

"I knew we could [advance this far] if we really tried hard and put forth the effort and dedication," Assistant Coach Chris Larkey commented.

The year started out with a surprising win over Lincoln County in the Death Valley Bowl, progressed to the slaughter of Knott County Central (80-0), and the end of the scheduled season marked a turning point in RCHS football.

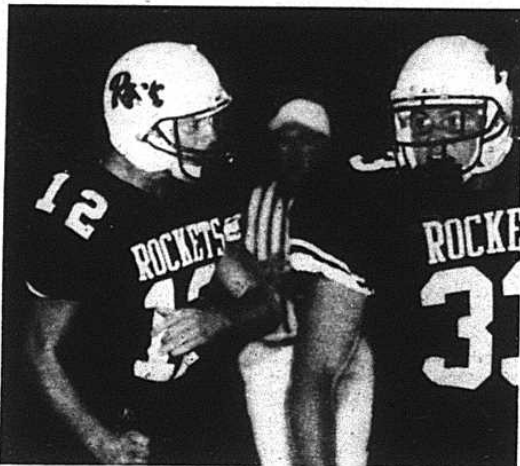
Until last Friday night, Rockcastle had never defeated the Bell County Bobcats. The crowd must have had every finger crossed because The Rock shutout Bell County, 26-0.

"I felt confident that if we went out and played well and eliminated turnovers, a win would be possible," Head Coach Tom Larkey said.

Tonight the RCHS Rockets will face the Lawrence County Bulldogs on home turf at 7:30 pm.

The Rockets definitely have their work cut out for them, especially since Lawrence County player Michael West, number one in the state for rushing, has rushed more individual yards than our entire team this year.

"He may be the number one rusher in the state, but he's coming to The Rock tonight!" said senior



Seniors Greg Harper (#12) and Travis Ingram (#33) between plays at the Bell Co. game last Friday. The Rockets won 26-0.

quarterback Chris Parsons.

As nearly any football player or coach will tell you, ranking doesn't matter when you're out on the field. Turnovers, conversions, and injuries can drastically affect the outcome of a game.

Maybe so, but being ranked third in 3A, facing off against a nineteenth place team is a definite advantage. Intimidation can help win a game and fans stay pepped up if their team is highly ranked.

"We have beaten some traditional powers in the beginning of the season. The point margin increases chances of high ranking," Coach Tom Larkey.

While we may have overall ranking on our side, Michael West will be a challenge.

"It's number one against number one [number one rushing defense vs. number one rushing player]. They've earned my respect, but I'm not scared of them," remarked senior linebacker Travis Ingram.

When asked how The Rock was planning to hold back Lawrence County offense, Senior Greg Harper replied "Put everybody in [Michael West's] face and bring the kitchen sink."

Regardless of what happens tonight, will the Rockcastle County football team be able to have a per-

fect season next year?

Nine departing seniors will unmistakably leave a large amount of work to be done to compensate for the loss, but it can be done again.

"We will lose some good players, but have good members returning. There are some big shoes to fill," Coach Tom Larkey commented.

Seniors this year include #2 Derrick Bussell, TB; #4 Chris Parsons, QB; #11 Dackery Larkey, E; #12 Greg Harper, E; #19 Chaz Cable, TE; #23 Greg Terry, K/P; #32 Heath Payne, HB; #33 Travis Ingram, LB; and #54 Sean Smith, FB.

Because tonight's game is not included in the regular season, tickets will be sold for \$5, with no option for a student discount. Reserved seats are honored, but must be accompanied with a general admission ticket. Season passes, Kentucky High School Coaches, and Officials cards are not honored. Everyone who enters the parking area must purchase a ticket.

If the Rockets win tonight's game, they will play the winner of the Bell County/Ashland game. It will be a home game on Friday, November 10 at 7:30 pm. This will be the final game of the season if lost.

As senior tight-end Chaz Cable put it, "It could be our last [game]. It's do or die. We've got the number one rushing defense, so I hope we can stop them."

Good luck at tonight's game Rockets!



A senior says...

Some senior players share their thoughts and random feelings about the past season and upcoming games.

Advice to underclassmen:

"...Put everything you've got into it. It'll be gone before you know it."

--Travis Ingram, LB

"Go out there and pretend there's always two scouts watching you at practice, and you'll always do your best."

--Dackery Larkey, E

"Stick with it...It only gets better."

--Greg Harper, E

Biggest obstacle against Lawrence County:

"Michael West."

--Chaz Cable, TE

"They have a really good quarterback. We have to stop offense in order to win, and put points on the board."

--Derrick Bussell, TB

What they will miss most next year:

"Camp...It's a week of hard nose butt kicking. Plus I got to know the freshmen really well."

--Travis Ingram, LB

"My teammates. They were the ones who kept me there, playing."

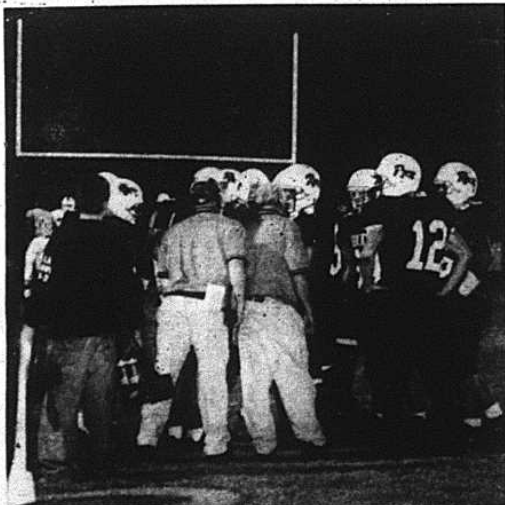
--Sean Smith, FB

"The tradition and being with all my friends...And running through the spirit line on Friday nights."

--Heath Payne, TE

"Being a Friday night warrior."

--Greg Terry, K



Coach Tom Larkey talks to players during a time-out of the Rockcastle-Bell game.

Rockcastle County Team Stats:

- #1 scoring defense; 43 points, 4.8 points/game
- #1 rushing defense; 394 yards, 43.8 yards/game
- #2 scoring margin; 43.1 margin/game
- #3 scoring offense; 459 points, 47.9 points/game 463 total points; 43 total points allowed; 10-0 record
- #12 in State
- #3 in 3A
- #1 in Region 4; District 7

Lawrence County Team Stats:

- #3 rushing offense; 3426 yards, 380.7 yards/game
- 370 total points; 306 total points allowed; 5-5 record
- Not Ranked in State
- #19 in 3A
- #4 in Region 4; District 8

Lawrence County Individual Stats:

- #1 rushing; Michael West, 1970 yards, 218.9 yards/game 25 touchdowns
- #4 scoring; Michael West, 17.3 points per game