

Rockets will play for state championship

The Rockcastle County Rocket football team will make history on Saturday when they play in the championship game of the Kentucky Class 3A play-offs.

Rockcastle, who is 14 and 0 this season, will face Boyle County, a team that hasn't lost a game in high school football in three years and a team that has won two straight state titles.

Rockcastle advanced to the state championship game with a 17-14 win over Covington Catholic on the road on Saturday.

Covington Catholic racked up 25 yards more on offense than the Rockets did, but they made three costly mistakes, which eventually cost them the game.

First, a defensive holding penalty wiped out an interception by the Colonels, which the Rockets turned into a 39 yard field goal by place-kicker Jens Strietzel.

The kick, which came on the last play of the half, gave Rockcastle a 10-7 lead at half-time and quieted a very loud Covington Catholic crowd.

"That was big, but the referees made the right call, they (Catholic) grabbed the jersey of one of our receivers as soon as the ball was snapped," head coach Tom Larkey said.

There were two more Colonel turnovers, which helped drive the nail in the Colonel coffin.

The Colonels missed a field goal with 7:26 to go in the third quarter, but the fatal dagger came in the fourth quarter with two minutes to go in the game.

Junior Stephen Boreing picked off a Colonel pass inside the ten as the Colonels were threatening to score.

"I was just trying to tip it and knock it down - but then I caught it after the tip," he said.

In some other big games for the Rockets they have made some mistakes they could not overcome - but on Saturday the Rockets actually recorded none, which was probably the key to them advancing.

"I would have never dreamed it - we've got a good football team and a bunch of good kids, but it is hard to believe we are going to play for a state title on Saturday," said head assistant Tony Saylor.

Larkey and Saylor have been together at RCHS for the past 17 years and have had only one losing season - that was their first year.

Saturday will mark the first time the Rockets have made it to a state championship game, al-

though the Rockets have been well respected for many years in the high school football community.

The Rockets scoring went as follows:

After falling behind 7-0, the Rockets scored on a 17 yard pass from junior quarterback Aaron Anderkin to senior Josh Hale.

With time running out in the half, Strietzel, a foreign exchange student from Germany, kicked his second field goal of the season to give the Rockets a 10-7 lead.

And the final scoring blow came with 5:26 left in the game.

That's when junior Marty Reagan took the ball and ran 43 yards to pay-dirt.

The Rockets had fallen behind in the score - but not in spirit.

"I told Aaron (Anderkin) as soon as they scored it wasn't over

- just focus on what we had to do and our kids were able to do it," Larkey said.

Offensively the Rockets had only 213 yards.

Anderkin was 10 for 16 passing and one touchdown. He also had 31 yards rushing on five carries. He was sacked three times.

Hale caught four passes for 33 yards and he rushed four times for 16 yards. He had one touchdown.

Reagan carried the ball 19 times for 78 yards. He caught four passes for 13 yards and scored once.

Senior Clay Dooley, who stepped up big on defense, caught one pass for four yards and ran the ball once for four yards.

Senior Josh Taylor also rushed four times for 22 yards and junior Michael Hayes caught one pass for 11 yards, which was also for a

first down.

Defensively the Rockets were hit a lot harder in the air than on the ground.

All total the Rockets gave up 315 yards, 281 through the air and 34 on the ground.

Reagan had nine tackles and assists and junior James Michael Bussell had 10. Both corners played extremely well.

Sophomore Jason Leger also showed up to play on Saturday with nine tackles and assists.

Dooley had a great defensive game with seven tackles and assists.

P.J. Rowe, Tanner Abney, and Leger all recorded sacks.

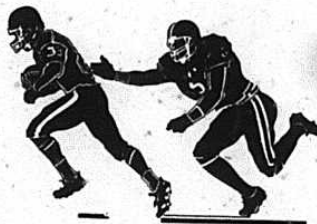
Rowe and Abney each had five tackles and assists as did

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