

Tigers outlast Creek Wood for region win

By Chris Siers
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CHARLOTTE — The good thing about ugly wins, they count as much as the pretty ones.

On a night with several untimely penalties and a pair of crushing turnovers, the Marshall County Tigers (3-0, 1-0) were able to overcome all the adversity and lands its first Region 5-AAAA win of the season, fending off Creek Wood, 17-14.

“We faced a bunch of adversity tonight and that’s how it goes sometimes. On the road, playing a tough opponent in Creek Wood—they’re a playoff caliber team. We faced adversity from the very start but I’m happy we overcame it,” Marshall County coach Thomas Osteen said.

Creek Wood’s game plan was simple: run the ball, move the chains and play keep away from the Tigers.

The plan worked noticeably well in the first half with Marshall County getting just three offensive possessions in the first two quarters.

Creek Wood (1-2, 0-1) took the game’s opening possession and was able to push the ball near its own 40-yard line, but Red Hawk quarterback Eathon Donaldson was sacked for an eight-yard loss on fourth down, which forced a punt.

On the punt attempt, the Tigers were able to tip the ball and recovered possession on the Red Hawk 39-yard line.

Working with a short field, the Tigers capped the three-minute drive on a five-yard touchdown pass from junior quarterback Silas Teat to Marcus O’Neal.

Creek Wood forced a three and out on the second Tiger possession of the night and put together another five-plus minute drive, aided by a handful of Tiger penalties.

The drive was capped off by a Jayden Elliott one-yard toss sweep that tied the game at seven after the successful kick after.

With just over five minutes to go in the



Wyatt Joyce splits the uprights on a 43-yard field goal, which proved to be the game-winner on Friday night.



Antomme Cowthorn eyes a crease and scrambles forward for a short gain for the Tigers.

half, the Tigers took possession for just the third time of the night after sophomore Aja Jones returned the ball to the Red Hawk 46.

Antomme Cowthorn

finished the drive and once again gave the Tigers the lead on a two-yard dive into the end zone with 2:06 to go.

Cowthorn led the Tigers’ ground attack with

46 yards and 18 carries to go along with his second-quarter touchdown.

“I’m so proud of him. We knew he was going to be a good football player for a long time. He’s kind of filled in a different roles. He thought he was going to be more of a receiver, and he still plays some receiver for us, but he played running back, he played corner. Really, he’s as responsible for this win tonight as anyone,” Osteen said.

Creek Wood took the following kickoff and working with a short clock, pushed to the red zone and attempted a pass to the end zone as time expired, which was intercepted by senior linebacker Montai Vaughn to end the half.

Hoping to take advantage on the first possession of the second half, it was Creek Wood who seized the game’s momentum off an interception with 9:21 left in the game and put together another clock-milking drive that finished with a game-tying touchdown by Jamison Ford on a two-yard reception with 2:02 to go in the period.

It wasn’t until Tiger kicker Wyatt Joyce connected on a 43-yard field goal that split the



Darren Crenshaw wraps up Red Hawk quarterback Eathon Donaldson for a tackle for loss against Creek Wood on Friday.

uprights with 9:39 to go in the game that Marshall County regained the lead—a lead they would hang onto until the final buzzer.

“We’re tickled to death we have an all-state kicker on our team. He makes those in practice all the time. I looked at him right before the kick and he said ‘I’ve got it coach,’ and that was all I needed to see,” Osteen said.

After forcing a punt with just under seven minutes to go, Marshall County was able to successfully move the ball well into the Red Hawks’ side of the field, but a second turnover of the night struck the Tigers at the most inopportune time, giving the ball back to Creek Wood on its own 23-yard line with 2:31 left on the clock.

This time, it was Marshall County’s defense that, for the first time of the night, didn’t allow the Red Hawks to move the chains and forced a turnover on downs thanks to a key pass breakup on fourth down by Cowthorn to force the turnover on downs.

For the bulk of the game, Creek Wood’s offense was managed by its two-headed monster out of the backfield with

quarterback Eathon Donaldson and tailback Dada Sweatt.

“They had two good runners and a big o-line to go with it. I felt like we were maybe a play away from breaking it open in the first half, but we would have a penalty or a negative play to keep us off schedule. Hats off to Creek Wood for playing a great game tonight,” Osteen said.

Teat completed 16 of 21 passing attempts for 139 yards and a touchdown.

Jones made five grabs for 44 yards, highlighted by a 34-yard pick up to set up Cowthorn’s second-quarter touchdown.

While Jones represented the downhill threat in the Tigers’ air game, it was junior Jayden Randolph who was the “move-the-chains” receiver, making six catches for 63 yards, four of which went for first downs.

“It was a big night for Jayden. Every yard was tough tonight. He made some tough catches. He’s so good over the middle of the field, weaving his way through traffic and making tough, contested catches. Really proud

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Bulldogs, Waddell weather Hornets for 1st win

By Will Carter
Sports Writer

CORNERSVILLE — It was a long and wet night in Cornersville as lightning forced delays and rain poured down, but the Bulldogs prevailed in their 24-0 victory over the Huntland Hornets.

Outside of the wild weather, it was a night to remember for Cornersville head coach Shelby Waddell as he grabbed his first win as the man in charge of the Bulldogs.

“The team did a great job tonight of responding,” Waddell said.

“After the first quarter delay, our attitude completely changed. We made some adjustments, and the team executed them well. It was a great team win.”

Before the first lightning delay hit with a minute and 20 seconds left in the first quarter, Cornersville (1-2, 1-1) was threatening to score inside Huntland (0-2, 0-1) territory.

The action started back after the 30-minute delay, and the Bulldogs picked up where they left off.

With a minute and one second left in the



Running back Ben Franklin follows his blockers on a first down run against Huntland Friday night. Franklin had one touchdown on the night.

first quarter, senior running back Riley Qualls rushed into the end zone from 10 yards out for the first touchdown of the game.

A missed extra point left the score at 6-0.

Qualls scored two touchdowns on the night while also contributing on defense by disrupting Huntland drives with key tackles in the backfield.

“He (Qualls) gives his all for Cornersville every day in everything he does,” Waddell said. “I don’t think I’ve coached a kid with a higher motor than him. I was glad

he was able to score tonight and I can’t say enough about him.”

What began as a light rain shower after the first delay quickly turned into a thick band of rain that didn’t let up for the rest of the game.

The conditions made it difficult for either

team to put together anything offensively and the second and final lightning delay hit with three and a half minutes left in the first half.

Play restarted after 30 minutes, but Cornersville carried its 6-0 lead into halftime.

After the shortened halftime, the Bulldogs found their footing and relished in the rain.

With three minutes and 27 seconds left in the third quarter, Qualls found the end zone again on a 21 yard run.

He also scored on the two-point conversion to give his team a 14-0 lead.

Not too long after, the Bulldogs were threatening again, and junior running back Ben Franklin put them on the board nine seconds into the fourth quarter on a 23 yard run.

Quarterback Blaine Woodard snuck in for the two-point conversion to make it a 22-0 lead for the Bulldogs.

The final points of the game came from the Cornersville defense as they backed Huntland up to their own end zone, and forced a safety on a blocked punt to bring the game to

its final score of 24-0 with nine minutes and 17 seconds left in the fourth quarter.

The Bulldogs’ defense continued to hold strong and force turnovers that eventually led to their offense lining up in victory formation to end the game.

Waddell was proud of his team for persevering in the conditions and pushing for the win.

“With things like that, I like to say ‘so what? now what?’” Waddell said. “If something happens, you just gotta move onto the next play. We did a great job of that tonight. A lot of teams would have let the delays and the rain get to them, but they did a great job of staying focused. They never showed their fatigue, so it was great.”

The Bulldogs will hit the road next week for a matchup with the Clay County Bulldogs at 7 p.m. in Celina.

Cornersville	6	0	8	10	—	24
Huntland	0	0	0	0	—	0

First Quarter
C — Riley Qualls 10 run, (kick failed), 1:01.
Third Quarter
C — Qualls 21 run, (Qualls 2 pt. good), 3:27.
Fourth Quarter
C — Ben Franklin 23 rush, (Blaine Woodard 2 pt. good), 11:51.
C — Blocked punt, (safety), 9:17.