



Tribune Photos by Kacy Kincaid

Tayton Swift scores on the two-point conversion for the Rockets.



Chris Davis goes up for the catch and makes the grab for Forrest.

Rockets come up short in shootout vs. Marion Co.

By Kacy Kincaid
Sports Writer

CHAPEL HILL — It was an all out battle at The Rock Friday night between the Forrest Rockets (3-3, 1-1) and the Marion County Warriors (3-3, 1-1), with the Rockets falling just short, 42-35.

Too bad 'almost' doesn't count.

Eli Stephenson's Rockets left it all on the field, proving their strength and tenacity against setbacks.

"I'm very proud of the way we played," Stephenson said. "We didn't run away from the fight, we ran toward it."

The Rockets didn't waste any time, coming out on the first possession covering 76 yards over eight plays that resulted in a five-yard touchdown carry from senior Tayton Swift, who led the Rockets offensively with 138

yards. After the extra point from Gavin Grissom, the Rockets took the lead, 7-0.

Quick to respond, Sam Pickett had a nice kickoff return, placing the Warriors at the 49, where running back E.J. Wilson took over, going the rest of the way on the next drive.

The extra point attempt failed, the Rockets hanging on to the lead at 7-6 with 8:05 left in the first quarter.

It was the Rockets' turn again with Swift and Liam Bell both completing first downs.

Quarterback Ryan Hill then connected with Chris Davis on a 13-yard pass and on the next play, it was Davis again, taking off on a 31-yard gain to land the Rockets at the seven-yard line.

Bell grabbed another six yards, allowing Hill to dip into the end zone

from the one. Grissom added the extra point, Forrest extending their lead to 14-6.

Marion County was forced to punt on their next possession thanks to big stops from Luke Swihart and Reggie Pearson.

Things started to really heat up in the second quarter. In five plays, the Warriors dig up their next touchdown, quarterback Tilton Pickett finding S. Pickett on a 38-yard pass.

Marion County successfully attempted the extra two, evening the score at 14-14.

After the Rockets were showered with flags, backing them up to their own 10-yard line, the punt was forced and Marion County took advantage.

With 4:53 left in the half, T. Pickett connected with S. Pickett in the end zone on a 16-yard

pass. The kick was good and the Warriors took a 21-14 lead.

The tussle continued, with a slew of Rockets coming together to keep moving the chains.

Freshman Antonio Marable came up with a 12-yard run, making it easy for Bell to carry out the first down.

Marion County was charged with targeting and encroachment, aiding the Rockets' move into Warriors territory.

With less than two minutes to go in the half, Hill threw a perfect pass to Carson Yates, who worked his way to the one-yard line, allowing Hill to score with the quarterback keeper on the next play.

The extra point attempt failed, however, leaving the Rockets trailing by one.

Maintaining the status quo, Marion County executed with a handful of plays, finding them-

selves back in the end zone with 28 seconds left in the first half and a 28-20 lead.

Entering the second half, the Warriors consistently dug themselves out of third and fourth down holes, but Forrest did not make it easy, a multitude of Rockets making big stops.

Bryce Tankersley covered on an incomplete pass on third down, Marion County then making the decision to kick the field goal, which didn't make it through the uprights.

Rockets gained possession and Hill came up with a critical first down on the drive and Swift picked up 34 yards to put the Rockets in Warriors terrain.

Hill connected with Tyler Ayers on a 19-yard pass and Eli Bell was able to convert on a 15-yard touchdown run. Thanks to big-time

blocking by Spence Tankersley, Swift added the extra two, leveling the score at 28 with 3:12 left in the third quarter.

The Rockets' defense showed up and showed out to finish the quarter, Pearson, B. Tankersley, E. Bell, and Swift all making crucial stops, forcing a Warriors turnover on downs, where the Rockets took over at their own five yard line.

To start the fourth quarter, the Rockets just weren't able to convert, being forced to punt after a pair of penalties and allowing Marion County to begin their drive on the Rockets 25 yard line. In only four plays, the Warriors once again crossed the goal line, taking the lead.

Making sure to respond, Hill threw a solid 42-yard pass to Yates, putting the Rockets on the Warriors 17 yard line. A couple minutes

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Turnovers costly as Eagleville spoils Bulldogs' Homecoming

By Dennis Holley
Sports Writer

CORNERSVILLE — Homecoming on the first Friday night of fall saw the Cornersville Bulldogs (2-3, 2-0), coming off a hard-fought victory over the Collinwood Trojans, welcome Rutherford County foe Eagleville Eagles (2-3, 0-1) under a cool evening sky.

Despite another stellar performance from junior running back/defensive end Ben Franklin, the Bulldogs could not overcome three turnovers that led to 21 points by the Eagles as Cornersville suffered its first Region 5-A loss, 28-14.

Franklin rushed for 165 yards on 27 carries with two touchdowns and with a new wrinkle in the Bulldog offense — a screen pass that he converted into 61 yards on three receptions.

Junior Blaine Woodward, beginning to find his rhythm in Coach Shelby Waddell's offense, completed 11-of-34 passes for 151 yards and two interceptions. The game featured two teams evenly matched, and both gave their respective crowds something to cheer about.

Eagleville won the coin toss, deferred to the second half and Cor-

nersville received the opening kick-off, a quibbler that Kale Adcox for Cornersville smothered at the 28-yard line.

Disaster struck on the second play for Cornersville as the ball popped free on the center exchange and the Eagles recovered at the Bulldog 28-yard line.

Two plays later from 16-yards out, Eagleville's Jackson Zentz ramblled into the end zone for the touchdown, but the PAT was missed and with less than a minute gone in the game the Eagles led, 6-0.

The Bulldogs responded with a 14-play drive featuring Franklin running and pass catching that pushed the ball down field.

Franklin accounted for 25 yards on the ground and 22 yards through the air and scored the go-ahead touchdown on a 16-yard scamper, then, Joseth Palma's PAT split the uprights and the Bulldogs led 7-6 at the 4:20 mark of the first quarter.

After the Cornersville kickoff the Bulldog defense stood up and forced the Eagles to punt on a three-and-out with the ball rolling out of bounds at the Bulldog 23-yard line.

Facing a third and one yard at the Bulldog



Photos courtesy of Paps Pics

Ben Franklin had a monster night against the Eagles, rushing for 165 yards on 27 carries and two touchdowns.



Quarterback Riley Qualls drops back in the pocket and eyes his receiver downfield.

32-yard line Franklin took the hand-off rolled to his left, broke free casting aside would be tacklers, made for the sidelines, shaking off more tacklers. He then broke to the

middle of the field as the crowd came to their feet and blazed on as the last Eagle defender finally managed to trip up the big man at the Eagleville 23-yard line. With the crowd still

buzzing from the electric Franklin run, the quarter ended with the Bulldogs threatening and leading 7-6.

The Eagles defense stiffened and the Bulldogs on fourth and

three could not convert and the ball went over on downs to Eagleville.

The Bulldog defense dug in and stopped the Eagles again forcing a punt and Cornersville

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