

Charlestown takes 15th MSC title, earns fourth perfect season

Last Friday night the Pirates of Charlestown traveled to Pekin to face off with the Musketeers of Eastern for the regular season finale. The undefeated Class 3A No. 2 Pirates were looking to capture their 15th Mid Southern Conference title outright and earn their fourth perfect season in school history, second under the tenure of head coach Jason Hawkins. Statistically Charlestown was also looking to break some school records, some of which were set by the 1989 team that finished 12-1, falling at the semi-state game against Indianapolis Roncalli 14-0. The semi-state game in 1989 is the only semi-state appearance by a Pirates football team.

The Pirates accomplished those tasks Friday night as they took the 62-7 victory over Eastern. They captured the MSC outright, clinched the Perfect Season (9-0) and broke two school records on the evening. Tyler Odle broke the career reception record with his 91st catch on Charlestown's second series of the ballgame. The Pirates also broke the school record for the most points scored in a single season, 485, set by the 1989 Pirates. The 2012 Pirates scored 527 points in the regular season.

Charlestown found the scoreboard four times in the first 12 minutes of play, two times in the second quarter and an additional three times in the third stanza.

The Pirates' first two touchdowns came from passes from senior quarterback Aaron Daniel as he hooked up with classmate Tyler Odle for a 19 yard touchdown pass and then with classmate Cody Donahue for an 11 yard touchdown pass. Daniel tacked on both extra points for the early 14-0 Charlestown lead about halfway through the first quarter of play.

The Pirates were not done in the quarter as senior running back Seth McCutchen hit the scoreboard with a 23 yard scamper. Daniel's extra point was good for the 21-0 Pirate lead with 3:10 remaining in the first quarter of play.

Charlestown would need just 66 seconds to find the endzone yet again in the quarter. Daniel hooked up with senior Wesley Sexton for a 44 yard touchdown strike. The extra point attempt by Daniel split the uprights for the 28-0 advantage heading into the second period.

Midway through the second quarter, Charlestown found the scoreboard again as Daniel found the endzone from two yards out. The extra point was no good as Charlestown pushed their lead to 34-0. The final score of the half would come from the arm of Daniel as he hooked up with senior wide receiver Jared Gordon for a seven yard touchdown pass. Daniel nailed the extra point attempt to give the visiting Pirates the 41-0 advantage heading into the halftime break.

Charlestown began the second half where they left off. The Pirates needed a mere 40 seconds to find the endzone. Daniel hooked up with senior Gage Brafford for a 20 yard touchdown pass. Junior Chris Shanks tacked on the extra point for the 48-0 Pirate advantage.

Charlestown junior Darren Taylor rambled 88 yards to pay dirt midway through the third quarter. Shanks added the extra point for the 55-0 Pirate advantage with 6:54 remaining in the third quarter.

The Pirates' final score of the evening would be from senior running back Ryan Wilkerson as he sprinted eight yards to the goal line. Shanks tacked on the extra point for the 62-0 Pirate advantage at the 3:05 mark of the third.

Eastern would not be shut out on their senior night. Sophomore quarterback Austin Roberts hooked up with freshman Jordan Eberle for a 30 yard touchdown pass. Jordan Omerso added the extra point for the 62-7 Pirate lead at the 11:03 mark of the final quarter.

The Musketeers' score would prove to be the last as Charlestown captured the 62-7 Mid Southern Conference victory.

Charlestown was led by Seth McCutchen with 89 yards on eight carries and one touchdown followed by Darren Taylor with 88 yards on one carry and one touchdown. Cameron Hopson added three carries for 39 yards and Ryan Wilkerson tallied two carries for 36 yards and one touchdown.

Eastern was led by Kaleb Nicholson with three carries for 23 yards. Mike Hall added one carry for 16 yards while Luke Terry tallied seven carries for nine yards.

Charlestown's Aaron Daniel completed 12-of-14 passes for 230 yards and five touchdowns.

Pirate senior Tyler Odle recorded five catches for 117 yards and one touchdown. Gage Brafford recorded three catches for 45 yards and one touchdown. Cody Donahue added two catches for 17 yards and one touchdown. Wesley Sexton tallied one catch for 44 yards and one touchdown and Jared Gordon recorded a seven yard touchdown pass.

Eastern's Austin Roberts completed 15-of-30 passes for 170 yards and one touchdown. He also threw one interception in the ballgame.

Musketeer junior Bryan Arnold recorded six catches for 39 yards while Jordan Eberle added four catches for 72 yards and one touchdown. Kaleb Nicholson tallied three catches for 54 yards.

Charlestown recorded 256 yards rushing and 230 yards passing for a total of 486 yards. Eastern tallied 35 yards rushing and 170 yards passing for 205 total yards.

Charlestown (9-0) will host the Bluejackets of Mitchell (2-7) this Friday night, October 19, for the opening round of Sectional 23 action. The kick off is set for 7 p.m.

The City of Charlestown and Tumbletown will host a Pirate Pep Rally Bonfire on Thursday night, October 18, at the corner of Dodge Street and Willomena (behind the skateboard park across from the football field) to celebrate the Charlestown Pirate Football Team. The event will begin at 6:30 p.m.

They want to rally the community around the team and show the football Pirates support as they prepare for the first round of Sectional play. They will have a bonfire, music, cheerleaders, free hot dogs, chips and drinks (while supplies last). Pirate Nation is invited and encouraged to show your Pirate Pride and attend the pep rally bonfire.