

# Red Conquers Blue In Clash Determining Leader SD-7 Football Pack

Color the Southern District VII Conference red.

That's as in Red Devils, as it was homecoming Newton-Conover who emerged triumphant in perhaps the single biggest varsity football game ever to take place within the established 2A circuit.

Friday night, with an overflowing crowd estimated at 8,000 and a live television sports crew in enthusiastic attendance, the host Red Devils painted blue the Blue Devils of Maiden, with a 16-7 decision that, for all practical purposes, sewed up this year's conference title.

In highlighting last week's games, Newton-Conover and Maiden entered the attraction with combined 14-0 overall record, and an 8-0 mark against league opponents.

The home team carried a statewide number five ranking in the state's Associated Press 2A poll into the affair, and that trailed the number-two ranked Devils of Maiden, predicted in pre-season to dominate league play this year.

In other SD-7 battles perhaps not quite as well recognized but just as important as far as league competition is concerned, Bunker Hill overcame West Lincoln, 34-33 in overtime, and Bandy's inched past Mooresville, 7-6.

With the exception of the Bessemer City-West Lincoln affair, all other games last week were vital to at least one participant as far as postseason play is concerned, with

the list of teams battling for one of the three playoff bids extended to four.

With their wins, Newton-Conover, Bessemer City and Bunker Hill all kept postseason dreams alive, with the Red Devils all but putting a lock on only one of those bids but also, barring a complete breakdown, the coveted first one that will award them the home-field advantage.

With its loss, Maiden is now involved in the three-team race for one of the remaining two playoff spots.

As for the defeated, West Lincoln and Cherryville were both virtually out of the scene even prior to last week's games, while Mooresville's hopes of sinking beyond reach, against league opponents.

In Bessemer City's case, it's overtime win may have come a bit late as it shares Mooresville's fate in having to depend on a host of upsets in order to secure the prolonging of its season.

This week, all four teams take care of next-to-the-last week of regular season play with conference dates, as Newton-Conover travels to Bessemer City, Mooresville visits Bunker Hill, Cherryville takes on host Bandy's, and Maiden calls on West Lincoln.

In the past weekend's, and the season's, highlight attraction in Newton-Conover, the Red Devils, whose fans starting arriving at the stadium as early as 11 a.m., blessed the partisan standing-room-only through with the 16-7 win.

Like a younger brother seeking advice from an older, junior varsity football team generally get by on points from varsity units.

But this week at Newton-Conover, the clowns are on the other foot. Accomplishing what their varsity brothers couldn't last week, South's jayvees spanked visiting Bunker Hill, 34-33 in overtime, and in their home finale to maintain their current Foothills Athletic Conference winning streak.

The victory over the cross-country rivals pushed the Baby Vikings record to 7-1 overall and 4-0 in the FAC, both registers one win and loss better than their fellow varsity squad.

"Our offensive line did a good job of blocking when it had to," summed up Ron Shepherd, a varsity assistant who is in charge of the jayvee squad. "Our defense came out strong. We've been with a solid effort, too. We've been very pleased with the ways things have gone for us this year. Our defense is keeping us in the games, and our offense is coming through with the points. It's been a total team effort, and we're able to be able to continue it for a couple of more weeks."

The decision also enabled South to salvage a split of the two-day twinbill with North, as one night later, the Raiders of the latter pined a 14-0 loss on the varsity Vikings, now 6-2 and 3-1, respectively, to hand the Barium Springs school its first FAC football loss of the year.

Thursday night in Viking Valley, where neither team of Vikings has lost this season, the host jayvees made the most of the odd-numbered quarters, scratching out eight points apiece in each, and weathered a tying effort on the part of their guests in the second period, to double the Raiders and remain undefeated in league play.

South tredded did much of its game string on the part of South's first defensive unit, which hadn't allowed a score of any kind during that extended span.

Joined by intermission time, the Baby Vikings constructed what proved to be the game-winning drive in the third quarter, one that was climaxed by a three-yard play on the part of quarterback, T. J. White.

White added 4 yards, while Cutrell completed the scoring for the hosts and the game with the conversion run.

The defenses of both teams took over from there, with neither allowing the other's offense to produce any more damage.

Clark championed the winning attack with his 155 yards running. White added 4 yards, while Cutrell chipped in with 20 more.

In receiving, four different Vikings snared an aerial apiece, with

the victory improved, the Red Devils, vying to earn either a share of fourth or the title outright for a first straight year, to 8-0 overall, and 5-0 in the league, while Maiden, hindered by the absence of one of its start players, suffered its first loss in eight tries overall and also its first in five tries overall in the league.

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The victory moved into a tie for second-place in the league with Maiden by shooting to 7-1 overall and 4-1 in the conference, while Bessemer City and West Lincoln tangled in the week's

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The Trojans, who played a homecoming crowd, improved to 5-2 overall and inched above the 500 mark, to 3-2, in the league, while Mooresville evened its overall slate at 4-4 and slipped a game under 500, to 2-3, in conference play.

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