

Akron Beacon Journal

OHSAA high school football playoffs score | Highland vs. Avon recap

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ELYRIA — As autumn leaves burn into winter snow, so too does a late high school football game postseason game between Highland and Avon.

The top-seeded Eagles reached their seventh state semifinal in eight seasons with a 28-20 win over the second-seeded Hornets. The Eagles did it by scoring on the first play from scrimmage, then scoring again after a fumble on the ensuing kickoff and holding off Highland from there.

It's the second season in a row Avon (14-0) has won the Division II, Region 6 championship with a victory over Highland (13-1). It also was the sixth time since 2014 Avon has knocked Highland out of the postseason.

Here's how the regional final unfolded through our live updates:

Who does Avon football play next in the OHSAA playoffs

Avon plays Archbishop Hoban (12-2), a 21-7 winner over Walsh Jesuit (13-1) Friday, in a state semifinal next week at a site to be determined.

Highland vs. Avon football stat leaders Friday night

Great Lakes District Offensive Player of the Year Nolan Good ran for 118 yards and a TD on 13 carries for Avon. Tyler Kauffman added 90 yards and two scores on 12 carries, although he fumbled in the final minute but the Eagles recovered.

Highland's Casey Myser carried 23 times for 115 yards and three TDs and caught five passes for 57 yards.

Jakob Weatherspoon with the pick for Avon football

Facing fourth-and-18 on its own 48, Highland couldn't convert. Jakob Weatherspoon picked off Dylan Borla. It's first-and-10 on the Avon 25. Eagles with the ball up 28-20 with 2:10 left.

Highland football holds Avon, gets ball back

The Eagles stalled on the Highland 41. The Hornets take over on the 25 with 3:44.

Highland football brings it back to a 1-score game with Avon

The Hornets drive 80 plays, convert two fourth-down conversions and score on a 3-yard run by Casey Myser. The extra point is blocked, making it 28-20 with 5:43 left in regulation.

Avon answers Highland score with one of its own

The Eagles went 80 yards on 13 plays and scored on a 4-yard touchdown by Tyler Kaufmann. It's Avon 28-14, which was last year's score, with 11:23 left in the fourth quarter.

Avon football driving as third quarter ends against Highland

The Eagles have already run 10 plays for 75 yards on their first drive of the second half. They face first-and-goal on the 6. Avon opens the fourth quarter up 21-14.

Highland scores to make deficit with Avon 1 score

Casey Myser's 18-yard touchdown run with 6:11 left makes it Avon 21, Highland 14. The Hornets went 75 plays in 10 yards to open the quarter.

Halftime statistics from Avon-Highland football

Category	Highland	Avon
First downs	7	7
Rushing attempts/yards	18/62	18/172
Passing completions/attempts	6/10	3/6
Passing yards	75	26
Total plays/yards	28/132	24/198
Penalties/yards	1/10	2/10

Fumbles/Lost	2/1	2/0
Intercepted by	0	0

Individual leaders: Highland - Casey Myser 11 carries, 48 yards, TD; Dylan Borla 6-of-10, 75 yards; Evan Dobkowski 2 catches, 47 yards. Avon - Nolan Good 8 carries, 58 yards, TD; Nolan Good 3-of-6, 26 yards; Quainte Smith 1 catch, 7 yards

Highland gets on the board against Avon

The Hornets went 69 yards on 15 plays and scored its first touchdown. The drive took 8:09 off the clock with Casey Myser scoring from 2 yards out. It's Avon 21, Highland 7 with 3:42 left before intermission.

Avon opens up second quarter with a score

On second-and-7 from the Highland 42, Matt Maxey took a handoff from Nolan Good and ran untouched to the left corner of the end zone. It's Avon 21, Highland 0 with 11:50 left before halftime.

Highland squanders two scoring chances against Avon

Highland drove deep into Avon territory on its first and second drives but turned things over on downs both times as Avon is bending in the middle of the field but coming up strong late. It's 14-0 Eagles at the end of the first quarter.

Avon stretches its lead over Highland

The Hornets have yet to have the ball on offense. A 2-yard run by Tyler Kaufmann makes it Avon 14, Highland 0 with 8:18 left in the first quarter.

Highland makes second miscue against Avon

The Eagles popped the ball up on the ensuing kickoff after they scored and it was fumbled by Highland. Sammy Ulery picked it up. It's first-and-10 on the Highland 39. Avon leads 7-0 with 11:35 left in the first quarter.

Avon scores on the first play from scrimmage

It came on a 65-yard run by Nolan Good, who took off toward the visiting side Hornets sideline and then went in untouched. It's Avon 7, Highland 0 with 11:38 left in the first quarter.

Starters for Highland

OFFENSE

NUMBER	NAME	POSITION
2	Luke Berkmeier	WR
3	Lucas Gerding	WR
6	Nick Dobkowski	WR
12	Evan Foust	TE
18	Dylan Borla	QB
25	Casey Myser	RB
50	Ryan Zywiec	C
54	Carson Noonan	LT
58	Ben Coyne	RT
59	Josh Messina	LG
66	Brady Bendau	RG

DEFENSE

4	Kyle Williams	CB
5	Colton Foust	CB
7	Jameson Gordon	OLB
11	Josh Arvanetes	SS
12	Evan Foust	ILB
20	Kallen Whitling	OLB
22	Garrett Phillips	FS
50	Ryan Zywiec	DT
54	Carson Noonan	DE
65	Cody Bendau	DT
87	Caleb McKeen	DE

SPECIAL TEAMS

12	Evan Foust	P
40	Jonah Kowza	K

Starters for Avon

Number	Name	Position
Offense		
4	Ty Beerbohm	WR
5	Nolan Good	QB
8	Matt Maxey	WR
9	Cole Kepner	WR
12	Grant Barr	WR
16	Tyler Kaufmann	RB
52	Jack Fitch	OL
53	Addison Hanna	OL
59	Eian Englehart	OL
73	Jeremiah Kelly	OL
77	Matt Hauck	OL
Defense		
1	Ryan Stolarski	LB
2	Aiden Atkins	DB
11	Jakob Weatherspoon	DB
15	Alex Rivera	DB
17	Alex Falasco	DB
27	Jerry Clements	DB
28	Owen Garcia	LB
50	Nolan Robke	DL
63	Jason Gillespie	DL
73	Jeremiah Kelly	DL
87	Caedam Bemmett	DL
Special teams		
90	Jensen Petro	P
92	Owen Warrick	K

What to know Highland coming into the OHSAA playoffs

What to watch: This is the 14th time the Hornets have made the playoffs and the second season in a row they've reached the regional final. Highland lost 28-14 to Avon in this round last season. The Hornets have one regional title (2013) but have never reached the state

final. Highland is coming off a 38-14 win over third-seeded Whitehouse Anthony Wayne (12-1).

Suburban League Offensive Player of the Year Casey Myser (230 carries, 2,024 yards, 36 TDs; 16 catches, 502 yards, seven TDs) and Dylan Borla (98-of-131 passing, 2,116 yards, 27 TDs, two interceptions) continue to set single-season school records for Highland. Evan Foust (26 catches, 537 yards, five TDs), Lucas Gerding (23 catches, 445 yards, three TDs) and Nick Dobkowski (18 catches, 426, seven TDs) are putting up solid numbers.

Foust (81 tackles, three sacks), Suburban League Defensive Player of the Year Ryan Zywiec (70 tackles, 9.5 sacks, 21 tackles for loss), Jameson Gordon (63 tackles, seven TFL) and Northeast Inland District co-Defensive Player of the Year Carson Noonan (62 tackles, 9.5 sacks, 18 TFL) lead a stellar defense that has allowed only 8.2 points per game.

What to know about Avon coming into the OHSAA playoffs

This the Eagles' 18th playoff appearances. Avon has won a regional title in six of the last seven seasons (2022) but the Eagles have not made it past the state semifinals since they finished runners-up in 2011. The Eagles are coming off a 41-10 win over fifth-seeded Wadsworth (11-2).

Northeast Lakes District Offensive Player of the Year Nolan Good, who didn't play in last year's game against Highland, is the leader for Avon. The Kent State commit is 176-of-270 passing for 2,908 yards and 28 TDs against seven interceptions. He has weapons in Matt Maxey (79 catches, 1,212 yards, 10 TDs), Cole Kepner (29 catches, 604 yards, seven TDs) and Grant Barr (34 catches, 509 yards, eight TDs). Tyler Kaufmann (87 carries, 607 yards, 10 TDs), Good (52 carries, 528 yards, nine TDs), Quiante' Smith (57 carries, 450 yards, nine TDs) and Cam Wendell (70 carries, 393 yards, five TDs) get it done on the ground.

Owen Garcia (90.5 tackles, 3.5 sacks, 8.5 tackles for loss), Ryan Stolarski (70 tackles, three sacks, eight tackles for loss) and Jason Gillespie (15 tackles, seven sacks, eight tackles for loss) lead an Avon defense that gives up 12.2 points per game.

How Highland football reached the regional final

Date	Opponent	Result
Aug. 23	at Hudson (6-6)	W, 31-24

Aug. 30	North Royalton (5-6)	W 50-20
Sept. 6	Brunswick (3-8)	W, 37-0
Sept. 13	Copley (5-6)	W, 44-7
Sept. 20	at Tallmadge (7-4)	W, 49-0
Sept. 27	at Barberton (2-8)	W, 49-7
Oct. 4	Kent Roosevelt (2-8)	W, 56-7
Oct. 10	Revere (7-5)	W, 41-0
Oct. 18	at Cuyahoga Falls (2-8)	W, 56-0
Oct. 25	at Aurora (11-2)	W, 34-0
Nov. 1	Fremont Ross (5-6)	W, 52-7
Nov. 8	Toledo St. Francis DeSales	W, 49-20
Nov. 15	Whitehouse Anthony Wayne	W, 38-14

How Avon football reached the regional final

Date	Opponent	Result
Aug. 23	St. Ignatius (1-10)	W, 42-21
Aug. 30	Canton McKinley (8-5)	W, 21-14
Sept. 6	Glenville (10-3)	W, 13-12
Sept. 13	Elyria (0-10)	W, 58-0
Sept. 20	North Ridgeville (9-3)	W, 38-7
Sept. 27	at Olmsted Falls (8-4)	W, 35-14
Oct. 4	Berea-Midpark	W, 49-7
Oct. 11	at Midview (5-6)	W, 49-10
Oct. 18	Amherst (6-5)	W, 42-7
Oct. 25	at Avon Lake (6-5)	W, 42-10
Nov. 1	North Olmsted (5-6)	W, 47-12
Nov. 8	Olmsted Falls (8-4)	W, 52-35
Nov. 15	Wadsworth (11-2)	W, 41-10

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