

Cleveland.com high school football Top 25: Defenses rule entering Week 9

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High school football: Hoban vs. Glenville, October 10, 2025

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By

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CLEVELAND, Ohio — Conference championships are being decided and playoff positioning is at stake with just two weeks left in the high school football regular season.

Many of Northeast Ohio's top teams are relying on stout defenses to get there, as Friday's showdown between Archbishop Hoban and Glenville showed. Top-ranked Avon, Mentor and Kirtland are coming off shutouts as they move closer to conference's championships.

There were only two matchups between Top 25 teams, resulting in one dropping out. Find out how the area shook up [since last week](#) with details below:

(The cleveland.com high school football Top 25 is expanding this season to provide a fuller picture of the top teams in Northeast Ohio. Previously, we limited the rankings to our traditional seven-county coverage area, but we're now considering all teams from the OHSAA's Northeast region of the state.)

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25. North Ridgeville (7-1)

Last week: Not ranked, won at Avon Lake 31-14

This week: Friday vs. Amherst

The Rangers return to the Top 25 after rolling past Avon Lake, using an onside kick to start the second half in their big Southwestern Conference win. They avenged a loss last year to the Shoremen, who beat them on a late field goal, and won their fourth straight game since suffering their lone loss to top-ranked Avon. Quarterback Cole Miller threw for 142 yards and rushed for another 103 yards against Avon Lake.

24. Buckeye (8-0)

Last week: Ranked No. 25, beat Normandy 42-0

This week: Friday at Rocky River

The Cleveland West Conference title will be on the line Friday at Rocky River (7-1), which looks to take down the defending CWC champs. Coach Greg Dennison's Bucks have been consistent all year. Their last three wins have come in convincing fashion. Liam Phillips rushed for two touchdowns and 192 yards in their win vs. Normandy.

23. Benedictine (7-1)

Last week: Ranked No. 23, won at Erie Cathedral Prep (Pa.) 53-23

This week: Friday vs. Villa Angela-St. Joseph

Sophomore Kayden Forte rushed for 165 yards with three touchdowns, while Giovanni Iacampo completed 5 of 8 passes for 171 yards and two TDs, both to Antowine Smith, who had 144 yards on three receptions. The Bengals have won three straight since their lone loss to Lake Catholic.

22. Lake Catholic (6-2)

Last week: Ranked No. 22, won at Padua 30-0

This week: Friday vs. Holy Name

Danny Zmorowski rushed for 173 yards and Lake Catholic's first touchdown in the Cougars' second straight shutout. They control their own destiny, [according to JoeEitel.com](http://JoeEitel.com), with a chance for a top four seed in Division IV, Region 13.

21. Norton (7-0)

Last week: Ranked No. 21, beat Woodridge 48-7

This week: Friday vs. Akron Springfield

Norton can clinch the Metro Athletic Conference title this week, having beaten all of its top challengers. The Panthers also are on top of Division IV, Region 13 with more Harbin points than Lake Catholic or even state-title favorite Glenville.

20. North Canton Hoover (7-1)

Last week: Ranked No. 20, beat Massillon Perry 35-21

This week: Friday at Uniontown Lake

The Vikings bounced back from their one-point loss to Canton McKinley and are sixth in Division II, Region 7, [according to JoeEitel.com's unofficial ratings](http://JoeEitel.com).

19. Villa Angela-St. Joseph (6-1)

Last week: Ranked No. 19, won at Gilmour Academy 59-10

This week: Friday at Benedictine

The Vikings have won their last five games by 30 points or more with Friday's showdown looming against Benedictine. Eight players scored in their rout of Gilmour.

18. Olmsted Falls (5-3)

Last week: Ranked No. 18, won at Berea-Midpark 46-12

This week: Friday at Midview

Bagley Road bragging rights belong to the Bulldogs after Owen Singleton rushed for 213 yards and two TDs against the Titans. Falls is one of three teams with three losses in the Top 25 because of strength of schedule, including a Week 3 overtime win at Strongsville and a close loss to Mentor. The Bulldogs are fighting for a first-round home game and maybe even a bye in Division II, Region 6.

17. Youngstown Cardinal Mooney (6-2)

Last week: Ranked No. 17, won at Warren Harding 7-3

This week: Friday at Canfield South Range

Mooney, which is responsible for VASJ's lone loss, has won four straight games and is Northeast Ohio's highest-ranked team in Division V.

16. Canfield (8-0)

Last week: Ranked No. 16, beat John Marshall 49-0

This week: Friday at Warren Howland

Canfield has clinched a top eight spot in Division III, Region 9, [according to JoeEitel.com](http://JoeEitel.com), lining it up for home-field advantage through the first two rounds of the playoffs. The Cardinals are No. 1 in the region, atop Cuyahoga Valley Christian Academy in Harbin points.

15. Cuyahoga Valley Christian Academy (7-0)

Last week: Ranked No. 15, beat Notre Dame-Cathedral Latin 35-7

This week: Friday at Padua

Despite trailing Canfield in the playoff ratings, cleveland.com likes CVCA a little better. Why? An unrelenting defense led by Rutgers commit Joey Kopec at linebacker has three shutouts and another near-donut on the scoreboard against NDCL (6-2). The Lions gained just 133 yards and didn't score until the fourth quarter against the Royals, [who got off to an explosive start](#).

14. Austintown Fitch (6-1)

Last week: Ranked No. 14, beat Erie McDowell (Pa.) 21-12

This week: Friday at Boardman

Could Fitch spoil a Hoban-Walsh Jesuit rematch in the Division II, Region 5 playoffs. Coach T.J. Parker's Falcons have won six straight and could be in line to play one of them, if they all reach the regional semifinals.

13. Hudson (6-2)

Last week: Ranked No. 13, beat Brecksville-Broadview Heights 27-0

This week: Friday vs. Nordon

Another team looking to play spoiler in Region 5, Hudson's upcoming matchup with Nordon (6-2) should go a long way toward seeding with both teams in that region.

12. Strongsville (6-2)

Last week: Ranked No. 12, won at Lorain 43-14

This week: Friday vs. Shaker Heights

Strongsville regrouped from its loss at Mentor, as Alex Espay took the opening kickoff at Lorain back for a 91-yard touchdown. He finished with 181 yards on 11 receptions and two TDs in the first half.

11. Massillon (5-3)

Last week: Ranked No. 11, beat San Antonio Cornerstone Christian (Texas) 45-20

This week: Friday vs. Warren Harding

The Tigers rushed for 239 yards against their visitors from Texas, despite leading running back Savior Owens watching from the sideline. Anthony McMullen Jr. paced them with 130 yards and a score, while Christian Culler added 102 yards and two TDs. The Raiders (3-4) are up next before Massillon's anticipated rivalry game Oct. 25 at Tom Benson Hall of Fame Stadium vs. Canton McKinley.

10. Canton McKinley (7-1)

Last week: Ranked No. 10, beat Uniontown Lake 24-21

This week: Friday at Massillon Jackson

The Bulldogs won their sixth straight game and they utilized three interceptions, including one for a touchdown, in their Federal League win. They can clinch the outright Federal League title this week at Jackson (5-3).

9. Kirtland (8-0)

Last week: Ranked No. 9, won at Chagrin Falls 45-0

This week: Friday vs. Crestwood

Kirtland clinched a first-round bye and top four spot in Division VI, Region 21, [according to JoeEitel.com](#). Neither that nor a third shutout in the last four weeks should be a surprise. The Hornets have given up just seven points in that stretch. They allowed only 50 yards to Chagrin Falls.

8. Highland (8-0)

Last week: Ranked No. 8, won at Kent Roosevelt 58-7

This week: Friday at Revere

Highland [made up for lost time](#) with the previous week's cancellation by Barberton, as Casey Myser scored five TDs and rushed for four with 125 yards. Grady Gibb completed 8 of 11 passes for 113 yards and three TDs, while rushing for another 89 yards. The Hornets have clinched a first-round bye in Division II, Region 6, [according to JoeEitel.com](#). They are third in the region behind Avon and Wadsworth.

7. Wadsworth (8-0)

Last week: Ranked No. 7, won at Nordononia 62-21

This week: Friday vs. Stow-Munroe Falls

The Grizzlies offense was [too much for Nordonia](#) as it has been for everyone on their schedule. They can clinch another Suburban League National Conference title this week vs. Stow (2-6).

6. Glenville (4-3)

Last week: Ranked No. 6, lost at Archbishop Hoban 12-9

This week: Friday vs. John Hay

Northeast Ohio's preseason No. 1, Glenville remains in the sixth spot after taking Hoban to the limit on the road. The Tarblooders' other two losses are to St. Edward and Avon. All three teams are ranked near the top of the cleveland.com Top 25 and state rankings in Divisions I and II. Ask yourself, can anyone do better against that slate?

5. Walsh Jesuit (6-1)

Last week: Ranked No. 5, idle

This week: Friday at St. Vincent-St. Mary

Walsh comes off the unintended bye, made possible by Youngstown Ursuline's troubles that led to cancelling its season, and now closes the regular season with STVM (0-6) and Trotwood-Madison (6-2). The Warriors control their own destiny and are in the No. 3 spot of Division II, Region 5, [according to JoeEitel.com](#).

4. Archbishop Hoban (6-1)

Last week: Ranked No. 4, beat Glenville 12-9

This week: Friday vs. Central York (Pa.)

Hoban's final four games is a gauntlet unlike any other in Northeast Ohio. The Knights [rallied past Glenville](#) in a defense struggle after a bye week that proceeded their [rivalry win](#) vs. Walsh Jesuit. Next up is undefeated Central York and No. 2 St. Edward. They will further test a defense [that is realizing its potential](#).

3. Mentor (8-0)

Last week: Ranked No. 3, beat Shaker Heights 49-0

This week: Friday at Lorain

Mentor secured a third shutout in its last four Greater Cleveland Conference games. In the Cardinals' biggest GCC win [two weeks ago against Strongsville](#), their defense shut out the

Mustangs in the second half of that one. They remain atop the Division I, Region 1 playoff standings with [one of the state's top offensive lines](#).

2. St. Edward (7-1)

Last week: Ranked No. 2, beat Clarkson Football North (Canada) 42-23

This week: Saturday vs. Cincinnati Archbishop Moeller

The Eagles remained efficient behind senior quarterback Jonny Evanchick (12 of 13 passing for 155 yards and three TDs) with top running back Brandon White (128 yards, one TD) and receiver Zach Hackleman (100 yards, two TDs on five receptions). They close the regular season with two big games against Moeller (6-2) and Hoban.

1. Avon (7-1)

Last week: Ranked No. 1, won at Amherst 34-0

This week: Friday vs. Avon Lake

The defending Division II state champions [continue to impress](#), this time limiting one of Lorain County's three 7,000-yard passers in its history (Cy Christensen) to just 12 yards through the air. They have three shutouts in their last four Southwestern Conference games. Meanwhile, Blake Elder continues to [make the most of his senior year](#) at quarterback. He completed 19 of 24 passes for 237 yards and three TDs to pace Avon's offense ahead of its rivalry game with Avon Lake.

Dropped out

Nordonia (6-2, was No. 24)

On the cusp

Garfield Heights (7-1), Massillon Jackson (5-3), Maple Heights (6-2), Perry (6-2), Rocky River (7-1), Uniontown Lake (6-2)

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