

Highland dominates North Ridgeville 48-0, advances to regional final

- Published: Nov. 14, 2025, 10:21 p.m.

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MEDINA, Ohio — Highland's offense needed less than three minutes to establish control Friday night, and the top-seeded Hornets never let up in a 48-0 shutout victory over fourth-seeded North Ridgeville that sends them to the Division II, Region 6 final.

Senior quarterback Grady Gibb led a relentless attack, accounting for all six of Highland's first-half touchdowns. The Hornets scored on each of their six offensive possessions before halftime, building a commanding 41-0 lead. Gibb finished with four touchdown passes and two rushing scores.

The opening drive set the tone when Gibb capped it with an 11-yard rushing touchdown just 9:06 into the game. Two and a half minutes later, he connected with Lucas Gerding on a 22-yard scoring strike, and North Ridgeville's offense never recovered.

Highland's first-half dominance was complete on both sides of the ball. The Hornets racked up 18 first downs while their defense kept North Ridgeville from advancing within 40 yards of the end zone. That defensive unit has allowed fewer than 14 points per game this season.

"I'm really proud of the guys, they executed every phase of the game, and we knew it was going to have to be a great effort for us to get this win," Highland coach Mike Gibbons said. "We really established our dominance in the beginning and kept it going the whole game."

The victory sets up a regional final matchup against No. 3 Avon, a team that has extra significance for Highland players.

"We got a lot of motivation, they took us out the last two years," Casey Myser said. "I'm excited for this game."

Myser added Highland's final touchdown in the third quarter on a 7-yard run.

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