



HIGHLAND 49,
MCDOWELL (Pa.) 10



Hornets put up 514 yards in first half

Albert Grindle
The Gazette

Even rookie difficulty on the video game "College Football 26" thinks this is ridiculous.

At halftime of the Highland football team's season-opening, 49-10 non-league blowout of McDowell (Pa.) on Friday, the Hornets were on pace for more than 1,000 yards.

That's not a typo. The perfect combination of scenarios — great blocking, playmaking and poor defense — took place as Highland racked up 514 of its school-record 672 yards in the opening 24 minutes.

The 672 total on only 50 plays (13.4 average) ranks fourth in Medina County history behind Medina's 810 (Oct. 29, 1942 vs. Wellington) and Black River's 715 (Sept. 21, 2012 vs. Fairview) and 711 (Oct. 12, 2012 at Brookside). Those teams didn't have to deal with a running clock in the second half, and none threw for more than 126 yards.

Coming off a Division II, Region 6 championship game appearance, the Hornets looked the part against the Trojans by roaring to a 35-0 halftime



Gerding



Gibb

lead.

First-team All-Ohio running back Casey Myser had 11 carries for 153 yards and two touchdowns to go with two catches for 42 yards, while Lucas Gerding rushed for 61 yards, caught a 34-yard pass and threw a wide-open 44-yard touchdown to Jake Weber on a trick play.

Grady Gibb was perfect through the air in his first career start, completing 7-of-7 passes for 226 yards that included a 73-yard touchdown to Nick Dobkowski, a 71-yard non-touchdown to Evan Foust and 34-yarders to Myser and Gerding. Gibb also rushed eight times for 39 yards and a score.

How Highland came to such gaudy statistics involved a few special circumstance. The Hornets scored two

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HIGHLAND 14 21 7 7 — 49
MCDOWELL 0 0 3 7 — 10

First
H — Casey Myser 9 run (Jonah Kowza kick).
H — Myser 20 run (Kowza kick).

Second
H — Myser 50 run (Kowza kick).
H — Nick Dobkowski 73 pass from Grady Gibb (Kowza kick).

Third
H — Jake Weber 44 pass from Lucas Gerding (Kowza kick).

Fourth
H — Gibb 8 run (Landon Kuwana kick).
M — Joseph Clark 24 field goal.

First downs H 26 M 13

H — Jonathan Prucha 1 run (Carson Kwiatkowski kick).
H — James Feronti 25 pass from Lucas Sult (Clark kick).

Touchdowns immediately after 10- and 11-yard holding penalties and got three stops in or near the red zone, including an interception by Dobkowski in the end zone, to give the offense further opportunities to gain significant yardage before scoring.

The night was far from perfect, as Highland put up the ridiculous 514 first-half yards despite losing three fumbles.

The defense stepped up each time. The most important stop came when Highland lost a fumble inside the red

Rushing	42/402	30/104
Rushing average	9.6	3.5
Passing	8/8	10/25
Passing yards	270	132
Total offense	50/672	55/236
Punting	0/0	6/99.2
Penalties	8/107	8/50
Fumbles	3/3	1/0

RUSHING: Highland — Myser 11-153, Gerding 3-61, Colton Winston 5-60, Dylan Lazar 4-53, Gibb 8-36, Joseph Clark 3-10, Oscar Judak 2-10, Frankie Jannagi 1-7, Prucha 3-8, Anthony DePompi 1-3, Team 1-(-2). McDowell — Neco Sargent 5-26, Peter Houston 3-27, Deonte Flemings 12-21, Brody Borsell 6-10, Lucas Sult 2-13, Chase Garrick 1-0, Jordan Brown 1-0.

PASSING: Highland — Gibb 7-7-226-0, Gerding 1-1-44-0, McDowell — Flemings 8-20-101-1, Sult 2-5-31-0.

RECEIVING: Highland — Dobkowski 2-72, Evan Foust 1-71, Weber 1-44, Myser 2-42, Gerding 1-34, DePompi 1-7, McDowell — Owen Haffey 4-72, Feronti 1-26, Brown 1-14, Borsell 1-10, Taylor Lincoln 1-6, Kameron Bastow 2-5.

MISSED FIELD GOALS: McDowell — Clark 34 (WR).

zone, but Foust's second-down tackle for loss eventually led to a missed 32-yard field goal with the score 7-0.

Myser's second and third touchdowns — from 20 and 50 yards — moved the ante to 21-0.

The Hornets then made the outcome-deciding stop on fourth-and-1 from the Highland 24. McDowell tried a surprise quarterback sneak, but great A-gap penetration from Ryan Zahir bumped the play outside, where others stopped the runner short.

A few plays later Gibb nailed Dob-

kowski in stride on a RPO slant for the 73-yard TD to make the score 28-0. Gerding then joined the fun when he jet motioned right, caught a lateral from Gibb and lolli-popped the 44-yarder to Weber.

Colton Winston (5 carries, 60 yards) and Dylan Lazar (4, 53) racked up most of the Highland yards in the second half. The Hornets' final touchdown was a 1-yard run by backup quarterback Jonathan Prucha in the fourth quarter, with Carson Kwiatkowski, who made 72-of-72 extra points as a sophomore before missing all of last season with a torn ACL, splitting the uprights for the 49th point.

The Trojans got on the board with a 24-yard Joseph Clark field goal in the third quarter and a Lucas Sult 25-yard pass to James Feronti in the fourth.

McDowell, a D-I school by Ohio standards, has been highly competitive with seven straight winning seasons. The Trojans have played Mentor, Walsh Jesuit, Barberton and Mentor Lake Catholic in recent years.

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