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to read the menu on a first date is  
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## Gales gut out double OT win

### Lancaster's Dilger boots 31-yard, game-winning field goal

BY JOE ARNOLD • SPORTS WRITER • OCTOBER 11, 2008

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LANCASTER - Chris Dilger wanted to be more than just a kicker in his senior season at Lancaster. The Gales' coaching staff obliged and has plugged him in at defensive back, punter and even as a back-up quarterback.

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But it was Dilger's leg and quick thinking Friday night that might help distinguish him from being just another flaky kicker.

Dilger booted a game-winning field goal and help avert a late-game disaster in the Gales' 31-28 win in double overtime over Pickerington North.

"I was ready to go no matter where it was," Dilger said of the winning kick. "I was a little nervous, but I knew my team would block for me and have my back. I was pretty confident."

Dilger's big plays in the fourth quarter and overtime help negate a lion's share of penalties and turnovers that plagued both teams. Aside from his 31-yard game-winner that would have

been good from another 10 yards out, Dilger salvaged a fourth-quarter possession when he fielded a low snap on a punt 8 yards deep in his own end zone. He dropped the snap, picked it up and managed a 34-yard punt with two North defenders bearing down on him.

"I just did what I could to get it off," he said. "We couldn't have done it without our defense."

That defense, with the help of a sack by Kenny Harlan and Adam Anderson, stiffened on the Panthers' next possession, limiting them to a three-and-out.

"Dilger's a (heck) of a player," Gales coach Rob Carpenter said. "He's probably one of our players that we count on every week. I think he can be proud (Friday)."

Although Dilger's plays might have been the highlights Friday, there were plenty of mistakes. Lancaster (4-4 overall, 2-3 Ohio Capital Conference-Ohio) turned the ball over five times on fumbles. North (4-4, 2-3) had three turnovers.

"I know they had their turnovers, and we had our turnovers," North coach Tom Phillips said. "We had our opportunities, and we didn't capitalize on them in that second overtime."

What looked like North's final chance at tying the game in the fourth quarter ended up being anything but. On a first-and-10 from the Lancaster 31-yard line, North quarterback Sean Flaherty lofted a fade pass to Chris Johann. The pass sailed long and into the arms of defensive back Nathan Carpenter.

The interception gave the Gales the ball at their own 2-yard line with 1 minute, 23 seconds left in the fourth. Lancaster's first play that drive, however, typified its Friday night.

Running back Connor Smith, who logged 14 carries Friday night, coughed up the ball at the 1-yard line. North's Kyle Shaeffer was credited with the recovery in the end zone, and after initially signaling a safety, officials awarded the Panthers the tying touchdown with 1:09 left.

"We should have just run out the clock and make them use their time-out," Rob Carpenter said. "We shouldn't have given the ball to a kid coming off a broken hand whose still wearing a soft cast on it, and that's



The Lancaster Golden Gales advance the ball during one of the team's touchdown drives against Pickerington North on Friday night. E-G photos by Abigail S. Fisher



Pickerington North's Sean Flaherty tries to hang onto the ball while being tackled by a Lancaster defender.

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my fault. He runs hard. And he runs with ball away from his body a little bit. "

North's Kevin Duckworth and Lancaster's Nathan Carpenter each scored overtime touchdowns before Dilger's kick.

After being exploited by North's short passing game and its taller receivers, the Gales' defense, stepped up when called upon. Flaherty, on North's first play of the second overtime, was hit from behind and fumbled the ball, and Lancaster linebacker Jarrid Karns emerged from the pile with it, sealing the Gales' win.

Ryan Cheek and Chris Woods scored first-half touchdowns, and Cheek added another in the third quarter to give the Gales a 21-14 lead.

North's Alec Lamancusa caught a 13-yard TD pass in the first quarter, and Matt Ferguson punched it in from 3 yards out in the second for the Panthers' first two scores.

"I think we needed it to get back to half and half and to get our record evened out," Dilger said of the Gales' second straight win.

"We need to keep rolling."

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