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## Gales can't solve Tigers

### Lancaster's anemic offense finishes game with 86 total yards

BY JOE ARNOLD • SPORTS WRITER • SEPTEMBER 13, 2008

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PICKERINGTON - Jay Sharrett saw the forest through the trees. Asked what he thought about holding Lancaster to just 46 yards in the first half Friday night, Pickerington Central's veteran coach chose to see the larger picture.

"I know they didn't have any points," Sharrett said. "That's bigger."

The Tigers owned the Gales in every statistical category at Tiger Stadium on Friday and steamrolled Lancaster 31-0 in both teams' Ohio Capital Conference opener.

The Tigers (4-0 overall, 1-0 OCC-Ohio) began Friday night billed as one of the top teams in Central Ohio, if not the state. But coupled with the Gales' anemic performance, Central looked downright invincible.

Consider:

- Jordan Shull's 71-yard punt return in the first quarter nearly equaled the Gales' total offensive production for the entire night. The Gales finished with 86 for the entire game.
- Of Lancaster's first seven possessions of the game, three ended with punts, one with an interception and one with a fumble recovery by Central's Malcolm Pannell that resulted in the Tigers' first TD.
- Lancaster, which trailed at halftime 14-0, turned over the ball on the first play of their first two drives of the second half. Central converted both miscues into a combined 10 points.

"That's the third-ranked team in the state, so that's enough said about that," Gales coach Rob Carpenter said. "They're good. They're good up front. They've got three (Division I) players on defense as far as cover guys. Our weakness showed. We don't have much depth. When our weapons get tired, we're not real good."

Lancaster fell to 2-2 overall and 0-1 in the OCC-Ohio.

Tigers' quarter Nick Raymond emerged as a legitimate offensive threat next to heralded speedsters Patrick White and Jamie Wood and bruising fullback Zach Boren. Raymond's scrambling ability consistently burned the Gales, as he rushed for 88 yards on seven carries. When he was running, Raymond was heaving passes up for a talented receiving corps.

"They're the playmakers. My job is to get them the ball," Raymond said of White and Wood. "They do their job, and I do mine. I try to be the glue that holds everything together."

Raymond was just 3 of 10 for 33 yards in the first half, but he was 4-for-5 for 57 yards in the second half. He hooked up with tight end Blaine Burgess on a 33-yard TD reception that put the Tigers ahead 28-0 with 5 minutes, 23 seconds left in the third quarter.

Raymond found White on a pretty fade route 4 minutes into the second quarter for the Tigers' second TD of the game.

"If I can get my job done passing the ball, it will open up my running," he said. "They both kind of worked in unison (Friday night)."



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Lancaster's Ryan Cheek fumbles the ball after getting taken down by the Pickerington Central defense Friday in Pickerington. (E-G photo by Ty Wright)



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The Lancaster defense chases down Pickerington Central's Jamie Wood on Friday in Pickerington. (E-G photo by Ty Wright)

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Carpenter applauded his defense's effort in light of the offense's struggles Friday night. The Gales' defense was on the field for 55 plays. Lancaster's offense ran just 36 plays before the teams began substituting.

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"Our defense was well-prepared and played good. But we didn't support them offensively," he said.  
"Pickerington Central's third in the state because of that defense. We've got a lot of work to do."

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The LHS Freshman team is doing great! I have not seen anything in the EG about them....they beat Pickerington on Thursday.....Great 'D' on Thursday guys! Gale #33 had a couple of great sacks....good job! Wish the EG would give them some credit....

9/13/2008 12:46:48 PM

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