

TROJANS PREPARE FOR EASTERN SEMIFINALS

West To Clash With Whiteville In Historic Playoff Game

BY DOUG RUTTER

West Brunswick clashes with conference rival Whiteville Friday night in a history-making high school football playoff game for the Trojans.

The contest will mark the first time a team from West Brunswick has made it to the third round of the state 2-A playoffs.

"They're real excited," West Brunswick Coach Marshall Seay said of the players. "They know it's going to be a tough one, and they want to walk away from it the winner."

The Trojans (11-1) advanced to the eastern semifinals by beating James Kenan on the road last Friday 32-21. Whiteville (9-3) was a 28-0 winner over Red Springs, and will host this week's contest.

West Brunswick is one of four teams remaining in the eastern region of the state 2-A playoffs, and one of three teams from the Waccamaw Conference.

Seay said the Trojans aren't intimidated by Whiteville, which has a rich high school football tradition, or the importance of the game.

"I think experience is in our corner," Seay said. "We're just gonna have to execute real well on offense. I think our youngsters will do everything they can."

Win or lose Friday night, the 1991 Trojan football team has already found a place in school history. They are the first football squad to win 11 games in a season.

West Brunswick won 10 games in 1975 and again 1988. The Trojans made it to the second round of the state playoffs those years, but lost to Southern Alamance in 1975 and to Jordan Mathews three years ago.

Friday night's game will be played in Whiteville, even though the Trojans have a better record, were seeded higher in the conference and beat the Wolfpack in Whiteville during the regular season.

Brackets for the state playoffs were set prior to the regular season, but Seay thinks the game should be played in Shallotte. "We may be a little on the ornery side having to go up there," he said.

The Trojans, enjoying a school-record, fifth consecutive winning season and third trip to the playoffs in the last four years, beat Whiteville 19-7 on Sept. 27 in the conference opener for both teams.

West Brunswick's Aldwin Lance, who has rushed for 1,262 yards this season, scored two second-half touchdowns in the game, and the Trojan defense did the rest.

The Wolfpack gained only 112 yards on offense, and was held to one first down in the second half. The Trojans rushed for 160 yards and passed for 113 in the game.

Seay said both teams have made changes since the earlier meeting, and Whiteville is more versatile on offense than it was at that time.

"You just got to take the first contest and throw it out the window," he

said. "It don't mean anything right now."

Seay said he hopes the officiating in this week's game is more consistent than it was last week. West Brunswick was penalized for 90 yards, compared to 28 yards for James Kenan.

"James Kenan certainly wasn't playing flawless football," he said. "We've just got to hope that situation is more like it was against Farmville—balanced."

Whiteville, a playoff team each of the last eight years, hasn't advanced to the third round since 1987. That was the year the Wolfpack went 15-0 and won the state championship.

After posting a 7-3 record in the regular season and finishing third in the conference, Whiteville has been impressive in its first two playoff games.

The Wolfpack beat Northside, the top-ranked 2-A team in the state, by a score of 31-10 in the first round.

Whiteville scored three second-quarter touchdowns in last week's shutout of Red Springs.

"Just like us right now they're on a roll, and it's going to be a real exciting ball game," Seay said.

Friday night's game will be the 17th meeting of West Brunswick and Whiteville. The Wolfpack has dominated the series, winning 12 of 16.

Besides this year's regular-season victory, West Brunswick's only other wins against Whiteville came in 1974, 1975 and 1988.



WEST BRUNSWICK FANS like this crew made the long road trip to James Kenan easier for the Trojans, who travel to Whiteville Friday night to play the Wolfpack in the eastern semifinals.

The Trojans and Wolfpack have never met in the playoffs and have never played twice in the same year.

In the other eastern semifinal game, Waccamaw Conference champ East Bladen will host Wallace-Rose Hill in Elizabethtown.

The East Bladen Cougars (11-1) advanced to the third round with a 3-0 win over previously-unbeaten Ayden Grifton last Friday night at home.

Wallace-Rose Hill (11-1) got by Clinton 14-12 last Friday on a

touchdown in the final minute of the game.

In the western region of the 2-A playoffs, Forest Hills (11-1) will play at Thomasville (11-1) this week and Starmount (10-2) will play at Swanannoa Owen (11-1).

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