

FROM THE SIDELINES: WITH LARRY SPEGAR

ABINGTON HEIGHTS SOARS TO A COMEBACK 14-7 WIN

In thrilling playoff fashion, Abington Heights used 2 nifty TD passes to pull out a hard fought dramatic win over Hazleton Area in Saturday afternoon's clash between District 2 AAAA powers. As the #2 seed in the District 2-11 subregional, the Comets hosted a feisty and well prepared Cougar team from Hazleton Area. A hard hitting and defensive contest for much of the afternoon, it was the heart and heroics of Abington Heights which paved the way for the big win at "The Pit." Hazleton took a late first half lead courtesy of an 8 play drive ending in a 2 yard scoring burst by Nate Eachus. Al Cabrejos, Evan Butkovsky and Jon Koslop led a superior defensive effort by the Cougars as well. In the end, however, it was the big play Comets which saved the day. With just under 9 minutes remaining in the game, Comet QB, Dave Keisling hit Shaun Pasternak with a 45 yard scoring strike to knot the game at 7-7. But Abington Heights would score again with just 1:15 in the game by way of a 35 scoring strike from Keisling to Nick Pasqualichio. The dramatic TD and win for the Comets was one of the most memorable ever witnessed at Comet Stadium. The score and resulting win set off a much anticipated celebration among Comet faithful throughout the jam packed stadium. One can only remember last season's opening playoff heartbreaking loss by Abington to Whitehall on a last second fake field goal and TD by Whitehall which stunned a previously undefeated Abington team at the very same site. The Comets were surely on the sweeter end this past Saturday. Abington Head Coach, Joe Repshis was extremely pleased with the performance and resiliency of his Comet team, "I'm proud of the way these guys never quit. They have been hanging tough all season. They never gave up and kept battling to the end. To be 10-1 and moving on in the playoffs says a lot for this team. They have matured and come along very nicely the entire year. When they keep playing with a lot of heart and desire, good things are going to happen and it certainly did right here today." Abington again was led by a very fine defensive effort on Saturday as it has enjoyed all season, including big games from Ray Bennett, Marc Wallace, Vinnie Armetta, Jake Roberts, Dave Keisling and Shaun Pasternak. Credit also Joe Diskin, John Kilpatrick, Brian Peters, Spencer DePhillips, Russell Reeves and Kurtis Medeiros with outstanding efforts for the Comets as well.

With its big win, Abington Heights, the #2 seed will host #3 Bethlehem Liberty, who handled Delaware Valley 42-13. In the other bracket for AAAA, familiar foes from District 11, Parkland and Easton will battle again. Look for some very interesting and exciting games to come in this subregional with the overall winner having a very strong shot at the Eastern Championship and a bid for Hershey in mid December.

WEST SCRANTON ADVANCES WITH BIG WIN OVER DALLAS 32-20

While many would have considered Dallas Area an overwhelming favorite in the AAA race, the Invaders of West Scranton pulled off a big upset and send Head Coach

Mike DeAntona and the Invaders into the second week of the playoffs to face Crestwood this coming Saturday November 18.

LAKELAND AND DUNMORE HEADING FOR ANOTHER BATTLE

With opening wins in the playoffs, Lakeland and Dunmore will hook up for another exciting rematch in AA competition in District 2. Lakeland pasted Wilkes-Barre Meyers 54-0, while Dunmore hung on for an exciting 28-20 win over Riverside in a rematch of an earlier hard fought win by the Bucks of Dunmore. Lakeland had a surprising easy 35-0 win over Dunmore in Week 7. The setting is at Lakeland once again with the Chiefs' #2 seeding. Lakeland Head Coach, Dan Case has the Chiefs on the warpath as they have rolled over opponents in the past number of weeks. For Dunmore, one only has to look at the resume of its top mentor, Jack HENZES, who notched career win #300 in Week 8 to know that the Bucks of Dunmore will make the most of every opportunity. This should be a marquis matchup of AA powers. In the other bracket, Wilkes-Barre GAR has the #1 seed and will be looking for another win over a very tough Wyoming Area team, which is the #4 seed and comes off an inspiring and thrilling win over Valley View 37-29 and a standout 5 TD effort from Warrior, Tyler Serbin. Despite a monumental season and effort again on Friday night, Kyle Passeri and the Cougars were unable to knock off the Wyoming Area charge as Warrior Head Coach, Paul Marranca led the Warriors to another impressive appearance and performance in the AA playoffs. This should be a good one this weekend as well.

SOUTHERN COLUMBIA STILL ROLLING ALONG

Making a bid for the Pennsylvania State Record of 5 straight state titles, the Tigers of Southern Columbia had no trouble taking care of business on Friday with a 41-0 halftime lead and a final 48-13 win over Bloomsburg. Head Coach, Jim Roth and the Tigers will take on Line Mountain in the District 4 A Championship this Friday November 17. The District 2 title will be played between Old Forge, which beat Mid Valley 42-14 and Northwest, which beat Lackawanna Trail 38-14.

Good Luck to all teams in the upcoming Week 12 round of high school football!

See you on the sidelines!

LARRY SPEGAR