

District 10 Week 11 Summary

By Todd Warner

Class A and AA Playoff Recap: All Four Finalists Come from Powerful South!

In Class A, defending champion Sharpsville beat Fairview, 38-26, on the strength several long-range scoring plays and some clutch defensive plays late in the game. The Blue Devils, who have won a total of six District 10 titles (including 4 of the last 6 in D10A), roared to out a 14-0 lead by the time the game was 8 minutes old. The first Sharpsville possession started on the F-49 where on 3rd and 6, speedster Aaron Reddix burst up the middle for a 45 yard TD run. Jarryd Summers, who haunted Fairview all night long in a bunch of different ways, booted the PAT for a 7-0 at the 7:34 mark. On the ensuing Fairview possession, Summers picked off a pass on the S-47 and returned it to the F-24. Ian Brown carried for 19 to the F-5 on the first play and two plays later, R.J. Golub swept 2 yards around the right side for at TD. Summers' PAT kick made it 14-0 with 4:03 left in the 1st quarter. Another Fairview punt saw Sharpsville start their 3rd possession of the game on the F-40. 10 plays later, Summers made it 17-0 with a 31-yard PFN Stat Star FG early in the 2nd quarter. Fairview's next possession lasted two plays and Sharpsville got another INT and started at the F-17. But the Tiger defense stopped Sharpsville on downs with 6:16 left in the half at the F-16. Suddenly, Fairview woke up and played like PFN's #8 ranked team. QB Kevin Stephenson hit Chris Delavern for a 46-yard gain and Tyler Sargent ran for 11 yards and then 23 and TD that cut the gap to 17-6. Sharpsville was forced to punt on their next possession, but then stopped the Tigers on 3 plays to force a Fairview punt with less than 2 minutes to go in the half. Reddix lost the handle the punt and Fairview recovered at the S-11 with about a minute left in the half. Ty Perry carried for 4 yards and then for 7 and a TD that turned what had looked early on like a Sharpsville rout into a 17-12 half time score. Sharpsville drove to the F-23 to open the second half, but the Tiger defense again stopped them on downs. Fairview then marched 77 yards on 10 plays to take the lead. Perry's 1-yard plunge into the end zone capped the drive which was highlighted by Perry's 22-yard run, Sargent's 12-yard run, and a pair of outstanding completions by Stephenson, who hit Zane Meeder for 10 on a 3rd and 6 situation and Delavern for 22 to give the Tigers a 1st and goal at the S-2. Perry also bulled in for the 2-point conversion and Fairview appeared headed for a stunning come-from-behind win with a 20-17 lead and 4:11 left in the 3rd quarter. But champions answer adversity and defending champion Sharpsville responded to their first deficit of the game very well when QB P.J. O'Connor dumped a little left screen off to Joe Joseph, who motored 60 yards for a TD. Summers' PAT made it 24-20 with 2:53 left in the 3rd period. Sharpsville then used one of the most effective types of onside kicks---drilling the ball line drive style at the front center on Fairview's return team to immediately regain possession. Two plays later, the still stunned Tigers saw Golub break outside to his left and race 50 yards virtually untouched down the Tiger sideline for a TD that made it 31-20. As the 3rd quarter ended, Fairview battled back as Stephenson hit Meeder for 11 yards, Perry bolted for 26 more, and then on the opening play of the 4th period Stephenson hit a leaping Meeder with a dazzling 23-yard scoring strike. It was 31-26 with 11:54 left in the game. Two minutes later, with Sharpsville facing a 3rd and

14 at their own 32 and the Fairview defense in heavy pursuit, O'Connor hit Summers with a marvelous middle screen pass that ended up being a 68-yard TD and the back breaker. Sharpville's defense, led by Golub and outstanding junior DT Mike Kudelko, kept the pressure on Fairview the rest of the way and clinched the Blue Devils' rematch in the D10 title game with the only team that beat them this season. Region 1 Champion Kennedy Catholic rolled past West Middlesex, 28-6, and into their first D10A title game since 2000 (when they lost, 14-7, to Sharpville). Coach Mike Donato's Golden Eagles, who are trying to win the school's 4th all-time D10 title, got a huge boost from the return of star RB Ross Gargano who scored on a 3 yard run in the first period to give KC an early lead. Mike Muckian kicked the first of his perfect 4-for-4 PATs following Gargano's opening TD to make it 7-0. In the second quarter, Eagle RB Lee Plotts ran for a pair of TDs (39 and 5 yards) to give KC a very comfortable 21-0 lead. West Middlesex managed just 46 rushing yards in the game and had to rely on QB Kolt Hoffman for the balance of their offense. His 1-yard scoring toss to Todd Miller cut the gap to 21-6 at the half, but the Big Reds were unable to move the ball in the second half against the very big, strong KC defensive front. The Eagles did not pick up a single yard through the air, but with Plotts and at least a partially recovered Gargano in the backfield hammering away at the Big Reds they didn't need to throw the ball. Gargano slashed 7 yards for his 2nd and KC's final TD of the game in the 4th quarter. The Eagles, whose only losses this season were very close defeats against D10AA finalists Wilmington and Reynolds, did not seem to suffer any ill effects from their bye week. They dominated the line of scrimmage and time of possession. The KC defense secured a trio of turnovers and made 10 tackles for either zero or minus yardage. The D10A title game should be a great one as the long-time backyard rivals meet for the D10 crown for the third time (splitting 1998 and 2000 championship games). Kennedy Catholic handed Sharpville a 21-20 overtime setback in October and that is the rugged Blue Devils' only regular season loss in the past two seasons.

In Class AA, PFN's preseason favorite for the D10 title and Region 3 Champion Wilmington glided past Hickory, 34-20, behind their usual multi-weapon scoring arsenal and stingy, quick defense. The once-beaten Hounds never trailed in the game, but they were challenged much more by the Hornets this time than they were in their early season 69-28 romp over Hickory. After a scoreless opening period, Wilmington jumped out to a 14-0 as Chris Burns scooted 6 yards for a TD and David Bruno bolted 24 yards for another score. The Hounds 2-point attempt failed after Burns' TD, but All-State track and field star Scott Lewis ran for a 2-point conversion following Bruno's score. Hickory QB Nick Erdesky completed 6 of 18 passes in the game for 138 yards under heavy Hound pressure. His best completion of the night was a 33-yard scoring strike to Garen Ream in the 2nd quarter. Ryan Voisey's PAT kick cut Wilmington's half time lead to 14-7. Greyhound QB Jake Reiber doesn't always get to throw very much. But when he does, he's very good. In the 3rd period, Reiber hit Forrest Minter with a 25-yard TD pass and Nick Riggall converted the PAT to make it 21-7. Hickory responded and made it a one score game again, though, as Dave Smith reached paydirt on a 15-yard run. Voisey's kick set the score at 21-14. The Hornets' momentum was very short-lived as Greyhound lightning bolt Scott Lewis made the PFN Stat Star list by returning the ensuing KO 75 yards for a Wilmington TD and a 28-14 Hound lead through 3 periods.

After Hickory's Keith Yager scored from 6 yards out to make it 28-20 in the 4th period, Wilmington mounted one more drive and Lewis applied the knockout blow by darting 31 yards for the clinching TD. The Greyhounds dominated the statistics in their semi final win over Hickory, but one stat that they will have to improve upon is penalty yardage. Wilmington was flagged 10 times for 85 yards in the game and the perennially-powerful Hounds will need to avoid a repeat of that performance if they are to win their 7th D10 championship since 1994. Reynolds thumped Region 4 Champion Girard, 16-2, in the other D10AA semi final. The fans in Transfer have waited a real long time on the Raider program to have a revival. From 1985 to 1989, Reynolds appeared in five straight D10 title games and won three of them. But, they have not reached the championship game since winning the AAA crown in 1989 with a 26-12 win over Titusville. That means that the current Raider starters were just learning to crawl, walk, and talk the last time Reynolds played this deep into the postseason. In the Raiders' game against Girard, the story was very simple: Muscle against Muscle. And the rugged Raiders had more muscle than Girard. A scoreless first 23:57 of the game turned into an 8-0 Reynolds half time lead when QB Cory Shaffer sneaked 1-yard for a TD as the 2nd quarter expired. He then tossed a 2-point PAT pass to Joe Combine and the Raiders took all the points that they would need into the locker room. In the second, the Reynolds "muscle" advantage stepped up to dominate the game even more. Bruising, but fast RB Jake McBride, who hammered Girard with a 30-carry, 160-yard performance, blasted 35 yards for a 3rd quarter TD and then Shaffer connected with Rich Burnworth on a 2-point conversion pass to make it 16-0. Reynolds took a safety while punting in the final period to set the final score. The Raider defensive front and outstanding corps of fast, physical linebackers held the vaunted Girard ground game to just 113 yards and it took the Yellow Jackets 39 carries to reach that total. The D10AA title game pits the size and strength of Reynolds against the intensity and quickness of Wilmington. The Greyhounds won the regular season meeting in week 7 by a 16-7 count.

AAA Powers to meet again for D10 title: PFN #5-ranked General McLane walloped Warren, 61-14, to cruise into the finals for the 3rd time in four years. The Lancers, who feature four (and maybe more) Division 1 caliber athletes on their roster bolted out to a 35-7 halftime lead behind five big play TDs. Brad Callan opened the rout with a "short" 14-yard TD run. Then, marvelous running QB Ben Swank scored long range TDs on runs of 79 and 35 yards. All-PFN Athlete candidate junior Drew Astorino only carried twice in the game---one of his carries went for 58 yards and a TD that made it 28-0 midway through the 2nd period. Warren's first score came via Andy Ackley's 1-yard run, but GM answered immediately when Swank fired a 41-yard TD pass to Bobby Stauffer. McLane's outstanding LB/RB/PK Dan Skelton connected on 5-for-5 PAT kicks after the Lancers' first half TD display. Then, in the 3rd period, Skelton who also picked off a Warren pass, took over from his RB spot and scored TDs on runs of 37 and 68 yards. He only carried three times in the game. Skelton's brother Ryan, with 14 tackles, and massive DL Rob Stoner, with a pair of sacks led General McLane's brutal defense and made the PFN Stat Star list. The Lancers got two final TDs in the 4th period as Brandon Saraceno (2 yards) and Brian Clark (33 yards) closed out the Lancer point parade. General McLane rolled up more than 500 yards in total offense and did not commit a turnover. Meanwhile, the Lancers took the ball away from the Dragons four times.

Strong Vincent routed Franklin, 60-33, to earn a rematch with the only team that beat them this year. Coach Tom Cacchione's two-time defending D10AAA champs scored 54 points in the first half in this game that really wasn't as close as the final score indicates. The Colonels piled up 560 yards in total offense as junior QB Maurice Williams, a cat-quick 6'3", 205-pounder with a cannon-like arm and an ever-increasing amount of Division 1 recruiting attention, led the unstoppable Colonel offense. SV led 20-0 after one period as Donte Harden torched the Knights with scoring runs of 38 and 53 yards and LaMont McWilliams raced 38 yards for another TD. Harden rushed for 180 yards on 17 carries in the game. In the 2nd period, 55 total points went on the board as Strong Vincent outscored the Knights by a 34-21 count. The 2nd quarter was the Williams Show (as in Maurice and Gary). Maurice opened the highlight-filled period with a dazzling 84 yards scoring run. He then hit Gary with three TD passes (61, 32, and 19 yards). Gary Williams made the Stat Star list with his 119 receiving yards on 4 catches. LaMont McWilliams tallied the other SV score in the 2nd period on a 24-yard run. Franklin got on the board three times in the period as well---Cody Cummings had Td runs of 3 and 51 yards and University of Pittsburgh recruit Nate Byham made the Stat Star list with an 85-yard KO return for a TD. Byham also hauled in a pair of long TD passes from QB Nick Wested to account for Franklin's 2nd half points. Byham made the Stat Star list with 5 catches for 115 yards and Wested qualified by throwing for 219 yards in the game. Strong Vincent's explosive offense sometimes involves some exciting, but risky plays; and the Colonels, with a starting lineup that features 16 juniors, will have to avoid losing five fumbles in the D10AAA title game as they did in the win over Franklin if they plan to entertain any thoughts of knocking off mighty General McLane in the title game.

D10AAAA Champion Cathedral Prep beat D9 DuBois, 42-35, in a PIAA Sub-Regional thriller. Prep QB John Csir had a marvelous game as he made multiple PFN Stat Star lists by throwing for 258 yards (18 for 27) with 4 TD passes and no interceptions. Csir also scored on a 3-yard run during Prep's crucial 21-0 run in the 3rd period as the Ramblers rallied back from a 21-14 half time deficit. The game was tied at 7 after one period as Csir hit Mike Schupp with a 19-yard scoring toss. Prep PK A.J. DeLuca connected on the first of his 6-for-6 PAT kicks following Schupp's TD. DuBois answered with QB Ryan Liddle's 1-yard TD run. Beaver PK D.J. Smith hit the first of his 5-for-5 PAT kicks following Liddle's score. Csir found Javon Rowan on a 7-yard TD pass in the 2nd quarter to give Prep a 14-7 lead, but DuBois took a 21-14 lead into the intermission as Liddle hit Taylor Kriner with a 33-yard scoring pass and then Mark Malacame broke loose on 63-yard scoring jaunt. Whatever motivating speech that Coach Don Holl gave his Ramblers in the locker room must have been memorable because Prep came out smokin' in the 3rd period. Csir hit Schupp for another TD. This one covered 11 yards and tied the game at 21. Then, Rambler wrestling star and RB Jon Wentz smashed 7 yards for a TD and Csir capped a great 3rd period with a 3-yard TD keeper. The Ramblers' 35-21 lead entering the final period was far from safe as Liddle again scored on a 1-yard sneak to cut the Rambler lead to 35-28. Csir found Rowan for a TD on a 33-yard pass that appeared to again give Prep a false comfort zone. The completion also solidified Rowan as a PFN Stat Stat as he finished with 10 catches for 134 yards and 2 TDs. DuBois cut the gap to 42-35 on Liddle's 3rd short rushing TD of the game and then with just over six minute remaining, the Beavers got potential game-tying or winning

possession at the Prep-30 following a fumble recovery. The Rambler defense had struggled much of the game against the Beavers held DuBois and once Prep got the ball back, Csir engineered a masterful drive to chew up the final minutes of the game and clinch Prep's trip to this week's PIAA playoff game against Brashear.

By the Numbers: Check out these facts, stats, and "what ifs"

- 43 schools play football in D10. 7 of them are still playing. After this weekend, that number will be either 3 or 4.
- Cathedral Prep won the AAAA crown. Based on their enrollment, the Ramblers actually qualify easily to compete in AAA. In fact, three of the nine teams that compete in AAA (Region 5) have larger enrollments than Cathedral Prep.
- Four teams out of nine make the playoffs in AAA. None of the four largest schools, in order (Erie East, Meadville, Oil City, or Titusville) made the playoff field this season.
- General McLane and Strong Vincent will meet for the D10AAA crown. How evenly matched are these two powers? Both report male student qualifying enrollments of 349. Neither of the state-respected AAA powers is much above the limit to compete in AA and the word around Edinboro is that General McLane's projected enrollment in the next 3-4 years will put them well within AA levels.
- Cathedral Prep has won 13 District 10 titles. Next best is Sharon with 9. Sharon is the all-time District 10 leaders in wins (566).
- Greenville has the 2nd most wins of all District 10 schools (506). The Trojans did not win a game this season.
- Fairview has gone 14-0 in Region 2 play the past two seasons. The Tigers were the only team in Regions 1 through 5 to repeat their region championship from last season.
- When Sharpville beat Fairview in the D10A semis, it was a meeting of the two largest schools in Class A. Both are very, very close to the upper limit for Class A competition; so both could possibly be bumped up into Class AA during the next enrollment adjustments.
- Corry and Franklin competed in AAA and finished 4-6 and 5-5, respectively. Both schools are very, very close to qualifying for reclassification into Class AA. The next wave of adjustments that will impact the 2006 and 2007 may see one or both of these schools playing a very different schedule from what they experienced during the past two years.
- AAA vs. AAAA: In the two highest profile inter-region games this fall, AAA swept their AAAA opponents. AAA finalist General McLane won a 28-27 thriller over D10AAAA Champion Cathedral Prep; while Strong Vincent came from behind in the final period to beat AAAA runner-up McDowell, 16-7, before a live television audience in Erie County.
- Of the four classes, the only one in which last year's champ still has a chance to repeat is AAA where Strong Vincent will try for a three-peat this weekend. Cathedral Prep already unseated defending AAAA champ McDowell, 20-19, in

the D10 title game. None of this year's four finalists in A and AA was in the title games last year.

- In AA, Maplewood has now recorded three consecutive winless seasons. Maplewood is the smallest AA school in D10.
- Greenville, Mercer, and Maplewood are the three smallest AA schools in D10. They combined for a 2-27 record this season. Mercer won both of those games—against Greenville and Maplewood.
- In AA, six out of 16 teams made the playoffs this year. But only one of them (Hickory) was among the six largest AA schools based on enrollment. Reynolds ranks 8th and Wilmington ranks 9th in enrollment; but those two will meet for the D10 title.
- 40 football playing schools in D10 have larger enrollments than Kennedy Catholic. Yet, Mike Donato's Golden Eagles claimed the Region 1 title and will play for the D10 crown this weekend.
- Sharpsville and General McLane enter title weekend as the only two District 10 teams to have 10 wins this season. At least one more team will reach that success level this weekend pending the result of the AA title game.
- McDowell is the biggest school in D10. So big in fact that if the AAAA Trojans' qualifying enrollment were split in half, it would create two new AAA programs that would be much bigger than the current largest AAA program (Erie East). Furthermore, if McDowell's enrollment was divided into thirds, the result would be three AA programs with larger enrollments than the current largest AA program (Slippery Rock). Ironically, AAAA McDowell played AA Slippery Rock in Week 9 and recorded a 26-7 win.
- McDowell's qualifying enrollment is listed at 977. McDowell went 7-3 this season and all 10 opponents were from schools with smaller enrollments than the Trojans. The smallest football playing school in D10 is Conneaut Valley with an enrollment of 96. CV went 0-10 this season against 10 schools that had larger enrollments.

D10 Class A Region 1 (South) Standings					
	Region	Overall	Points	Points	Next
Team	Won-Loss	Won-Loss	For	Against	Opponent
Kennedy Catholic	6-0	8-2	253	105	Sharpsville
Sharpsville	5-1	10-1	395	109	Kennedy Catholic
West Middlesex	4-2	7-4	226	177	SEASON OVER
Linesville	3-3	5-3	169	127	SEASON OVER
Lakeview	1-5	4-6	160	227	SEASON OVER
Conneaut Lake	1-5	3-7	114	250	SEASON OVER
Cochranon	1-5	1-8	59	204	SEASON OVER

D10 Class A Region 2 (North) Standings					
	Region	Overall	Points	Points	Next
Team	Won-Loss	Won-Loss	For	Against	Opponent
Fairview	7-0	9-1	352	129	SEASON OVER
Iroquois	6-1	7-3	255	134	SEASON OVER
Cambridge Springs	5-2	6-4	243	213	SEASON OVER
Eisenhower	4-3	4-5	209	130	SEASON OVER
Union City	3-4	4-5	171	180	SEASON OVER
Saegertown	2-5	5-5	276	218	SEASON OVER
Youngsville	1-6	2-7	120	216	SEASON OVER
Conneaut Valley	0-7	0-10	81	505	SEASON OVER

D10 Class AA Region 3 (South) Standings					
	Region	Overall	Points	Points	Next
Team	Won-Loss	Won-Loss	For	Against	Opponent
Wilmington	6-1	9-1	227	95	Reynolds
Reynolds	5-2	9-2	205	117	Wilmington
Hickory	4-3	7-4	280	200	SEASON OVER
Grove City	4-3	6-3	172	132	SEASON OVER
Sharon	4-3	5-5	163	172	SEASON OVER
Slippery Rock	4-3	4-5	135	129	SEASON OVER
Mercer	1-6	2-7	104	177	SEASON OVER
Greenville	0-7	0-10	83	265	SEASON OVER

D10 Class AA Region 4 (North) Standings					
	Region	Overall	Points	Points	Next
Team	Won-Loss	Won-Loss	For	Against	Opponent
Girard	6-1	6-4	166	132	SEASON OVER
North East	5-2	7-3	192	128	SEASON OVER
Seneca	5-2	6-4	218	157	SEASON OVER
Harbor Creek	4-3	6-4	218	153	SEASON OVER
Northwestern	4-3	6-4	160	183	SEASON OVER
Mercyhurst Prep	3-4	6-4	310	153	SEASON OVER
Fort LeBoeuf	1-6	1-9	114	363	SEASON OVER
Maplewood	0-7	0-10	106	370	SEASON OVER

D10 Class AAA Region 5 Standings					
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	Region	Overall	Points	Points	Next
Team	Won-Loss	Won-Loss	For	Against	Opponent
General McLane	8-0	10-0	431	164	Strong Vincent
Strong Vincent	7-1	9-1	347	167	General McLane
Franklin	5-3	5-5	269	230	SEASON OVER
Warren	4-4	4-7	289	394	SEASON OVER
Corry	4-4	4-6	143	160	SEASON OVER
Titusville	3-5	3-6	178	241	SEASON OVER
Oil City	3-5	4-6	269	295	SEASON OVER
Erie East	1-7	1-8	145	367	SEASON OVER
Meadville	1-7	2-7	101	288	SEASON OVER

D10 Class AAAA Region 6 Standings

	Region	Overall	Points	Points	Next
Team	Won-Loss	Won-Loss	For	Against	Opponent
McDowell	2-0	7-3	275	167	SEASON OVER
Cathedral Prep	1-1	8-3	362	176	Brashear
Erie Central	0-2	3-6	118	245	SEASON OVER