

Oracles bow out in Sectional final

By Todd Swank
Contributing sportswriter

In Delphi's wins in the first two rounds of the sectional, its recipe for winning had been to get an early lead and wear the opponent down in the second half. That strategy paid off Friday night, unfortunately not for the Oracles. Wheeler defeated the Oracles 28-7 in the final game of the sectional.

Although the Oracle's defense played a decent game, Wheeler had too many weapons for Delphi to try to stop. Quarterback Mike DeSimone threw for over 1,400 yards, while running backs Harold Branch and Clay Duarte ran for over 1,800 yards collectively. DeSimone passed for almost 100 yards, while Branch (5-11, 212 lbs.) and Duarte (5-7, 150 lbs.) each scored two touchdowns. Branch rushed for 131 yards and Duarte got 121.

Wheeler had the ball to open the game and showed that their 10-1 record was well deserved. They used a no huddle offense and drove 75 yards in 14 plays. Less than four minutes had been played and the Oracles

were behind 7-0. Less than two minutes later the lead was 14-0 after Delphi fumbled and Wheeler had a short field.

After the kickoff the Oracles looked like they were going to get back into the game. They moved the ball into the red zone of Wheeler before the drive stalled. On second and one at the 17 Banes was stopped for no gain. On third down Dustin Salyer lost two yards. Delphi's coaches decided to go for it on fourth down, but the Oracles came up a yard short. The first period ended 14-0.

Wheeler took a 21-0 lead 3:48 before half, driving 52 yards on only two plays. Branch got his second touchdown on a 24-yard run.

The Oracles had several chances to stop Wheeler on third and long or on fourth down plays, but couldn't come with the needed stop.

The Oracle defense played better in the second half, allowing only a 4-yard touchdown run in the fourth quarter. The Wheeler defense continued to play well too.

Delphi couldn't move the

ball past midfield on three third period possessions. Wheeler ate up five minutes of time and took a 28-0 lead early in the fourth to put the game out of reach. With senior Shane Evans replacing Salyer at QB, the Oracles scored on a 25-yard Evans to Kyle Stonebreaker pass with seven minutes left. Although Wheeler was ready, Delphi managed to get possession of the ensuing onside kick at the 50-yard line. The Oracles got a first down inside the 40 before an Evans sack surrounded by three incomplete passes turned the ball over to seal the game.

The Oracles ended their season with a 4-8 record. This team played what had to be one of 2As toughest schedules this year, playing no less than five ranked teams. After suffering through a four game losing streak late in the season they came together and played some of their best ball when it counted most advancing to the sectional final for the first time since 2000.

If next year's team plays as hard as this year's seniors, it should be an exciting season.



Nowhere to run
The Oracles had few answers for the strength of Wheeler's running backs Friday night. Delphi's #12 Kyle Stonebraker takes his shot at the Wheeler runner after his teammates had their chance to stop the touchdown. Wheeler defeated the Oracles 28-7. Bill Stauffer photo

Two Heisman finalists at Delphi

Comet staff report

For the first time in school history, two students at Delphi Community High School were selected as top 20 finalists in Wendy's High School Heisman program. Seniors Erika Hawn, daughter of Julie and David Hawn, and Kyle Bender, son of Kevin and Denise Bender, were chosen from hundreds of applicants across the state.

Created in 1994, the Heisman program has celebrated youth ex-

cellence for 14 years. The program consists of six phases - Applicants, School Winners, State Finalists, State Winners, National Finalists and National Winners. Entries are initially evaluated by ACT Assessment during the Applicant, State Finalist and State Winner phases and then passed on to a distinguished panel of judges.

"I feel honored to have been chosen as a state finalist," Hawn said. "The entire day was filled with events that I will never forget. The bonus of being recognized at halftime in front of thousands of people was remarkable. I can truly say that my first NFL experience was incredible."

"I am very honored to be selected as one of Wendy's High School Heisman State Finalists," Bender agreed. "To have the opportunity to go to the Colts-Patriots game and be recognized on the field made the experience even more memorable."

The students were honored at a banquet in Indianapolis this past Sunday. Bob Lovell host of the popular Sports Talk Indiana radio broadcast was guest speaker. Hawn and Bender were recognized for their great accomplishments and given bronze medals, certificates and tee-shirts. As a special bonus, they, their parents and DCHS Principal Barry Stone were provided tickets to the Indianapolis Colts vs. New England Patriots football game later that day. Also, at half-time of the game, Hawn and Bender were escorted to the field and recognized in front of 55,000 screaming fans.

"Erika and Kyle are much deserving of this honor," Stone said. "They are good students, good athletes and great role models at DCHS. It is an honor for DCHS to have one finalist, but to have two is special. They are a great representation of the type of student-athletes we have here at Delphi."



Put us in, coach!
Delphi senior student-athletes Kyle Bender and Erika Hawn enjoyed free tickets to an Indianapolis Colts football game for being named top 20 finalists in the Wendy's High School Heisman program. Both were recognized on the field at half-time of last Sunday's game for their accomplishments in high school sports and given bronze medals, certificates and t-shirts. They represent the first Wendy's Heisman finalist duo Delphi has produced according to principal Barry Stone. Photo provided

U14 Blaze wins Fusion championship tournament

Comet staff report

Carroll County Soccer U14 Blaze blew away the opposition Sunday afternoon 3-1 to claim the Fusion Fall Festival championship. The tournament was held Nov. 3 and 4 in Indianapolis.

After beating B division Sporting Indiana '94 1-0, the Blaze tied Terre Haute Flyers coming from the AS division 2-2 later on Saturday. With a 0-0 draw against Fusion Navy '94 Sunday morning they qualified for the final, where they faced the same team again. Fusion Navy, one of the home teams coming from the AAN division, was the favorite for the championship, but the Carroll Blaze team was unstoppable Sunday, winning 3-1 to claim the title.

"It already showed during the fall season that this team is able not to just compete against high level opposition,

but also to play quality soccer that is exciting to watch," said Pszota. "On the basis of this, I was hoping to be successful if everything worked out and the team showed its better face. After fighting hard and winning the first game against a rough and highly motivated opponent, we fell asleep a little bit and allowed two quick goals in the first half of the second game. Watching the game, I felt that we could come back as long as our team believed it. They did, and we scored one not long after the start of second half."

"The team started to play at a much higher speed, dominating the rest of the game and scoring one more and getting a tie," continued Pszota. "This was the game where the team really found itself, and that gave momentum to tackle the remaining challenges. The face that our team showed in the final was com-

pletely new to me and it exceeded all my expectations. The pace that we dictated and the way our players fought for each other was something the other team didn't have an answer to."

"This weekend we honored the memory of Sam Kemp," Pszota said. "His son, Braden, scored a goal that gave us our hopes back when we were down."

The Fusion Fall Festival championship capped a highly successful fall season for the U14 Blaze. They earned second place in the AN division with only one loss out of the 10 games.

"Every effort has to be made to keep this team together because it is very solid now," added Pszota. "I am confident that they will achieve future results that Carroll County can be proud of."



Champion team

Carroll County Soccer U14 Blaze won the Fusion Fall Festival held last weekend in Indianapolis. Members of the team include (l-r): Kneeling - Kate Hickner (Flora), Shelbi Fisher (Camden), Braden Kemp (Camden), Elliot Packard (Flora), Justin Baker (Rossville), Austin Goodman (Camden), Bryce Everett (Lafayette), Alex Tello (Delphi). Standing - Ricky Windell (Camden), Codey Sattler (Delphi), Dan Bredreau (Camden), Jeremy Hayes (Flora), Jackson O'Brien (Logansport), Jared Schliglof (Logansport), Blake Seward (Flora), Jose Molina (Logansport), Juan Carlos Velez (Delphi), and coach Gabor Pszota (West Lafayette, originally from Hungary). Photo provided

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Carroll County Youth Soccer League

The Carroll County Youth Soccer League finished their season with a tournament Oct. 20-21 for the U10 and U12 age divisions. The younger age groups participated in their regular season final game. All players and their families celebrated with an end-of-the-season cookout at the soccer fields in Flora. See page 3B for runnerup teams.



Orange Tigers are U10 champions

Pictured are (l-r): Front - Sandra White, Sydney Fisher, Kylee Retzlaff, Meghan Miller, Havannah Kauffman. Back - Colby Ritchey, Truman Plank, John Cooper, Thomas Pitrowski. Back Coaches Jennifer Ritchey and Tina Miller. Photo provided



Red Fireballs are U12 champions

Pictured are (l-r): Front - Colin Stephen, Andrew Plank. Middle - Stephen Murphy, Kylor Redmon, Luke Atkisson, Courtney Pinkard. Back - Brandon McCarty, Coach Mike Poe, Nigel Thieke, Jordan Hendershot, Alex Atkisson, Coach Chase Meade, Haley Hamilton. Photo provided