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Trenton beats Dixie County 20-13



The Bears prepare to enter the field. The banner in front of them on the ground is the one they broke through to make their entrance.

Story, Photos and Video By Jeff M. Hardison
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TRENTON – Hundreds of fans of the Trenton Tigers and the Dixie County Bears watched a classic hard-fought gridiron battle Friday night (Sept. 23).

The game itself was a classic contest between two relatively strong rivals, but the art and drama throughout the stadium was awesome as well. There was even at least one little girl who watched a high school football game in person for the first time.



Stage smoke wafts across the field after the entrance by the Trenton Tigers. There was also smoke from volunteers who cooked on grills, and there was barbecue prepared off-site by Sonny's Barbecue, which brought it to the concession stands for game-time diners to enjoy.

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COACHES COMMENT

Trenton Tigers Head Varsity Football Coach Bill Wiles told the team that they proved to be the winners by never giving up.

Dixie County Bears Head Varsity Football Coach Brent Wilkerson spoke to HardisonInk.com immediately after the game.

“I’m proud of our effort,” Wilkerson said. “We just missed a few too many tackles, and a few opportunities we should have made on offense that we didn’t get ‘r’ done.

“Overall, we played hard and that’s all you can ask your kids to do,” Wilkerson continued. “I am proud of them.”



Tigers' Montrez Jackson (#6) scores as he runs across the goal line.



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THE GAME

The Trenton High School football field seemed in excellent shape with grass that seemed almost manicured, and no pot-holes.

As the visiting Bears went on the field first through a banner that said “Your School; Your Field; Our Game,” they were full of energy. And that went through the end of the last quarter.

As the hosting Tigers entered, it was quite a production with music and stage smoke while they came through a tunnel. They carried an American flag and the team flag.

Jayce Gentry brought a bear on a string and flung it to the ground as he entered.

While Gentry may have had a more aggressive entrance to the field, the Bears were the first to light the scoreboard.

The Dixie County Bears received the first kick and Clifford Jackson (#5) took it to the Tiger 20-yardline thanks to Bears quarterback Kyle Chessser’s (#11) effort to get the football to his receiver.

In that first offense, though, it showed the start of a trend. The Bears were called for penalty after penalty all night long.

It was Kevin Harden (#3) taking a Chessser pass and running across the goal line with 9:36 remaining in the first quarter to start the scoring of the night.

Bears kicker Wyatt Higginbotham (#57) scored a Point After Touchdown kick through the uprights and it was 7-0 Bears to start the game.

Tigers quarterback Michael Smith (#3) was the winning quarterback of the night.

Although the Tigers gained some first downs, they punted to wrap up their first offensive push. The Bears then punted on fourth down.

Tiger Eric Henry (#16) scored a first down to begin the second offensive push by the home team.

Montrez Jackson (#6) seemed to be Tigers quarterback Smith’s favorite receiver of the night, and with 2:32 remaining in the first quarter, Jackson’s touchdown was followed by a PAT to tie the score at 7-7.

The second quarter was relatively uneventful for scoring, but both teams showed equal resolve on offense and defense as they switched roles back and forth.

That equal drive to win kept both teams with a score of 7-7 at the half.

The third quarter started similar to the first in one way.

The Tigers received and with 10:25 remaining in the quarter, it was Tiger Jackson scoring and quarterback Smith kicking a PAT to make the score 14-7, Tigers.

The Bears were next on the board, however, when Clifford Jackson (#5) scored a touchdown with 20 seconds remaining in the third quarter. There was no PAT, and the score was 14-13, Trenton.

In the fourth quarter, both teams kept giving it their all.

On fourth down with inches to go, it was Tigers’ Randy Fuller (#10) scored a touchdown with 2:45 remaining in the game. The PAT was good and that was the final round of scoring with the final score showing the Tigers winning 20-13.

One of the officials who are certified through the Florida High School Athletic Association was injured at about this time. It took a few minutes to restart action after that.

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An injured official is escorted off the field by his colleagues.

THE CHAIN GANG

The men who walked up and down the sidelines for every minute of the game, carefully marking the location of the ball so that even the fans who were farthest from the action would have a clear perspective were Kevin Benson, Johnnie Martin, Malcolm Hickox and Doug Johnson.

Another outstanding and noteworthy feature for the hundreds of people visiting Trenton that night is the public address system.

Unlike some fields in the Tri-County Area of Levy, Dixie and Gilchrist counties, this field had speakers that could be heard from every spot within the four corners of the playing field and stands.

And the announcer for Trenton was very good, too, in helping people know what was going on.

And the many adult and student volunteers were all spot-on with helping everyone enjoy their visit to the school.

In this game, there were people in every possible seat of both sets of bleachers, and there were people sitting or standing at least three deep on three sides of the field. There was even a small group sitting on one end zone in chairs.

The Gilchrist County Sheriff's Office had a visible presence with more than a dozen law enforcement officers easily counted. And the volunteers from the GCSO helped with traffic starting and ending the game.

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Under the guidance of Varsity Cheerleading Coach Christine Smith, the THS Varsity Cheerleaders Team is comprised of Capt. Gabby Liddell, Capt. Julie Ann Perryman, Shelbie Guthrie (a senior), Shelbie Porter (a senior), and Grace Harris, Emily Wilkinson, Morgan Matheny, Brittini Craft, Kylie Robertson, Skyler Oswald, Jakerria King, Samantha Prather, Tierra Riley, Hannah Hickox and Kayla Owens.



THE CHEERLEADERS

With the Dixie County Bears Varsity Cheerleaders having provided a photo opportunity when they were visiting Bronson previously in the season, as seen in this archived story with photos by [CLICKING HERE](#), it was the Trenton Tigers Varsity Cheerleaders chance to pose on Friday night (Sept. 23) at home.

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The Trenton High School Band **THE BANDS**

Jennifer Wingate is the band director and music teacher at Trenton this year as she marks her first sojourn with these young musicians in the Tiger Pride Marching Band of 40 members.

William Malloy is the band director and music teacher at DCHS this year as he continues his band directorship legacy by bringing 44 musicians along their paths through high school this year.



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The Dixie County High School Red Jacket Brigade



Both bands performed at halftime, with the home musicians performing a *House Of The Rising Sun* rendition which flowed into a Simon and Garfunkle mix of *The Sound of Silence*. Both bands were extremely well-mannered and sharply outfitted in their band uniforms.

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Aria Jordan, 2, enjoys her first-ever live high school football game. Her aunt Nora Rouse plays on the Dixie County Red Coat Regiment Band in the percussion section. The young Miss Jordan was escorted to the game in Trenton by her grandma' Robin Rouse.

