

Little movement across Shore as football teams clinch divisions

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This weekend's action saw two Shore Conference teams clinch division titles outright and two others secure at least a share of their division championship.

All of that led to little movement in the Asbury Park Press Top 10.

The only ranked teams to lose games this weekend were then-No. 8 Howell and then-No. 9 Toms River North, but each lost to a team ranked higher in the poll.

The Rebels, who lost to Manalapan, 54-27, remain ahead of the Mariners due to their 48-17 victory in Week 1.

Howell's three other victories, however, have come against teams with a combined record of 5-13. It will need to beat Brick Memorial on Nov. 5 to remain in the poll.

Toms River North finds itself in a similar position as the Rebels. After losing to Brick Memorial, 14-10, the Mariners enter their bye week with a game against a ranked team looming in two weeks. They'll host Manalapan on Nov. 5.

Manalapan and Brick Memorial each clinched division titles with their victories this weekend. For the Braves, it was their first division title since 1999. The Mustangs won their first since 2005 and only their second outright.

Matawan and Lacey, the top two teams in the poll and the Shore's only remaining unbeaten, also secured division titles this weekend.

The Huskies clinched at least a share of the Class A Central title by beating Holmdel, 49-14, and the Lions won Class B South outright with a 42-6 win over Central.

1. MATAWAN 7-0 Last week: No. 1. The Huskies ended up scoring 21 first-quarter points after a slow start and defeated Holmdel, 49-14, to clinch their second consecutive division title. After scoring four TDs last week, Keith Beaty had another big game, running for 81 yards and two TDs and catching two passes for 44 yards and a TD. Jared Allison accounted for 150 yards of offense. He threw a 33-yard TD pass, ran 37 yards for a TD and returned an interception 60 yards for a score. Matawan figures to lock up the No. 1 seed in NJSIAA Central Group II with a win in two weeks. Next game: Nov. 6 vs. New Brunswick (0-7).

2. LACEY 7-0 Last week: No. 2. Craig Cicardo completed 8-of-9 passes for 135 yards and three TDs as the Lions beat Central, 42-6, to clinch their first division title since 2006. He threw TD passes of 38 and 5 yards to Cameron Blackwell in the second quarter and tossed a 25-yarder to Zach Torrell in the third. Lineman Dave Vieira blocked a punt and returned it 46 yards for a score, and Jake Dabal ran for 58 yards and two TDs on five carries. Up next is an intriguing nondivisional game against another of the Shore's traditional powers. Next game: Saturday at No. 8 Neptune (4-2).

3. MANALAPAN 5-1 Last week: No. 3. Josh Firkser blazed into the Manalapan record books by rushing for 317 yards and scoring seven TDs as the Braves routed Howell, 54-27, and clinched a share of the Class A North championship. Firkser, who had six TDs rushing and one receiving, broke the school single-game rushing of 304 set by Reggie Grant against Jackson Memorial in 1990. His seven TDs are the most in a game by a Shore Conference player since Middletown South's Knowshon Moreno had seven against Neptune in 2004. Manalapan, which can win the Class A North championship outright with a win at Marlboro on Thanksgiving

Day play a game that will have major ramifications in the NJSIAA Central Group IV playoff picture this week. Next game: Friday at No. 5 Brick Memorial (6-1).

4. MIDDLETOWN SOUTH 5-1 Last week: No. 4. The Eagles, who defeated No. 5 Brick Memorial, 13-3, in their last game on Oct. 15 and have won four straight since a 35-28 loss to Manalapan on Sept. 19, did not play. They are trying to earn the No. 1 seed in the NJSIAA Central Group III playoffs, but face a tough hurdle in two weeks when they play at Lacey. Next game: Friday vs. Brick (2-5).

5. BRICK MEMORIAL 6-1 Last week: No. 5. The Mustangs came from behind to defeat No. 10 Toms River North, 14-10, as quarterback Mike DiGuilmi led a fourth-quarter TD drive that spanned 71 yards and 4:19. DiGuilmi capped the 10-play drive with a 5-yard TD run, and Jordan Loiodice kicked the extra point. Brick Memorial's defense gave up 264 yards, including 163 on the ground, but came through when needed. Defensive lineman Will Wowkanyn had two important sacks, and the Mustangs held in the final seconds as the Mariners drove to the Brick Memorial 10, but failed to score. Brick Memorial's next game will be a big game in the NJSIAA Central Group IV playoff picture and is its last game that will count toward playoff qualification. Next game: Friday vs. No. 3 Manalapan (5-1).

6. FREEHOLD 4-2 Last week: No. 6. The Colonials, who have won four straight since an 0-2 start and defeated Long Branch, 33-7, in their last game on Oct. 15, did not play. They will clinch at least a tie for the overall Class B North championship and the Class B North public division title with a win this week against a team that was its Thanksgiving rival for the past 10 seasons and one that gave it plenty of trouble during that time. Next game: Saturday vs. Colts Neck (1-5).

7. RED BANK CATHOLIC 5-1 Last week: No. 7. Senior running back Andrew Casten ran for 146 yards and three TDs and quarterback Ryan Spahr went 9-for-9 for 118 yards with an 18-yard TD pass to Greg Golden as the Caseys overwhelmed Monmouth Regional, 48-6. Red Bank Catholic can clinch the Class B North non-public divisional championship and at least a tie for the overall Class B North championship with a win this week. Next game: Friday vs. Ocean (1-6).

8. NEPTUNE 4-2 Last week: No. 10. Quarterback Jaheem Woods threw a 10-yard TD pass to Koren McDaniel and a 46-yarder to Charles Davis and Davis ran for 131 yards and a TD as the Scarlet Fliers defeated Ocean, 33-21. Travis Kennedy also returned an interception 35 yards for a TD. Neptune can make a big statement and shake up the top of the rankings with a win this week. Next game: Saturday vs. No. 2 Lacey (7-0).

9. HOWELL 4-3 Last week: No. 8. Wide receiver Michael Clark returned a kickoff for a TD and hauled in three TD passes from quarterback Ryan Davies, but the Rebels were overwhelmed by Manalapan running back Josh Firkser and suffered a 54-27 defeat. The Rebels, who have lost two straight and three of their last four, will be playing for their playoff lives in two weeks. Next game: Nov. 5 vs. No. 5 Brick Memorial (6-1).

10. TOMS RIVER NORTH 5-2 Last week: No. 9. Quarterback Demetri Davis completed a 38-yard pass to Anthony Carrington on third-and-16 and led the Mariners to the Brick Memorial 10, but his fourth-down pass fell incomplete as the Mariners lost to Brick Memorial, 14-10. Davis rushed 27 times for 148 yards and a TD and has 932 yards and 14 TDs rushing on the season. Chris Gulla's 30-yard field gave Toms River North a 10-7 lead with 8:11 remaining, but Mustangs quarterback Mike DiGuilmi responded with a clutch scoring drive to deny the Mariners at least a piece of the Class A South title. After their bye, the Mariners defense will be tested by Manalapan running back Josh Firkser. Next game: Nov. 5 vs. No. 3 Manalapan (5-1).