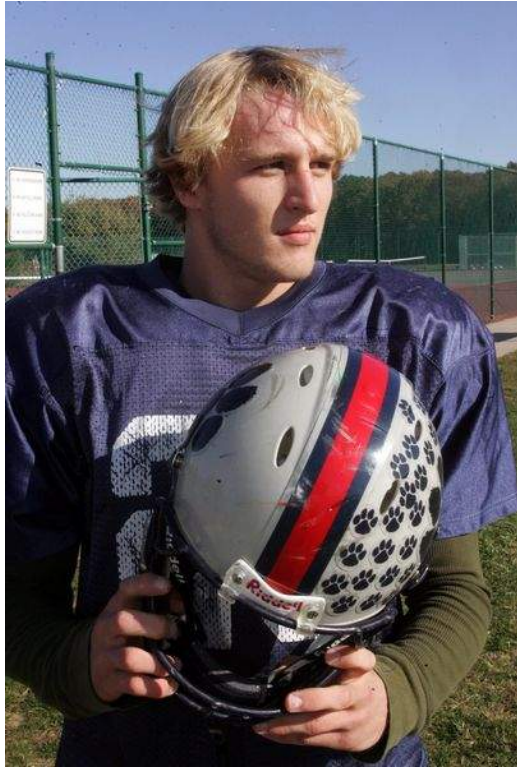


Jarrold Molzon does it all for Lacey High School football team

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Lacey High School's Jarrod Molzon had an unusual game Saturday against Neptune. (STAFF PHOTO: TIM McCARTHY)

Three weeks ago, Jarrod Molzon returned his own blocked field goal attempt for one of the strangest touchdowns of the season in Lacey's win over Toms River East

On Saturday, the senior running back/defensive back gave one of the season's top all-around performances using more conventional means.

After missing the previous game with a hamstring injury, Molzon ran for 123 yards, caught three passes for 120 yards, scored three touchdowns, kicked a 39-yard field goal and intercepted a pass on defense in a 38-0 victory at Neptune.

It was the first time this season a Shore Conference player surpassed 100 yards both rushing and receiving in the same game.

"It was one of the games I probably won't forget," Molzon said before practice Tuesday, adding that his hamstring is doing well as the Lions, No. 2 in the Asbury Park Press Top 10, prepare to host No. 3 Middletown South this weekend.

The Middletown South game will be the second in a row for Lacey against a ranked team with a proud tradition. The Lions weren't tested in the first, easily beating then-No. 8 Neptune, which was without

Rutgers recruit Charles Davis, to lock up the top seed in the NJSIAA South Group III playoffs, which begin the weekend of Nov. 12.

Lacey established control early against the Scarlet Fliers, racing out to a 17-0 lead before the end of the first quarter.

Molzon led the way, taking a screen pass from Craig Cicardo and going 55 yards for a touchdown on Lacey's second offensive play from scrimmage. He also scored on a 54-yard pass from Cicardo and kicked his third field goal of the season in the first quarter.

Rather than look to establish the run against a stingy Neptune rush defense, Lions coach Lou Vircillo said Lacey wanted to attack the Scarlet Fliers immediately.

"There's no sense getting into a fist fight when you can see if you can sting them right away," said Vircillo, who's in his 30th season at Lacey.

Lacey, which is 8-0 and has clinched the Class B South title, and No. 1 Matawan, which is 7-0 and looking to defend its Central Group II championship, are the Shore Conference's only remaining unbeaten teams.

The debate over which deserves to be ranked No. 1 has already started and will only intensify if Lacey beats Middletown South on Saturday, but Vircillo and Molzon insist they're not concerned with rankings.

"Wherever they put us as our ranking, it's a ranking, it's not really important to us," said Molzon, who has 791 yards of total offense and 11 total touchdowns this season. "We know what our team's made of."

Still, while it will not count toward their playoff qualification, don't expect the Lions to approach the Middletown South game any differently.

"Our concerns in terms of conference, in terms of states and all that kind of stuff is zero," Vircillo said. "This is a good, old-fashioned football game."

"We're strapping it on, they're strapping it on, and we're coming after you and they're coming after us, and we're just going to have a battle."

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