

# Lacey dominates

Lions rout Crusaders to finish off perfect season

By DAVID BIGGY • STAFF WRITER • December 4, 2010



Lacey head coach Lou Vircillo (center) holds the trophy and is surrounded by the team after the Lions beat Delsea to win the NJSIAA South Jersey Group III title. (STAFF PHOTO: DOUG HOOD)



Jarrold Molzon, Jake Dabal and Craig Cicardo celebrate after Lacey beat Delsea. (STAFF PHOTO: DOUG HOOD)

**LACEY** — The Lacey football had dominated its opponents all season long.

The Lions did it again during Saturday's NJSIAA South Jersey Group III championship against Delsea Regional, as the Lions went on to win a fourth sectional title with a bruising, 56-7 rout over the Crusaders.

"We felt confident we could win today," said senior running back Jake Dabal, who amassed 163 yards on just 10 carries and scored three touchdowns. "But we didn't expect to win that big. We really wanted to go out there and show what Lacey football was all about."

With the brief exception being a 45-yard touchdown run by Delsea senior running back Tyler Coulbourn with 1:33 to go in the first quarter, the Lions were every bit of dominant during the last three quarters, scoring 49 unanswered points to finish the season 12-0 for the second time in the past five seasons.

The last time Lacey won the section championship was 2006, when the Lions downed Seneca, 12-0.

"This whole season has been about doing things for each other," said senior quarterback Craig Cicardo, who ran for 82 yards on 15 carries and scored twice. "We worked hard for each other. We suffered for each other. We went out there and won for each other. The goal from the beginning was to get the seniors a championship."

From the opening possession, the Lions set the tone. On the first play from scrimmage, Dabal took a handoff from Cicardo and streaked to the end zone for an 84-yard TD run. Senior Jarrod Molzon kicked the extra point and put Lacey up, 7-0, just 16 seconds into the game.

"The counter was there all day," Cicardo said. "I don't know why they never picked up on it. We scored at least three touchdowns with the counter. That first one was big."

For the rest of the first quarter, it appeared Delsea was going to stay with the Lions, especially after Coulbourn helped tie the score when he ran to the outside and zipped down the left sideline for the Crusaders' only touchdown of the day.

But the Lions erased any doubts of a possible upset when they moved the ball 77 yards in just over two minutes to take the lead for good. On first-and-10 from the Delsea 43, Molzon set up the winning score when he got to the outside and ran down the left sideline for a 39-yard gain, then followed it with a 4-yard burst into the end zone. Senior Matt Ruhnke kicked the PAT to put the Lions up, 14-7 with 11:30 to go in the first half.

From there, it was all Lacey, which during the last three quarters forced eight turnovers.

The first of those turnovers ended the Crusaders' next possession after just two plays, when senior defensive back Cameron Blackwell recovered a fumble on Delsea's 44-yard line with 10:35 to go in the half. The Lions capitalized seven plays later, when Dabal again ran the counter and dashed into the end zone from 11 yards away. Molzon made it 21-7 with the PAT and 7:05 on the clock.

Delsea gave the ball back to Lacey five plays later, when senior linebacker Brian Mykoliw picked off sophomore quarterback Josh Atowunde and returned the ball to the Delsea 30. Five plays later, with 2:17 to go in the half, Cicardo carried the ball across the goal line from a yard away and Molzon kicked the fourth PAT to make it 28-7 at the half.

"Going into the second half, we made sure we played as if the score was 0-0," Dabal said. "They had the players who could turn the game around in four plays. We wanted to go for the throat and not let them back in it."

The Crusaders didn't even cross the 50 against Lacey's defense until their final possession, when the game was way out of reach.

Another interception by Mykoliw with 11:09 to go in the third didn't lead to a Lacey score, but a hit by senior linebacker Matt Uveges on Atowunde that forced a fumble and gave the Lions the ball on Delsea's 10-yard line did, as Dabal busted into the end zone on the next play. Molzon made it 35-7 with the PAT and 7:48 left in the third.

On Lacey's next possession, the Lions needed just five plays to find the end zone again, this time on an 8-yard dash by Molzon. Ruhnke made it 42-7 with 2:42 left in the quarter.

Two more Delsea fumbles led to the Lions' last two scores in the fourth quarter.

Uveges recovered a fumble by Atowunde 40 seconds into the fourth, and Cicardo scored his second touchdown of the day when he ran the ball in from 13 yards out six plays later. Ruhnke followed with the extra point to make it 49-7.

On Delsea's next play from scrimmage, Lacey senior defensive back Zack Torrell picked up a Tyrone Saud fumble at the 8-yard line and all but walked into the end zone for the Lions' final TD of the season with 6:20 left. Ruhnke booted the final PAT of the season to make it a 56-7 thrashing.

"This season couldn't have ended in a better way," Dabal said. "This team is one big family, and it's a great way to go out, being undefeated and winning a championship with your friends."