

Lacey dominates Pinelands

Lions' defense records second straight shutout



Lacey quarterback Craig Cicardo (13) raises his arms to celebrate after scoring a touchdown in the first quarter against Pinelands. (STAFF PHOTO: DOUG HOOD)

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Pinelands scored 98 points in winning its opening two games, and it entered Saturday's game at Lacey with a chance to make a statement.

Matt McLain rushed for 659 yards in those victories, but hadn't faced a defense nearly as tough as Lacey's. He had a chance to legitimize those numbers Saturday.

Neither happened, as Lacey delivered another dominant performance.

The Lions, No. 2 in the *Asbury Park Press* Top 10, scored on their first six possessions and the defense posted its second straight shutout in a 42-0 victory against the Wildcats in a Shore Conference Class B South game.

"We knew we were going to come out strong, and we knew we weren't going to let them think that they can do that to us," Lacey quarterback Craig Cicardo said.

It only took four plays and 1:45 for Lacey to send a message.

The Lions received the opening kickoff and on their second play, Jarrod Molzon took a handoff 43 yards to the Pinelands 24-yard line. Zach Torrell gained 23 yards on a sweep on the next play, and Cicardo scored, untouched, from a yard out.

Pinelands drove to the Lacey 38, but Michael Keller's pass was tipped at the line of scrimmage by Dave Vieira and intercepted by Zach Torrell, who returned the ball 68 yards to the Wildcats 12. Three plays later, Molzon scored on a 2-yard run.

Lacey rushed for 256 yards in the first half and finished with 293. Molzon led the way with 91 yards on four carries, Jake Dabal rushed for 69 yards and a touchdown on five carries and Torrell carried three times for 68 yards and a score.

Cicardo rushed for 45 yards and three touchdowns. His 2-yard scoring run with 34.6 seconds left in the first half gave the Lions a 35-0 lead.

"Everyone's working together. Everyone's going their job, and we have such great athletes that we really make a great unit as one," Dabal said. "It helps spread the ball out, and it makes our offense a lot more dynamic."

McClain rushed for 80 yards in the first half, but finished the game with 79 on 21 carries. He gained 23 yards on a fake punt that gave Pinelands a first down late in the second quarter, but the Wildcats didn't gain another first down until their final drive of the game, when the outcome had long been decided.

"We're a great shut-down defense so when we saw that he had over 600 yards in two games, we knew we had to make a statement by shutting him down," said Vieira, who also had a tackle for a loss and a sack.

"Lacey's at the top right now, and if you can't run the ball against them, then you can't win championships, and our ultimate goal is to win a championship," Pinelands coach Sean DeRosa said. "We took a step backward, but we're going to regroup and refocus and get ourselves better."

Matt Uveges and Pat Jensen also made interceptions for Lacey, which hosts Manchester next week. Pinelands has a bye next week before it tries to get back on track against a Brick team that's been outscored 105-14 through three games.