

**Kenny Howell**

*Managing Editor*

Mt. Juliet suffered their first regular season loss in two seasons, as Beech came away with a 27-20 victory over the Bears Friday.

Highly recruited Bucs running back Jalen Hurd finished the game with 280 yards on 33 carries and two scores. Mt. Juliet's Caleb Hopkins also had a big night with 186 yards on 15 carries and a score.

Beech struck first after picking off a Mt. Juliet pass the first play of the game. Mt. Juliet's defense held, and the Bucs kicked a 32-yard field goal.

A few possessions later, Beech added another field goal, this one from 36 yards out to lead 6-0.

Mt. Juliet finally got going, and marched methodically down the field. After a big Contrez McCathern return, the Bears went 52 yards on 10 plays. Austin Chaplin scored from 12 yards out to give Mt. Juliet the lead, 7-6.

Beech answered. A 44-yard run by Hurd, in which he was run down by Kyle Grace, set the Bucs

## **Bucs hand Bears first loss**

Tuesday, September 18, 2012

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up in Mt. Juliet territory. A few plays later, Stephen Von Mann plunged in from a yard out to give Beech a 12-7 lead. That score held until halftime.

After forcing a Beech punt to start the second half, Hopkins got the big play Mt. Juliet needed as he took it out at right, juked a Buc defender, cut back across the field and outran everyone to the end zone. The extra point was off target and Mt. Juliet led 13-12.

Beech went with a big set, going eight linemen, and started to try to wear down the Bear defense. The Bucs went 80 yards on 18 plays, including a 3rd-and-20 conversion. Hurd got the 11-yard score and Beech added the two-point conversion to make it 20-13.

Mt. Juliet kept fighting, and put together a big drive of their own. The Bears went 91 yards in 11 plays, the biggest being a 50-yard run by Hopkins, which was set back a bit by a personal foul after the play. Chaplin got his second score of the game on an 8-yard run to tie the game up 20-20.

Mt. Juliet Head Coach Roger Perry took a gamble as he went for the onside kick on the kickoff with 6:40 remaining. Beech was able to recover, and got the ball at the 38. Seven plays later, Hurd got his second score to give Beech the 27-20 lead.

The Bears were able to get the ball to midfield, but a fourth down conversion came up short as Hopkins slipped down trying to make a cut.

Mt. Juliet has a bye week, and will return to action Sept. 28 at Gallatin. Kickoff is 7 p.m.