Kenny Howell

Managing Editor

Caleb Hopkins had five touchdowns on just 11 carries in Mt. Juliet's 52-22 first round win over Independence Friday.

The win moves the Bears into the second round to face Dickson County, who knocked off McGavock Friday, 42-14.

Mt. Juliet went to work early, as Chase Mang picked off an Independence interception on the third play of the game. Set up at the 28-yard line, it took the Bears five plays to get in the end zone, including a fourth down conversion on a Contrez McCathern run. Hopkins scored on the next play from 17 yards out and Mt. Juliet went up 7-0.

A few possessions later, Mt. Juliet got the ball at the 49. On the third play of the drive, Hopkins took off for 40 yards down to the two. He went the rest of the way on the next run, and the Bears led 14-0.

After an Independence three-and-out, Mt. Juliet got the ball back. Nolan Chowbay found Austin Chaplin on the first play of the drive for 39 yards. However, the drive stalled and Ryan Jenkins connected on a 47-yard field goal to put the Bears up 17-0.

Jalen Graham got the Bears started on their next possession with a run for 34 yards.

A few plays later, Hopkins scored again, this time from 16 to extend the lead to 24-0.

Independence finally got on the board. The elusive Vic Wharton had a big kick return to the Bears 35. Three plays later, he scampered in untouched for 29 yards to cut the lead to 24-7.

Mt. Juliet would answer with a eight play, 62-yard drive, capped off by Hopkins' 27-yard touchdown run.

It looked like Mt. Juliet would take a 31-7 lead into the half, but Wharton answered with a pass to Josh Murray for a 69-yard score. Mt. Juliet led 31-14 at the break.

The Bears got the ball to start the second half, and only needed five plays to score on a Hopkins 40-yard touchdown run.

Independence would put together a long drive, but came away with no points. It took two plays for the Bears to score again.

Chowbay found Graham for a 37-yard score, making the game 45-14.

Mt. Juliet got a score late from Cole Sears, and Independence would find the end zone one more time for the 52-22 final score.

Hopkins finished the night with 183 yards on 11 carries and five scores.

The Bears will travel to Dickson County (10-1) Friday. Kickoff will be 7 p.m.