

COACH HILTON'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Coached high school football for **36** years

Overall record of **345 – 101**

3 state championships in 1991, 1997, 2008

1 state runner-up finish in 2004

20 districts

11 regional titles

7 regional runners-up

8 regular undefeated seasons

Numerous prestigious bowl games and Southeast Kentucky Conference (SEKC) championships

Coach Hilton has been named the State Coach of the Year by the Kentucky High School Athletic Directors Association, the Kentucky High School Coaches Association, and the Louisville Courier Journal. He was named second for Sportsman of the Year in Kentucky by the Lexington Herald Leader in 1997. In 2008, he was chosen by the Kentucky National Guard to represent the state of Kentucky in attendance at the Army All-Star Game in San Antonio, TX. In 2010, Coach was selected by the KHSCA as the state nominee for the Football Coach of the Year for the National High School Athletic Coaches Association Coach of the Year Program in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

He has served on the Football Advisory Committee for the Kentucky High School Athletic Association and as a school representative to the Kentucky High School Athletic Association General Assembly from 1985-1997.

He is currently the Head Football Coach at the University of Pikeville.

Hilton gets his chance, leads

The Springfield Sun, Springfield, Ky.—November 9, 1978—PAGE 15

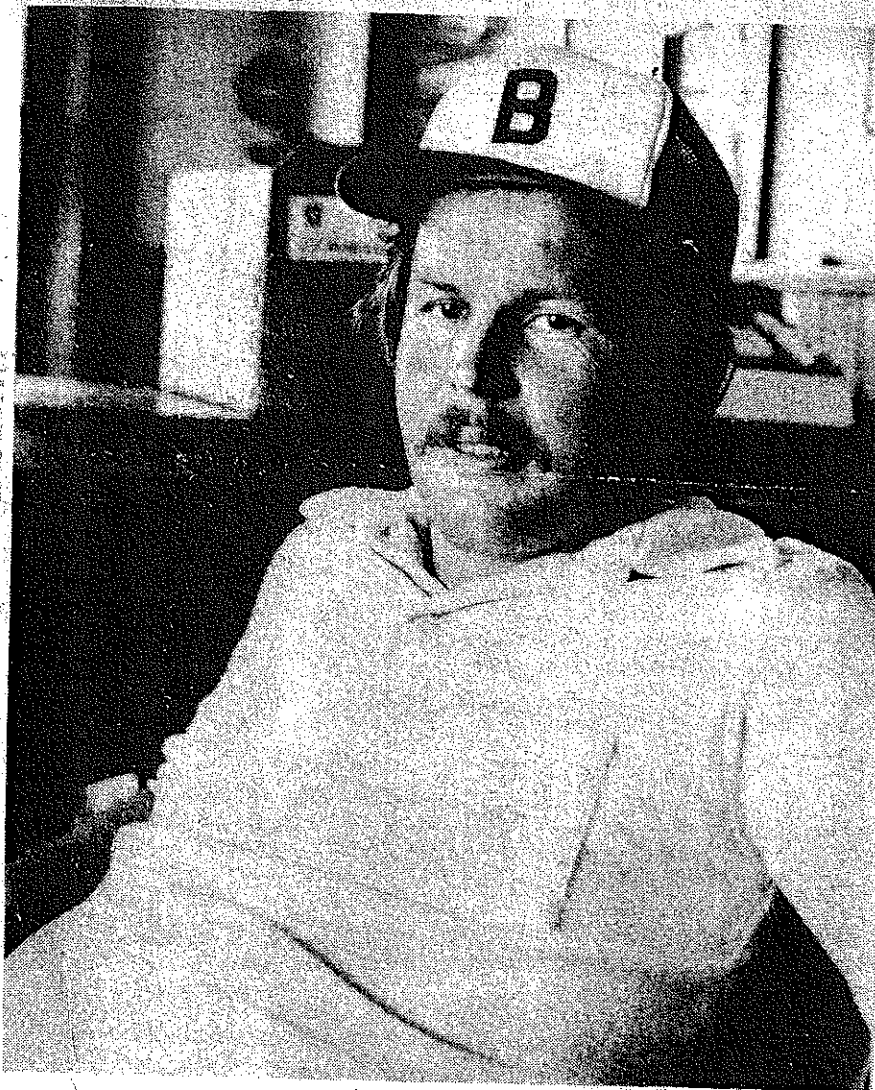
Breathitt to playoffs

By PAUL GOTTBATH

Dudley Hilton was about to begin an assistant coach's job at Washington County High School in the fall of

1973 when he got a phone call from an old friend. The call was a job offer, for a head coaching position at a school that was just beginning a football program in the mountains.

Dissatisfied with the way things were going at home, Hilton decided to take the offer. It's a decision that has changed his life, not to mention the football fortunes of Breathitt County



DUDLEY HILTON

"I've proved to people here that I was ready."

High School

This Friday night at Russell, Hilton sends his Bobcats into the biggest game in their five year football history. Winners of 11 straight games this season, Breathitt County begins its quest for a state Class AAA championship. The ratings say they will get it.

The state playoffs would seem like a heady atmosphere for a man who paid his coaching dues trying to build a grade school program at St. Rose. A familiar face around Springfield during his playing career at Springfield High and WCHS and his college days at St. Catharine and Eastern Kentucky, Hilton taught a generation of county youngsters the basics of baseball and football. After developing his coaching skills on the playgrounds, he only needed a chance to show that he had learned his lessons well.

"When I went down to Breathitt County for my interview, I really didn't have any coaching experience to show on my application other than grade schools and one year as freshman coach at the high school," he says. "They looked at me kinda funny, but they decided to give me a chance anyway."

Hilton found out immediately just how big a job he had assumed. He started his first season in the mountains with only 13 players and no assistant coaches. The Bobcats suffered more broken arms (five) than they won games (two).

"The kids didn't know anything about football, and they were trying to do all this arm tackling," he explains.

His second season Hilton picked up an assistant and about 11 more

players, and the Bobcats went 5-6. Last year, with only four seniors on the team, Hilton won seven of 11 games. The school's first taste of winning was infectious, and football never swept the community.

This season has been more of the same, with the Bobcats getting even week after week for previous drubbings. First they beat perennial area power Prestonsburg. Then they routed Hazard 36-6. ("When I first came here, people told me it would take 10 years just to compete with them," Hilton recalls with a laugh. "Beating them like that, I knew we were on our way.")

The last game of the season, two weeks ago when the Bobcats beat Cawood 30-6, was probably the sweetest victory of them all, says Hilton.

"They were the team that beat us 66-0 our first year," he explains. "We played them there, and when I looked up and saw more of our fans there than theirs, I KNEW we had arrived."

The community's response to his team's success has been overwhelming to Hilton at times. The converted baseball field the Bobcats played on that first season has been replaced by a football field and stadium. Seven games into the season

this year a trucking company executive came to Hilton and told him he wanted to buy new shoes for the entire squad. Three weeks ago an appreciation dinner packed the high school cafeteria, and brought promises of new jackets and a booster club for the team.

"And we've already got five or six Greyhounds (buses) lined up for the Russell game," Hilton said. "I've never seen so many people want to get involved in something. Anything we need, all we got to do is ask—they'll get it for us."

Local folk are not the only ones interested in Breathitt County. College scouts from Kentucky, Tennessee, Vanderbilt, and Georgetown have been to Bobcat games to watch the prospects on Hilton's squad. Eastern and Morehead have "practically lived with us," Hilton says.

Hilton doesn't see his team's big season guaranteeing future success, but he thinks the program can "live off of it" long enough to allow him to build the type of feeder system he wants.

"Breathitt County has been basketball crazy for a long time, and I'm probably still the only man in the county with a deep down knowledge of football," he says. "We still don't

have a grade school program yet, and you can't expect kids who've been playing only three years to compete with players who've been playing for seven or eight years."

That's a future worry, though. For now Hilton is enjoying this season, and the vindication of a sort that it has brought him.

"I worked hard as a player and never won a district title," he says. "I worked hard in school, and I put in my years here working with the kids. When I got out of school, I felt like I shoulda had a job here, but there were people who didn't think I was ready. That's the best thing about this season—I've proved to people here that I was ready."

Hilton says he once dreamed of coaching at Washington County, but his success in the mountains has changed his outlook. He has no hard feelings anymore about his experiences here -- "I'm glad they finally hired a local boy here," he says. "I think Jimmy Reed is the right man for the job; he'll keep the program going."

"There's always one more game down the road," he adds. "Beyond that I'd like to try college. I'd like to see how high I can go. I'd like to coach the Baltimore Colts—they need help right now."

Bell County rings up first state title 35-13

By Jonathan Miller

Herald-Leader staff writer

LOUISVILLE — Bell County's tricks almost became treats for Meade County yesterday in the Class 3A championship game.

But when the Bobcats ditched their bag o' tricks, they pounded the Waves 35-13 in front of 6,125 in Cardinal Stadium in their first state football finals appearance.

"This is a great win for Bell County," said Bell Coach Dudley Hilton. "I didn't think I could ever do it at a county school."

Bell finished the season 10-5. The Bobcats forfeited four victories because they played an ineligible athlete.

Meade County, also making its first appearance in the championship game, finished 12-3.

"Bell County didn't look that good on film," said Meade running back Chucky Valentine, who rushed for 80 yards on 16 carries. "They really surprised us with how big and strong they were."

Bell Co. 35, Meade Co. 13

Bell Co. 7 14 0 14—35
Meade Co. 7 0 6 0—13

BC—Robbins 2 run (Smith kick); MC—Abell 2 run (Gable kick); BC—Jones run (pass failed); BC—Robbins 1 run (Robbins run); MC—Valentine 1 run (kick failed); BC—Robbins 1 run (Jones run); BC—Smith 1 run (kick failed); A—5, 125.

First downs	BC	MC
Rushes-Yards	16	13
Passing	50-249	42-229
Return Yards	97	0
Comp-Att-Int	2	0
Punts	3-6-0	11-0-1
Fumbles-Lost	1-3-0	2-3-9
Penalties-Yards	1-1	3-22
Time of Possession	0-0	23:00

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS
RUSHING—Bell Co., Robbins 28-122, Jones 9-71, Meade Co., Valentine 16-80, Fackler 11-64, Abell 6-55.
PASSING—Bell Co., Jones 3-4-0 97, Meade Co., Fackler 0-1-1 0.
RECEIVING—Bell Co., Clark 2-56, Langford 1-39.

Bell surprised Meade with more than just its brawn.

One of Bell's three first-half scoring drives was kept alive by a fake punt.

Leading 21-7 early in the third quarter, Bell's attempt at a reverse on a punt return backfired.

When Reggie Robbins caught the punt at his own 40-yard line, he

ran to teammate Derek Jones and attempted a handoff.

Meade County defenders got between Robbins and Jones, causing a fumble. Meade's Robert Rowan recovered the ball on Bell's 35-yard line.

"I thought we could return a punt on them. I was wrong," Hilton said.

On the next two plays, Meade's quarterback Robby Fackler swept around Bell's defense, gaining 18 and 16 yards down to the 1.

Valentine jumped over a pile into the end zone for the 1-yard touchdown. Kevin Gable missed the extra-point kick. The score was 21-13 with 8:40 left in the third quarter.

The Waves pulled out a trick of their own — an onside kick on the ensuing kickoff. The ball popped up over Bell's front row and into the arms of Meade's Marty Beasley at Bell's 41.

Meade drove to the Bell 24, but couldn't convert on fourth-and-8.

Meade's Fackler fumbled on the Waves' next drive and Derek Jones recovered for Bell on Meade's 38.

Bell County then drove to a 1-yard scoring run by Robbins, his third touchdown of the day.

"When our offensive line blocks like they did today, it goes like this every game," Robbins said, referring to the lopsided score.

Robbins, a 5-foot-5 junior, led all rushers with 122 yards on 26 carries.

Bell stopped Meade's last threat when Jones intercepted Fackler's only pass attempt of the game at his own 27.

"We had just switched to three-deep coverage because we figured they'd try to pass it eventually," Jones said.

With 6:51 left, Bell performed a clinic on ball control.

Bell ran 12 plays, took off 4½ minutes and scored. Joe Smith ran 2 yards for the touchdown, making it 35-13 with 2:17 left.

Bell County captures AAA crown

By JOHN HARRELL
Staff Writer

Bell County High School football coach Dudley Hilton was glowing after his team's 35-13 triumph over Meade County in yesterday's Class AAA state final at Cardinal Stadium. Then he noticed his players weren't doing the same.

"You're all too dry," said Hilton, his week-old son in his arms. "Celebrate a little bit."

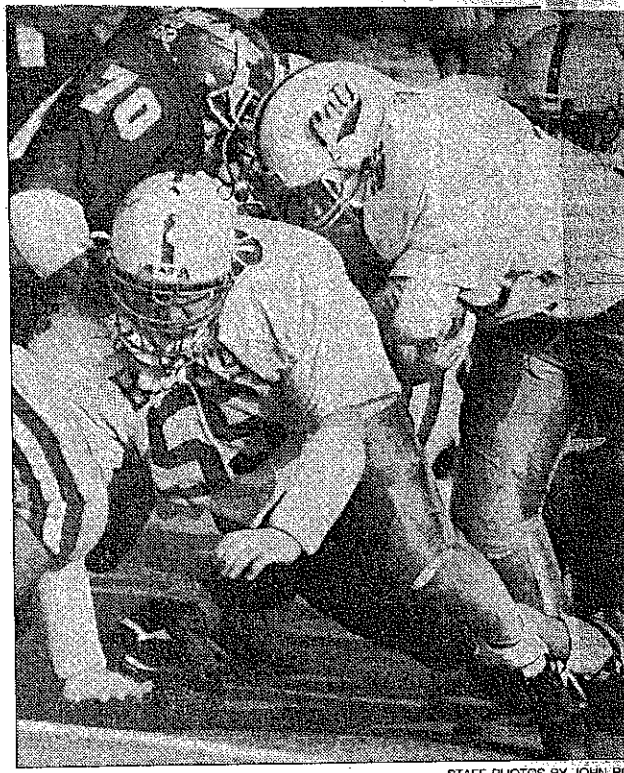
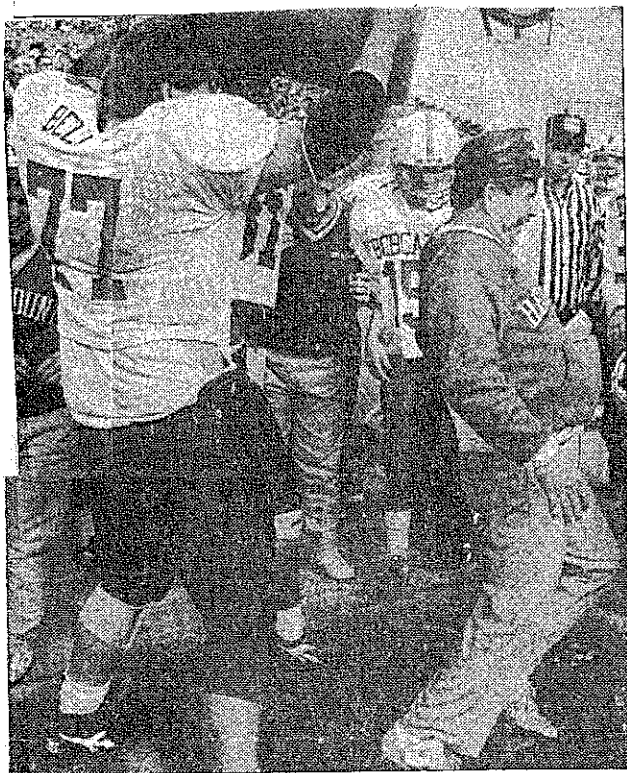
All celebrations were merited yesterday after the Bobcats (10-5) won their first state title in their first trip to the final.

"We wanted to be the first to be state champions in Bell County," junior halfback Reggie Robbins said. "That motivated us."

The Bobcats made several big plays, converting a pair of

See BELL COUNTY
Page 10, col. 1, this section

STATE HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL FINALS



STAFF PHOTOS BY JOHN ROBERTS

Bell County coach Dudley Hilton got an icy but welcome bath from Lonnie Gray after yesterday's 35-13 victory over Meade County in the Class AAA final at Cardinal Stadium. At right, Joe Smith followed Derrick Thomas' block into the end zone for the Bobcats' final TD.

Bell County captures its first AAA crown

Continued from Page C 1

fourth-and-goals into touchdowns in the second quarter and stopping Meade County in the second half when the Waves were trying to establish some momentum.

"It's a great win for Bell County," Hilton said. "I never thought we could do it."

Meade County (12-3) also was playing in its first state title game. Coach Larry French said the difference was Bell County's offense.

"They just lined up and ran over the top of us," French said. "We played well enough offensively, but we didn't play very well defensively. They completed a couple of pass plays early and got into scoring position."

Bell County threw just six passes, relying instead on the running of Robbins and junior quarterback Derek Jones. But two of Jones' three completions went for big yardage and set up first-half touchdowns. The Bobcats scored on all three first-half possessions and led 21-7 at halftime.

Jones found Brian Langford open

Class AAA summary

BELL COUNTY	7	14	0	14-35
MEADE COUNTY	7	0	6	0-13
Bell County — Robbins 2 run (Smith kick); Meade County — Abell 2 run (Gable kick); Bell County — Jones run (pass failed); Bell County — Robbins 1 run (Robbins run); Meade County — Valentine 1 run (kick failed); Bell County — Robbins 1 run (Jones run); Bell County — Smith 1 run (kick failed), A—6,125.				

Team statistics

	Bell	Meade
First downs	16	13
Rushes-yards	50-249	42-229
Passing	97	0
Return Yards	2	0
Passes	3-6-0	11-0-1
Punts	1-30	2-38
Fumbles-Lost	1-1	2-1
Penalties-Yards	0-0	3-22
Time of Possession	25:00	23:00

Individual statistics

RUSHING — Bell County, Robbins 26-122, Jones 9-71, Meade County, Valentine 16-80, Fackler 11-64, Abell 6-55.
PASSING — Bell County, Jones 3-6-0 97, Meade County, Fackler 0-1-0.
RECEIVING — Bell County, Clark 2-58, Langford 1-29.

for a 40-yard strike on the fourth play of the game. Robbins scored from 3 yards out on the next play to make it 7-0 just 1:41 into the game.

With Bell County leading 13-7 late in the half, Jones connected with Darrin Clark on a 54-yard pass play, putting the Bobcats into scoring po-

sition after they had taken over on their 15-yard line with 2:47 left.

Seven plays later Bell County faced fourth-and-goal from the 1 for the second time in the quarter. Jones had run a keeper for the TD the first time, but this time it was Robbins' turn. He plunged in with nine seconds left, then ran for a two-point conversion to give Bell County its 14-point halftime lead.

Hilton said the emphasis on the run reflected a change in philosophy.

"We did some things today we hadn't done all year," he said. "We went to the power game today. During the year we were more of a finesse type of team, but you don't want to beat yourself in the state championship game."

Jones said the Bobcats' size and strength allowed them to dominate Meade County.

"We felt our front line could overpower them and our backs could block out their linebackers and open up some holes," he said.

Bell County amassed 249 yards rushing to 229 for Meade County, which was averaging 346 yards on

the ground going into the game. Chucky Valentine, a 5-foot-4 senior who had run for 1,835 yards for Meade County this season, was hit to 80 yards on 16 carries.

"We worked with putting in third linebacker," Bell County senior defensive back John Knuch said. "We wanted two to stay in case they passed and have everyone else concentrate on the run. Concentrated great."

Meade County tried to rally in the second half. After Bell County fumbled away a punt, the Waves drove 34 yards in three plays to the lead to 21-13 on a Valentine's yard plunge with 8:40 left in third quarter.

Meade County then recovered outside kick at the Bell County but the Waves were stopped downs at the 20. Their next possessions ended in turnover which Bell County converted.

TD runs by Robbins and Joe Smith. "We got the outside kick and stopped us," French said. "Then fumbled the ball, and they did and scored on us. That was key."

Bourbon coach works title magic

THE COURIER-JOURNAL
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6, 1997

By BOB DEMING
The Courier-Journal

Dudley Hilton is known to building high school football programs in to state contenders, but this time he's outdoing himself.

Three months after taking over at Bourbon County, the veteran coach has guided a program that hadn't had a winning season since 1937 to the Class AA state championship yesterday.

Quarterback Caren Conley scored three touchdowns and Tim Pevsian rushed for two in the final weather as the upstart Colonnels downed Owensboro Catholic 26-28 before 7,355 fans at Cardinal Stadium.

Hilton surprised Hilton said no question about that. Now we have a lot of people in central Kentucky hope that didn't think they could do something like this.

The Colonnels, who won 3-2 last season and lost 14 seniors from the team, dropped from Class AA to A before the season.

We were just hoping to win this season and ended up state champions, including back from 1974 to 1997. We've been



Tim Pevsian helped give coach Dudley Hilton a victory shower as Bourbon County wrapped up the Class AA title yesterday.

think we would make it this far after another year stuck in the last year we didn't.

Hilton, who guided Bell County State County's Coach led them to the AA title in 1993, took over our program that we wanted to win the Colonnels late after Pevsian and I came. One we started to Coach Pevsian's assistance. We've all left Bell County. We've all left Bell County.

thinking back to decision to take the Bourbon County job. It was crazy because Bell County was a heck of a football program.

Kids are kids. If you work them. We started out this year for fun. After we got too far it was too late to turn back. We had to start working.

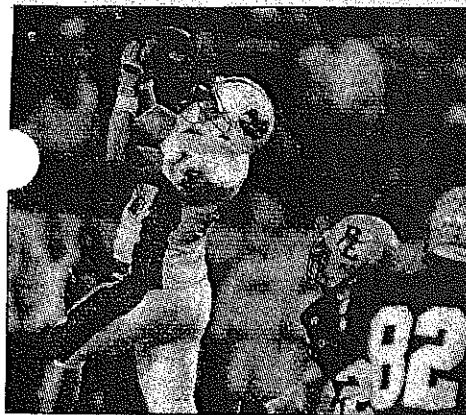
The game relation looked like it was going to come to a streeting half late in the game when Owensboro Catholic had two chances to tie the score or take the lead in a battle of first-time state finalists.

Bourbon County wiggled its way out of both situations with the final escape sealing the title.

Wigglesworth returned a blocked field goal attempt 86 yards for a touchdown, swinging the momentum back to the Colonnels and giving them a 33-22 lead with 3:43 left.

It came right to me. I was glad. I was said. All I saw was end zone all the way. I never ran a blocked field goal back before.

After Owensboro Catholic re-



JONATHAN PALMER

Bell County's John Dudley Hilton intercepted a pass in the fourth quarter Saturday in Louisville. Hilton was named the game's MVP.

CLASS 4A CHAMPIONSHIP:
BELL COUNTY 15,
BULLITT EAST 13

Bell Co. hangs on for title, perfection

Chargers' conversion pass falls incomplete

By Mike Fields

mfields@herald-leader.com

LOUISVILLE — Putting the finishing touches on a perfect season wasn't easy, but Bell County dodged a late bullet and held on for a 15-13 victory over Bullitt East in the Class 4A football finals Saturday afternoon.

"We're just glad to get out of here. Somebody's watching over us," a relieved Bell County Coach Dudley Hilton said after getting hugs from his wife and daughters.

Bell County looked like it had its second state title wrapped up when it led 15-7, and Bullitt East had the ball on its 26 with only 93 seconds left.

Bell County fans in the crowd of 6,103 at Papa John's Cardinal Stadium were ready to party. But their celebration was delayed by Bullitt East's fantastic finish.

BELL CO. | Fourth-and-goal TD pass gives Bobcats lead

From Page C1

The Chargers stayed alive when Zach McCarthy caught a deflected pass at the Bell County 1-yard line with 48 seconds left.

"It wasn't a shocker; Zach does things like that all the time," Bullitt East Coach Doug Preston said.

Bell County's defense stymied three straight plays before McCarthy bulled into the end zone to make it 15-13 with 10 seconds left.

But Bullitt East couldn't finish the comeback. Matt Bowles' two-point conversion pass fell incomplete, and Bell County survived to cap the first undefeated season in school history.

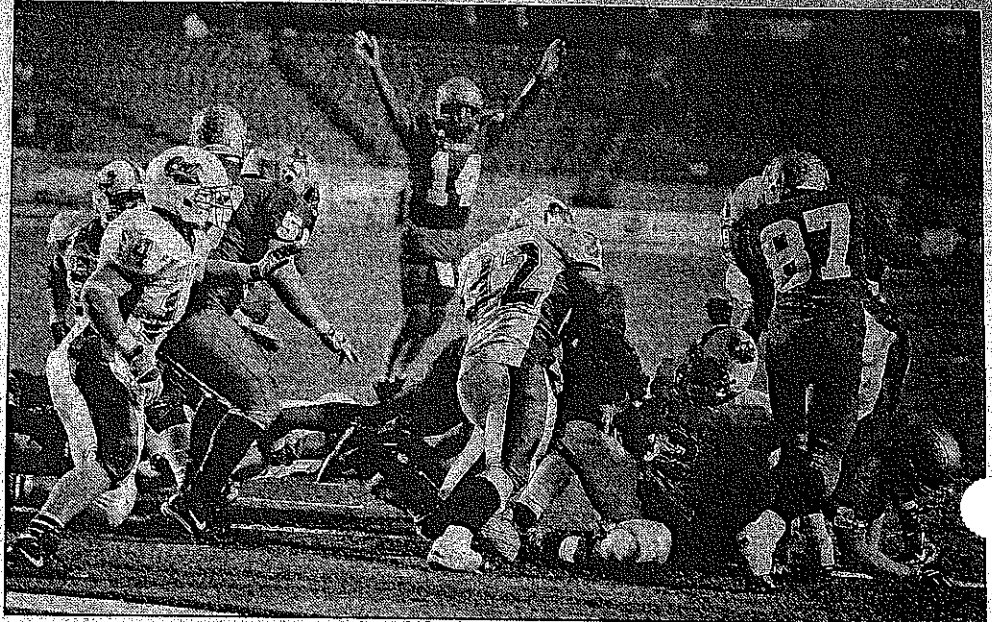
This was the third state title for Hilton, who also guided Bell County to a championship in 1991, and Bourbon County to the top in 1997.

"This was the hardest," Hilton said. "Those darned old ratings kill you by making you the favorite."

"I've always been here before as the underdog. This year we were supposed to win, and that's the hardest because everybody's already wanting ring sizes and everything."

This title had to be the sweetest for Hilton, too, because his son, sophomore John Dudley Hilton, was named the game's MVP after catching a TD pass and making an interception in the closing minutes.

Bell County's defense was pretty valuable, too. Led by Hilton, Keith Lowe, Shawnta Zachery and Cody Marcum, it allowed Bullitt East only



JONATHAN PALMER

With just 10 seconds left, Bullitt East's Zach McCarthy scored on a 1-yard run to make it 15-13. The Chargers failed to complete a two-point conversion, and Bell County won the state title.

72 yards between its first and last possessions.

"Our defense played great in the second half," Coach Hilton said after his team rallied from a 7-0 halftime deficit.

Bell County tied it early in the second half on Spencer Greer's 4-yard run.

The Bobcats' defense got the lead on the last play of the third quarter when Lowe tackled Bullitt East tight end Garrett Foss in the end zone to make it 9-7.

"Coach told me all week they had trick plays, and that was one of them, and I was looking for it," Lowe said.

Bell County was clinging to its two-point lead when it drove to the Chargers' 9 with four minutes left in the game.

On fourth-and-goal, Hilton

decided to forego a field goal and try for a TD.

Afterward he said it wasn't a gamble because Bullitt East would've been backed up against the goal line.

It didn't matter. Bell County got the TD when Zachery tossed a TD pass to John Dudley Hilton.

John Dudley wasn't surprised by his dad's gutsy call.

"I knew he'd put trust in me," he said. "We had that play drawn up since Monday, and it worked great."

Watching his son accept the MVP trophy, Hilton said, "My wife and two daughters taught him well. It couldn't happen to a better boy."

The Bobcats' offense got just enough done. Dominic Carton, Spencer Greer and Justin Goodin combined for

181 yards rushing. Zachery also threw for 64 yards.

McCarthy led Bullitt East, rushing for 79 yards and two scores, and catching two passes for 56 yards.

"They made big plays when they had to, and we made big plays when we had to," Hilton said. "Somehow or another, we held on."

Bell Co.	0	0	9	6-15
Bullitt East	0	7	0	6-13

BE—Zach McCarthy 1 run (Josh Smith kick); BC—Spencer Greer 4 run (Monte Merrick kick); BC—Safety, tackle in end zone; BC—J.D. Hilton 9 pass from Shawnta Zachery (pass failed); BE—McCarthy 1 run (pass failed).

Records: Bell Co. 15-0, Bullitt East 9-6.

	BC	BE
First downs	14	13
Rushes-Yards	45-189	42-1
Passing	64	
Comp-Att-Int	7-14-2	6-18-2
Return yards	47	62
Punts-Avg	1-50.0	4-28.2
Fumbles-Lost	3-0	0-0
Penalties-Yards	3-19	2-20
Time of possession	23:33	24:27



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CLASS 4-A STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

Hiltons ring up perfect season for Bell County

Chargers' 2-point pass fails in final seconds

BY JODY DEMLING • JDEMLING@COURIER-JOURNAL.COM • DECEMBER 14, 2008

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John Dudley Hilton couldn't be part of the first two times his father, veteran coach Dudley Hilton, won a state football championship.



By

Kicker Monte Me while being surrc East 15-13 yeste


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The first one came in 1991 at Bell County when John Dudley was only two weeks old. In 1998 he was sick as dad led Bourbon County to the title.

The Hiltons claimed one together last night.

John Dudley Hilton caught a fourth-quarter touchdown

pass, intercepted a pass and led Bell County's defense with 10 tackles in a 15-13 victory over Bullitt East before 6,103 fans in the Class 4-A title game at Papa John's Cardinal Stadium.

"I was just praying to God that I wouldn't be sick this time," John Dudley said. "There's nothing better than to come down here with your dad and win one with him."

The Bobcats did that in dramatic style.

Hilton caught a TD pass on fourth-and-goal from the 9-yard line with 3:40 left in the game.

He then picked off a pass that looked as if it sealed the game. But Bullitt East got the ball back and made it to the 1-yard line on Zack McCarthy's 33-yard, fourth-down catch that deflected off two other players. Four plays later, McCarthy scored from the 1 with 10 seconds left.

Bullitt East went for the tie, but Matthew Bowles' two-point conversation pass was just beyond the outstretched hands of McCarthy in the end zone.

"Oh boy, somebody is watching over us," the elder Hilton said. "We're just glad to get out of here with this one. Some way we just held on."

Bell County (15-0) was stout on defense.

The Bobcats allowed 125 rushing yards in the first half but just 6 after that. They also got a safety when Keith Lowe read a screen pass and tackled wide receiver Garrett Foss in the end zone to make it 9-7 on the last play of the third quarter.

"We didn't play defense very good in the first half; give them credit," Dudley Hilton said. "But we made big plays when we had

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to."

It's the first undefeated season in 34 years for Hilton. He moved into second place on the state's win list with 320, just 18 behind Newport Central Catholic's Bob Schneider.

"This was the hardest one," he said. "Those darn 'ol ratings and things kill you. I am used to being the underdog, and here this year we were supposed to (win it)."

McCarthy led Bullitt East with 79 yards rushing and two touchdowns. Bowles was 6 of 17 passing for 85 yards, and Curtis Logsdon had 41 yards rushing.

The Chargers (9-6) made it to the title game despite losing three of their first four games. First-year coach Doug Preston switched the offense in the middle of the season to the wishbone, and the Chargers nearly won a state title after the move.

"That's the kind of kids we have at Bullitt East. They fight for 48 minutes," Preston said. "We are extremely proud of these kids. I can't say enough; the entire state of Kentucky should take their hats off to these kids."

Bell County missed a field-goal try on its opening possession. The Chargers took the ball and went 80 yards on 18 plays to go up 7-0.

Greer scored on a 4-yard run early in the third quarter to tie it, then Bell's defense took over.

Monte Merrick's punt late in the third quarter backed the Chargers against their own goal.

Hilton and Billy Lawson had consecutive tackles for a loss to put the ball on the 5-yard line. Bowles then threw a screen pass to Foss, who was tackled two yards in the end zone to make it 9-7.

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The Bobcats scored on Hilton's TD catch on fourth down with 3:40 left, and the game appeared to be out of reach when he picked off Bowles' pass 35 seconds later.

But the Chargers held on fourth down and got another opportunity.


Bowles connected on a 23-yard pass to McCarthy and a 17-yarder to Nathan Brooks. After three incomplete passes, Bowles' long pass hit off two players, and McCarthy caught it at the 1.

"Zack did things like that for us all the time," Preston said. "That's why we had to get him the ball."

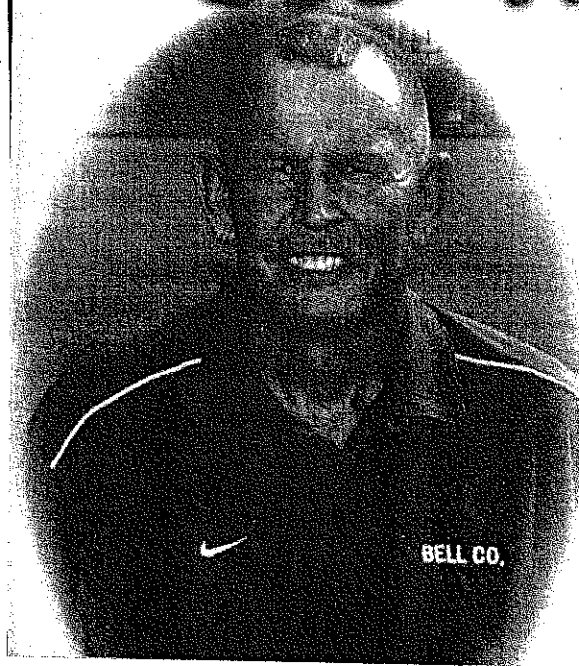
McCarthy scored on fourth-and-one to make it 15-13, but the pass on the two-point conversion to send it to overtime was just out of his reach.

"I should have caught it," McCarthy said. "We should still be playing."

Jody Demling can be reached at (502) 582-7176.

 Hide story chat

Congratulations Bell County Head Coach Dudley Hilton 300 VICTORIES!!



PHOTOS BY
GARY FERGUSON,
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"It's an honor to coach with Coach Hilton. This will be my eleventh year with him. I don't think a lot of people understand the milestone he's reached, winning 300 games, but I can honestly say he cares more about the kids than he does about winning or winning the 300 games. I don't think there's anybody, and I'm not just talking about in the State of Kentucky, that coaches high school football that can get more out of the kids than Coach Hilton can." - Tom Greer

TOM GREER
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL,
BELL COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL



by
**GARY
FERGUSON**
Sun-Courier
PUBLISHER

Congratulations are in order for Bell County Head Football Coach Dudley Hilton and his family. Coach Hilton reached a milestone in his coaching career with the Bobcat's win last Friday night, becoming the first head coach in the state of Kentucky in a public school system to reach 300 wins.

Coach Hilton has been coaching for 33 years and obviously is dedicated to his profession. Also to have coached 33 years and still do it with the passion and zest for the game is proof his love for the game is still the same as it was in year one.

I spoke with Coach Hilton and asked him what it means not only to get the 300th win, but to get 210 of those wins at Bell County High School, right in the heart of Eastern Kentucky where there's not a lot of factories and industry which in turn gets different fam-

ilies moving into the area from time to time. You don't have a lot of players to choose from, but mostly just those who grow up in the community.

Coach Hilton said, "When I started 33 years ago I never dreamed I'd do anything like this, especially in the mountains. I'm glad it happened in the mountains and at Sheldon Clark. It couldn't have been a better mountain scenery than it was over there the other night.

Having all my family there meant a lot to me.

When I started out 33 years ago, I didn't think about being the winnest coach or winning

300 games, I was just trying to keep my wins more than my losses. I guess everything just kind of worked out for me.

The Lord has blessed me with good health. In those 33 years I've never missed a game. I've always been there, so I have to give Him credit."

In Coach Hilton's 33 years of coaching his records speak for themselves.

- Coach Hilton started the first ever program at Breathitt County 33 years ago. He started out as a head coach. He's never been an assistant coach as far as football goes.

- In his first season at Breathitt County the football field was only 60 yards long, so obviously they played most of their games away, but they only had a 60 yard field to practice on.

- In his first year at Breathitt County they were 2-9, in 1976, the second year they were 5-6. Those are the only two losing seasons in his 33 year career as a head coach.

- In his third season, 1977 at Breathitt County they went 7-4

- The fourth season, 1978 they

were 11-1 and district champions.

- In 1979 they were 7-4 and in 1980 they went 10-1; 1981, 6-5; 1982 9-1 - district champions again

- 1983 Coach Hilton came to Bell County. The year before he came the Bobcats were 0-11. Pinneville beat them 20-0. They lost to Lone Jack 13-0 and Middleboro beat them 56-6. In Coach Hilton's first year at Bell County he took the 0-11 team and turned it around and went 6-5

- In 1984 the Bobcats were 10-1 and finished second in the SEKC

- In 1985 the Bobcats finished 9-2

- In 1986, 7-3

- In 1987, 10-3, District Champions, SEKC Champions and Regional Runner up

- In 1988, District Champions, Recreational Bowl Champions

- In 1989, 11-1, District Champions, SEKC Champions and The Pike Bowl Winners

- 1990, 13 wins and 1 loss, District Champions, Regional Champions, Appalachian Bowl and SEKC Champions

- ★ 1991, 10-5, won the Thoroughbred Bowl, STATE CHAMPIONS

- 1992, 13-1, Recreational Bowl Champion, District and Regional Champions and SEKC Champions

- 1993 13-1, District and Regional Champions, Thoroughbred Bowl Champions and SEKC Champions

- 1994 - 11-4 District Champion, Regional Runner Up and SEKC Champion

- 1995 - 10-2, District Champions, SEKC Champions

- 1996 - 12-2, District Champions, Regional Champions, Recreational Bowl Champions

- ★ 1997 - First Year at Bourbon County 12-3, Regional Champi-

on, STATE CHAMPION

- 1998 - Bourbon County, 8-4

- 1999 - Bourbon County, 6-5

- 2000 - Bourbon County, 7-4

- 2001 - Came back to Bell County, 10-4, Regional Runner Up, City County Bowl Champions

- 2002 - 10-3, Regional Runner Up

- 2003 - 8-2, District Champions

- 2004 - 12-2, District Champions, Regional Champions, SEKC Champions

- 2005 - 10-3, SEKC Champions and District Champions

- 2006 - 9-3, SEKC Champions

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PHOTO BY TERRY BROUGHTON, SUN-COURIER

Bell County High School Head Football Coach Dudley Hilton was recognized for the recent milestone he reached in his coaching career when he achieved 300 career victories. Hilton is pictured with Bell County High School Principal Jeff Saylor. Saylor presented Hilton this plaque on behalf of the school's faculty and staff just before Friday night's first round playoff game against McCreary Central on Log Mountain.

In recognition for your
leadership in the unparalleled success
of the

BCVHS football team,

the Bell County Board of Education
officially proclaims the football field
be known as

"Dudley Hilton Field"

From this date forward
September 10, 2010