

Nov. 5 Football

Hamilton's hopes for playoff berth are buried at Rancocas Valley

By Ken Weingartner

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Nov. 5: Hamilton West's football team hoped to keep alive its chance for a berth in the NJSIAA Central Jersey Group III playoffs, but the Hornets were unable to come away with a win at Rancocas Valley.

The Hornets committed five turnovers, missed a field goal and were limited to 70 rushing yards on 30 carries in a 25-0 loss. Hamilton, which trailed by just seven points entering the fourth quarter, has lost three of its last four games. Two of their turnovers came in the fourth period as the Hornets tried to play catch-up.

Rancocas Valley won its sixth straight.

"It was just one of those days," Hamilton coach Tom Hoglen said. "Our defense played great all day and kept us in the ballgame. We just didn't capitalize when we had opportunities and they did. That's why they've won six games in a row. They're jelling and getting better and we're struggling right now.

"They just played tough, physical defense all day. They played in our receivers' faces and we couldn't get open, and we couldn't run the ball. They were stronger than us up front. Our young guys learned today that we need to get stronger going into next year if we want to get back to the playoffs."

Hoglen said the Hornets (5-3) would likely face either Hopewell Valley (5-4) or Brick Township (5-4) in a state consolation game. Hamilton finishes the season with the traditional Thanksgiving Day clash with Steinert.

"We've got to turn it around and get ready to go next weekend," Hoglen said. "Our goal right now is to get better this week and get ready for Thanksgiving."