The Bandera Prophet

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Fresh off bye week, Bandera preps for big home showdown against Devine

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After a well-timed bye week, the Bandera varsity football team is ready to face its toughest district test yet as the Bulldogs take on Devine, at 7 p.m. Friday night, at Bulldog Stadium.

Bandera, now 5-2 overall and 1-0 in district play, is riding a three-game winning streak and looking to build on its recent momentum in what promises to be a competitive matchup.

The Bulldogs are coming off a 31-14 win over Pearsall in their district opener, where their defense shined, holding the Mavericks to just 127 yards of total offense while forcing two turnovers. Senior captain Gavin Spruell recorded 8 tackles, 3 tackles for loss and a sack, while running back Breydan Gherman powered the ground game with 147 rushing yards and a touchdown.

“We sure needed the bye week!” Bandera Head Coach Joel Fontenot-Amedee said. “It was great for our players and coaches to pull back last week in order to get ready for the final push to make a run at running back our district championship.”

Devine enters the game with a 6-2 overall record and a 1-1 mark in district play, following a dominant 49-7 victory over Pearsall last week. The Warhorses district loss came in the opener against Carrizo Springs, as the Wildcats pulled off a 34-16 upset win.

“Devine is a physical football team with a great tradition and program,” Fontenot-Amedee said. “We focused on preparing for them last week,

but also improving on what we need to get better at every single day. The focus as always ends up being on us."

Last season, Bandera pulled off a thrilling 31-21 comeback win at home over Devine, scoring 14 unanswered points in the fourth quarter to seal the victory. That win propelled the Bulldogs toward their first district title since 2009, and they will look to take the next step in repeating that success on Friday night.

Fontenot-Amedee emphasized how far the Bulldogs have come after a challenging mid-season stretch.

"Earlier in the season, we lost back-to-back games for the first time since 2021," Fontenot-Amedee said. "That is an amazing feat for our program, but it was also a very hard part of our season. Our entire football team accepted the challenge given to them after the Cole game, and we have reaped the benefits of their hard work and execution. We aren't the same football team we were a month ago."

Through seven games, senior quarterback Dylan Peace has thrown for 1,519 yards and 15 touchdowns this season and is averaging 217 passing yards per game. His top target, Jeffry Thomas, has hauled in 34 receptions for 695 yards and 8 touchdowns. Sam Snavely has added 11 catches for 262 yards and two touchdowns, Benton Cloudt has 14 catches for 260 yards and 2 touchdowns, and Ibraham MacNeil has 15 catches for 213 yards.

On the ground, sophomore Gherman has been a workhorse, rushing for 781 yards and 11 touchdowns on 158 carries.

Defensively, Dane Barnett leads the Bulldogs with 59 total tackles, followed by Kenneth Seth with 55 tackles and Jonah Klein with 47. West Cloudt had 44 tackles and six tackles for loss, and Spruell has 44 tackles, 11 tackles for loss and 3 sacks. Josh Goff and Jackson Satterfield have also been disruptive, combining for 13 tackles for loss and 3 sacks.

"Our fans can expect a 4 quarter battle Friday night," Fontenot-Amedee said. "They can expect to see some DAWGS with their 4's up looking for their support heading into the 4th quarter. They can expect to see some district champs defending their crown on their home turf. We need the community's support!"