

Huskys open playoffs Saturday

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NORTH PORT — The North Port Huskys are raring to go as they open the Manatee YMCA Youth Football Conference championship playoffs Saturday at the Lakewood Ranch YMCA field.

The undefeated 14-year-old-and-under Huskys will play at 1:30 p.m. against either the DeSoto Bulldogs or the Sarasota Bulls in one semifinal. A playoff will be determined to see which of those teams the Huskys will play. The North Port 12-and-under, 10-and-under and 8-and-under teams also will open the playoffs Saturday. The Huskys don't have weight limits.

Last Saturday, the 14-and-under Huskys

team finished the regular season with a 48-0 trouncing of the Crusaders in Sarasota. North Port (8-0) ended the season by allowing just six points and scoring 335 points.

Mike Haynes, Chris Butler, Joel Wernick, Cody Nolan and D'allen Kurzke scored touchdowns for the winners. Quarterback Tyler Kirby threw a touchdown pass to Zack Sessa for the other score. Sessa also kicked six two-point conversions. Defensively, the Huskys held the Crusaders to minus six yards rushing and 18 yards passing for just 12 yards total offense.

"They (the Crusaders) were about the same as the other teams we've played," 14-and-under head coach Dana Haynes said. "We're really getting good."

North Port's 14-and-under team is both big and fast. Linemen Layton Hall (6-foot-2, 278 pounds) and David Samms (6-foot-1, 280 pounds) key the offensive line. Courtney Stewart and John Fortson lead the defense, and both are excellent at rushing the quarterback.

In other Huskys games last weekend, the North Port 12-and-under team won 18-13, the 10-and-under team won 24-6 to finish the regular season at 8-0, and the 8-and-under team lost 14-6. The 10-and-under team gained five shutouts this season.

The conference finals will be Nov. 15. Following the playoffs, the top teams will advance to the regionals in Orlando.