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## HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL WEEK 9

# Vandy, Lutch square off for 8-4A supremacy

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HOUMA — Before the start of the 2009 prep football season, first-year Vandebilt Catholic coach Laury Dupont said the Terriers came up with a list of team goals. One of them was to win the District 8-4A title.

At 7 p.m. Friday, the Terriers get their chance to do just that when they face Lutch at Buddy Marcello Stadium.

Both teams enter with 3-0 records in district play, and the winner will clinch at least a share of the district title and a Class 4A playoff berth.

"It's a big game," Dupont said. "This is what we've worked for all year long. After all our hard work and effort, it's all about playing for a district championship. We'll have that opportunity Friday."

Although Vandebilt (4-4 overall) has won its last three district games by a combined score of 116-39, Dupont said the Terriers will face their toughest challenge this season in Lutch.

Entering Week 9, the Bulldogs (8-0 overall) are ranked No. 11 in the Rivals.com national poll, No. 1 in the Louisiana Sports Writers Association Class 4A poll and No. 1 in the pelicanpreps.com poll, which takes into account teams from all classes.

Lutch, which is riding a 16-game winning streak dating back to last year's Class 3A state championship season, has averaged 46.5 points per game and has beaten its opponents by 30 points per game.

Dupont said Lutch has a roster loaded with talent. Bulldogs senior quarterback Gavin Webster, who has passed for 27 touchdowns, four interceptions and 1,939 yards this year, has garnered looks from major colleges across the country. He is joined by sophomore running back Daniel Taylor (849 yards, 12 touchdowns) and highly-

recruited junior receiver Jarvis Landry (899 receiving yards, 52 catches and 12 scores).

"They are definitely the most talented team we've faced all year," Dupont said. "They are quick and very well-coached. On paper, it's hard for us to match up with all those skill athletes and the speed they have."

But Dupont said the Terriers, ranked No. 22 in this week's unofficial Class 4A pelicanpreps.com power ratings, have prepared hard all week and are poised to pull off an upset.

"I told our kids we have an opportunity and a chance to win," Dupont said. "We're probably the underdogs, but we believe that we have a shot. That's all that counts."

Dupont said Vandebilt's offense, led by junior quarterback T.J. Cantrelle (227 yards and five touchdowns rushing, 382 yards and six scores passing) and junior running back Hunter Pere (368 rushing yards and five touchdowns), will be its best defense. He said they must win the time of possession and avoid turnovers to have a shot.

"You can't give Lutcher six or seven possessions each half because they've got too good of an offense," Dupont said. "You have to keep the ball away from them. Our offense needs to control the football in order for us to have an opportunity to win."

Dupont said key defenders for Vandebilt will be sophomore linebacker Seth Ward, junior linebacker Nick LeBlanc, senior defensive end Michael Ortego and senior defensive back Jordan Ezell.

Lutcher coach Tim Detillier, who has led the Bulldogs to three state championships since 1991, said he is not surprised that the district championship will be settled between Vandebilt and Lutcher.

"I'm not shocked because Vandebilt always had a good program," Detillier said. "Coach Dupont has put together a good staff. They raised a lot of eyebrows when they beat (defending 4A champion) Belle Chasse."

As two former longtime district rivals, Vandebilt and Lutcher have established a competitive rivalry.

Detillier said the teams have played 16 times, with Lutcher leading the all-time series 11-5. But Vandebilt has won four of the five games between the teams in Houma, including the last meeting (a 10-7 win in 2000).

"Even when it's not for a district championship, it just seems like Lutcher and Vandebilt have always played competitive and entertaining football games," Detillier said.

Detillier and Dupont also have a longtime coaching rivalry. The two, both members of the prestigious 200-win club, used to face each other when Dupont was coaching at West St. John. Detillier said he knows Dupont will have the Terriers ready.

"It's a district championship game, so it should have a playoff atmosphere," Detillier said. "Hopefully the weather holds up because it should be exciting."

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