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Offensive woes continue for Port football team as Germantown plays role of spoiler in homecoming loss

Facing a 6-0 deficit early in the second quarter, the Port Washington football team appeared headed for a tying touchdown against Germantown last Friday.

Bolstered by an enthusiastic homecoming crowd, the Pirates mounted an impressive drive that carried them to the Germantown 16-yard line.

Seconds later, though, the 50-yard march ended when a fourth-down pass fell incomplete — giving the Warhawks possession and ending Port's best offensive series of the night.

Before halftime, Germantown tacked on three touchdowns and took control on the way to a 39-0 victory in North Shore Conference play.

"We knew this game was going to be a real challenge," Port coach John Bunyan said.

"Germantown has one of the best teams in the area and is strong on both offense and defense. We just weren't able to move the ball consistently against them."

The Pirates, who were shut out for the third time in their last four games, also had trouble defensively.

With sophomore quarterback Dwayne Lawhorn Jr. at the helm, Germantown piled up 362 yards in total offense. Lawhorn completed five of seven passes for 120 yards and a pair of touchdowns, both to wideout Jason Townsend in the second quarter.

The Warhawks' balanced offense combined 192 passing yards with 170 yards on the ground.

Tailback Tyler Baran handled most of the running and finished with a game-high 104 yards and two touchdowns on 16 carries.

“Field position was one of our biggest problems,” said Bunyan, whose team fell to 2-3 in the conference and 2-4 overall.

“When you have trouble moving the ball, it puts you at a real disadvantage.”

True enough. Germantown, which didn’t have to punt until the fourth quarter, started four of its drives inside Port’s 40-yard line.

After Lawhorn had a pass intercepted on the Warhawks’ first series, they scored touchdowns on their next five possessions.

Defensive back Quentin Lueck made a nice play on the interception, halting a Germantown threat when he picked off the ball at the Pirates’ 1-yard line. However, after Port was unable to pick up a first down, a short punt gave the Warhawks possession at the 12.

Two plays later, Baran’s first scoring run set the tone for Germantown, which improved its second-place NSC record to 4-1.

“We’ve been ineffective on the ground, which really limits what we can do offensively,” Bunyan said.

“We need to do a better job of getting the ball to our skilled people in open space.”

Running back Mick Clarke was one of the few offensive bright spots for the Pirates. The senior rushed for 45 yards on 11 carries, including a 20-yard burst that was his team’s longest run from scrimmage.

Derek Haley was Port’s leading receiver with two catches for 43 yards, including a 39-yard completion from reserve quarterback Ben Schueller in the closing minutes.

The Pirates finished with 143 yards in total offense, 98 of them through the air.

Bunyan noted that his team has struggled in physical matchups against tough conference foes, losing decisively to Homestead, Whitefish Bay and Germantown. But he said the Pirates also have to do a better job of executing their game plan.

“We need to pick it up. Some of it is getting beat physically, but some of it is fundamentals,” Bunyan said.

“I don’t have any questions about our players’ efforts. We have had some great practices, but we just haven’t been able to translate that into games.

“We’re going to keep working hard. It will come.”

Port will try to bounce back this Friday when it travels to Cedarburg for a 7 p.m. conference game.

Image Information: PORT WASHINGTON QUARTERBACK Aidan Wojociehowski found the going tough when he tried to escape the clutches of Germantown defenders in Friday's North Shore Conference game. Photo by Sam Arendt