

All's good for Pirates on opening night

Written by STEVE OSTERMANN
Wednesday, 28 August 2013 17:00

With quick-strike attack that chalks up 420 rushing yards, Port football team has little trouble sealing the deal against Waukesha North

It didn't take long for the Port Washington Pirates to make a striking impression on the football field this fall.

Slicing through an overmatched defense for 420 rushing yards, the Pirates rolled past Waukesha North for a 35-21 home win in their season opener last Friday night.

Port's ground-heavy attack was propelled by the quick-hit duo of Tom Rose and Marty Franzkowiak, who combined to outgain North's total offensive output.



Rose, a junior, rushed for 182 yards and two touchdowns on 14 carries, as well as returning a kickoff 86 yards for a score. Most of his yards and all of his scoring came in the first half, when the Pirates built a 14-point lead.

Franzkowiak, a senior, was close behind with 175 yards and two touchdowns on 13 attempts.

Combined with another 54 yards from quarterback Ben Schueller and tailback Bennett Fleischmann, the Pirates averaged nearly 10 yards per rush.

"I just felt we had a lot of speed in our backfield and could do some things against them," Port coach John Bunyan said.

"When (North) took away our passing game, we decided to run the ball a little more. But I didn't know we would have that much success."

In his first varsity backfield start, Rose got things rolling for the Pirates in the first quarter with touchdowns runs of nine and 15 yards.

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After North countered with an 18-yard scoring run by Mario Van Schaick in the second quarter, Rose had another answer. With 3 minutes, 34 seconds left in the half, he fielded the Northstars kickoff, broke a tackle and raced down the left sideline for a touchdown that put Port back in control, 21-7.

Rose finished the first half with 166 yards on the ground, which Bunyan called a product of hard running and crisp blocking.

"I've seen Tom when he had some big games on the JV team. He has the ability to cut and make people miss," Bunyan said.

"We also had a lot of good backside blocking, which allowed our backs to make those cuts."

North showed its ability to move the ball by piling up 315 yards with a balanced offense. The Northstars kept things reasonably close with two fourth-quarter touchdowns, but Port matched those with a pair of Franzkowiak scores.

In the third period, the Pirates took the opening kickoff and mounted a nine-play, 64-yard drive. Franzkowiak capped the march with a 5-yard touchdown burst.

Trailing, 28-7, North rallied with an 80-yard scoring drive after a missed Port field-goal attempt midway through the fourth quarter. Jackson Roe's 4-yard touchdown run gave the Northstars a lift, albeit brief.

On the first snap of the Pirates' next possession, Franzkowiak darted through a gaping hole, cut to the right sideline and raced 65 yards untouched to the end zone.

Jake Krapfl's fourth extra point of the night gave Port a 21-point cushion with just 2:05 to play.

"We played pretty well. We gave up some yardage, but it was usually when we blitzed and (North) took advantage of it," Bunyan said.

Bunyan singled out the stout play of linemen Kyle Brock, Andy Fidler and Alex Manley in a defensive effort that forced four North punts, stuffed three fourth-down plays and got a fumble recovery from Sam Lepak.

The Pirates were also aided by the strong leg of Krapfl, who was 5-for-5 on extras points, averaged 55 yards on six kickoffs and had a 44-yard punt.

"Jake is such a good athlete. He's had some knee issues, but his leg is fresh now," Bunyan said. "He looks good."

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The Pirates can expect a tougher test this Friday when they travel to Kewaskum for another nonconference game at 7 p.m.

“Kewaskum has a solid Division 3 program. It will be a good challenge for us,” Bunyan said.

Image Information: PORT WASHINGTON HEAD COACH John Bunyan used a time-out to give his players a few words of advice during their season-opening win over Waukesha North last Friday. The Pirates grabbed a lead in the first quarter and never trailed on the way to a 35-21 victory. Photo by Sam Arendt