

# Scoring a TD for life

Romeo player  
Alex Brewer  
overcomes  
leukemia

## High School Football

By Jim Evans  
Macomb Daily Sports Writer

The final touchdown in a lopsided 43-6 football game.

Is there a better Webster's unabridged definition of meaningless than Alex Brewer's three-yard burst up the gut in the third quarter of Romeo's lopsided victory over Sterling Heights Friday night?

Really, what did those final points even mean?

Much, much more than most of us could even imagine.

Alex Brewer is a leukemia survivor. The Watchdog game was played for cancer awareness. The host Romeo Bulldogs wore pink jerseys with white lettering. Visiting Sterling Heights had white jerseys with pink lettering.

A senior, Alex Brewer normally plays cornerback for the



Macomb Daily staff photo by Ray J. Skowronek

**Who said real men do not wear pink? Romeo High School senior Alex Brewer, left, a cancer survivor, and senior quarterback Blake Laurain. Brewer scored a touchdown in the Bulldogs' 43-6 victory over Sterling Heights Friday.**

Bulldogs. The coaches had inserted the Heavy Brewer play earlier in the week at the cajoling of teammates like Alex's pal, quarterback Blake Laurain.

When Brewer got some stiff resistance from the Sterling Heights defense, it was Laurain who got behind him, pushed and provided the added oomph into the end zone.

"I was really excited," said Brewer. "It was like 'What the heck is going on?'"

That was pretty much the same question asked more than

a decade ago. But then, the inquiry was hardly dripping with excitement.

"Alex was three years old and he'd been playing at a friend's house," said his mom, Chris Brewer. "I was putting his pajamas on that night and there were bruises all over his body. I called the mom and asked what did your kid do to my son? She told me that Alex had been resting on the couch all day and did not even play. Then I felt a bunch of swollen lymph nodes on an ear. We took Alex immediately to the doctor's office."

What the heck is going on? A blood test revealed the leukemia.

"The minute we got home from the doctor's office, the doctor called and I had to be rushed to Children's Hospital in Detroit. I started chemotherapy right away. I didn't know what was going on until my mom told me that night. My mom was crying like crazy. I asked her why she was crying and she told me I had leukemia."

Alex underwent a rigorous re-

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# PLAYER: Brewer scores biggest touchdown of his life

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gime of chemotherapy. It lasted for several years and required frequent hospitalizations. When he could go out and play, he had to wear a surgical mask to help ward off disease. Chemotherapy wreaks havoc with the immune system.

“Basically, I hung around the house. I was wiped out. I had no energy whatsoever,” he recalled.

It also wreaks havoc with everyone else in the family.

“I do not wish that on anybody,” said Chris Brewer. “It is the absolute worst nightmare that anyone could have.”

Alex Brewer and Blake Laurain met much, much earlier than in the huddle at Romeo

High School.

“I met Alex in pre-school and we were friends,” said Laurain. “At that time, I had no idea that Alex was going through this and what was going on. It wasn’t until we were in the second or third grade when my mom told me. I really did not know how to react. Being that little, I did not really know what leukemia was.”

Alex and Blake Laurain also went to the same grade school, Croswell Elementary.

A handful of years later, Blake Laurain took the field with his buddy’s name stitched across his back.

“As time went on and I got older, I realized how much de-

termination it took for Alex to beat leukemia,” said Laurain. “Alex has been a big part of my life, both him and his family. He is not the biggest guy, but his determination is outstanding. No one really knew what Alex went through for years.”

Alex Brewer had his grandpa’s name on his special jersey.

Arnold Brewer whipped pancreatic cancer nearly 20 years ago. It was only this past June when he succumbed to colorectal cancer.

“My grandpa and I were close. I would always pick a day of the week to go over to his house. We’d talk about random stuff about how was I doing in school or hunting. He loved hunting,”

said Alex Brewer.

“I’d hunt with my grandpa pretty much every year at his place up north in Rose City,” said Alex. “We’d go deer hunting. Even though we had to be quiet in the blind so we didn’t scare things away, we would talk about things like what were my goals for school and college.”

The final points in a 43-6 pasting seem pointless, right? It probably seemed a little meaningless for some folks when Brewer banged over from the three.

But those points meant plenty. “It was amazing,” said Alex’s mom. “First I was shocked. I mean, Alex does not play offense. Believe me, there were some tears.”



Macomb Daily photo by David S. Angell

**Romeo High senior Alex Brewer, who battled leukemia as a youngster, battles on the football field with his teammates these days. He starred in Friday’s 43-6 win over Sterling Heights.**