

Down early, Romeo rolls by Big Reds

Bulldogs go on 41-6 spree after trailing 10-0 in Red game

By **Chuck Pleiness**

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Romeo's football team was missing something Friday night.

Luckily for the Bulldogs, they found it in the second half.

After falling behind 10-0 early in the second quarter, Romeo outscored Chippewa Valley 41-6 the rest of the way, cruising to a 41-16 win in their Macomb Area Conference Red Division matchup.

"I truly believe we did not have the enthusiasm that we've had the last couple of weeks,"

Romeo co-coach Jason Couch said. "It is hard to show up week in and week out with that kind of enthusiasm. That's not an excuse. We have to make sure to find that little bit of fire and not let being down or someone else's big hit being the thing that motivates us. That energy is just contagious."

And with the score tied 10-10 at halftime, the Bulldogs got the enthusiasm boost they were looking for on the opening kickoff.



After a penalty was assessed for the first kick going out of bounds, Nathan Fraeyman took the next attempt 80 yards for a touchdown.

"Nathan is just a tremendous runner," Couch said. "I know he's fast, but you watch him and he strides it out. We were fortunate the ball got in his hands."

"That was huge motivation for us when he scored," Couch continued. "We had kids doing the chest bumping and they were getting fired up. So much in high school is enthusiasm and getting the boys ready to play."

The momentum carried over to the Bulldogs' ground attack as well.

Senior Ryan Burkard bulled his way in for TD runs from one

and 14 yards.

Burkard, who had just four carries last week against Sterling Heights, amassed 173 yards rushing on 24 carries.

"They put a ton in the box against us last week," Couch said. "This was a career high for him."

Burkard also scored on an eight-yard run in the second quarter for Romeo.

The Bulldogs also intercepted two passes in the second half. Zachary Bellas, who finished with eight tackles, and Brian Roth picked them off. Roth returned his 103 yards to cap the scoring.

"Obviously we weren't happy going into halftime," Couch said. "We didn't think we played a very good game up to that

time. Our boys came out and played really hard.

"I don't think it ever helps being down," Couch laughed. "We were fortunate in the second half."

Romeo's other second half score was a 22-yard field goal by Evan Simpson early in the fourth quarter.

"They're a big strong physical team and they pounded it in the second half," said CV coach Scott Merchant, whose team falls to 1-2 in the MAC Red and 1-4 overall. "And we had a hard time stopping their run."

"After giving up the kickoff return to start the second half it really took some momentum from us," Merchant added.

Chippewa Valley opened the

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ROMEO: Burkard TD starts Bulldogs' scoring spree

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scoring, taking over advantage an interception by Cedric Williams on Romeo's first play from scrimmage.

Demi Brigham capped off a four-play drive with a 30-yard burst up the left sideline for the score with 5:44 left in the first quarter.

The Big Reds again took advantage of another Romeo miscue, a bobbling punt return that was recovered by Brad Hughes at the Bulldogs' 37.

Keegan Haggerty put the finishing touches on the 11-play drive with a 27-yard field goal to give CV a 10-0 lead early in the second quarter.

Romeo quickly struck back, taking advantage of some good field position.

Four running plays later, Burkard busted through the middle

of the line for an eight-yard TD.

The Bulldogs looked like they had taken the lead after Blake Laurain found an outstretched Taylor Brynaert from 33 yards in the end zone. However, the play was brought back after Romeo was flagged for too many men on the field.

They did tie the game on a 28-yard field goal by Simpson as time expired.

Joe Bacci led Romeo with 13 tackles and Dalton Binkowski finished with eight.

The Bulldogs (3-0, 4-1) have won four straight since dropping their opener to Troy. They have outscored their last four opponents by a combined 115-32.

DAKOTA 44, STEVENSON 13: Mark Morris passed for 111 yards and a touchdown, and he rushed for 88 yards and a touchdown to lead Dakota.

Brandon Hughes rushed for 169 yards, including TD runs of 80 and 29 yards.

Gerald Jackson caught a 65-yard touchdown pass, and Spencer Miller also rushed for a 13-yard touchdown for the Cougars.

Bernard Taylor recorded 11 tackles and two sacks, and Chad Kozumplik had five tackles, two sacks and an interception that he returned 35 yards that set up a score.

Dakota is 2-1 in the MAC Red and 4-1 overall.

CHARTER SCHOOL CONFERENCE

**MICHIGAN COLLEGIATE
22, DETROIT PLYMOUTH
EDUCATIONAL CENTER 0:** Totally blank looks once again followed a Michigan Collegiate football game.

For the fourth time in five

games, the Cougars (4-0, 5-0) have blanked an opponent. Among those leading another amazing defensive effort were linebackers Nick Love and Tommy Bush, along with defensive end Keith Brooks.

Offensively, Bush ran for 95 yards on 17 rushes including a one-yard touchdown. He's a junior running back. Junior quarterback Alante Gardner had nine carries for 73 yards including a 10-yard score. Junior quarterback Gabe Sanders connected with sophomore wide receiver Teo Redding on a nine-yard touchdown play. That score culminated a nine-minute, 18-play drive.

The Cougars scored all of their points in the second half. They take on Detroit University Prep Friday.

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