

Football

Dominating first quarter leads to Amherst road win

by PATRICK J. NAGY
Reporter

Rob Gross has seen plenty of crazy football games throughout his tenure at Amherst Central but nothing like his team's 40-14 road win at Hamburg on Saturday.

In the first quarter, the Amherst offense only needed 17 snaps to rush for 221 yards, score three touchdowns and pass for another. Andre Hakeem (16 carries, 176 yards) had touchdowns runs of 86 and 14 yards and quarterback Cordell Freeman ran in a 19-yard touchdown to cap off a four-play, 66-yard drive, and threw a 10-yard strike to Matt Krajna. Freeman finished 6-of-9 for 55 yards. He also threw a two-point conversion to Casey Rich.

Meanwhile, the Amherst defense held Hamburg to minus-7 yards in the first quarter.

"It was the first time I've been involved with something like that at the beginning of the game," said Gross. "We

had a game against Williamsville South three or four years when Mark Rubin by himself scored four touchdowns in a quarter. So I've seen some quarters when everything goes our way. What was unique about this one was it was in the first nine and a half minutes of the ball game. Everything we did on both sides of the ball worked perfectly in that first quarter."

Amherst finished with 295 first half yards to 16 for Hamburg. The Bulldogs did not get a first down until 1:30 left in the first half. Hamburg finished with 140 total yards, 51 coming on the ground.

Bertram Smith closed out the Tigers' scoring with a 35-yard interception return. He also scored a 6-yard run in the third quarter.

Troy Martin also had an interception for Amherst. The defense also recovered a fumble which led to Krajna's TD catch. Amherst is plus-12 in turnover ratio.

Chris Brunetto and Casey Rich each made eight tackles.

"It was a great team win," said Gross. "The offense and defense did their jobs and special teams got us field position. The defense as a whole swarmed and gang tackled."

The win improved Amherst's playoff chances. The Tigers, ranked No. 10 among Western New York large schools, sit 4-2 overall but are third in Class A South at 2-2. They host No. 1 ranked Iroquois (6-0, 4-0) at 7 p.m. Friday. It is Amherst's homecoming.

"They're a very good team," said Gross. "They do a great job in all phases of the game. We've told our guys every week, 'we need to improve every week'. Every time we show up, it has to be our best game of the season. Our guys have responded the majority of the time and this week is no different. We need to step up and play our best game of the season on Friday night."

e-mail: pnagy@beenews.com

Turnovers plague Billies in Albion loss

by PATRICK J. NAGY
Reporter

Turnovers have been Williamsville South's worst enemy all season and it came to bite the Billies again Friday at Albion.

South (1-5, 1-5) turned the football over four times, the last three which led to Albion touchdowns in a 42-20 loss.

"They really didn't disguise anything or show anything that we weren't prepared for," said South coach Ryan Gallo. "We just ultimately didn't tackle with any consistency or sustain any offensive drives at various times. We continue to self-destruct via turnovers on a week to week basis. We're not a good enough football team to overcome those situations at this point."

South trailed 14-0 six minutes into the game thanks to their own miscues. Gallo said a South fullback backpedaled into the punter as he was kicking and the ball sailed only 15 yards, giving Albion the ball at the Billie 41. The Purple Eagles' Brandon Brewer scored five plays later from 20 yards out. South's Adrian Wood took the ensuing kickoff at the Billie 10 and fumbled at the 17. Two plays later, quarterback Justin Ward fired a 23-yard TD to Chris Thomas. The two would hook up two more times in the first half from 19 and 4 yards as Albion built a 34-0 halftime lead.

"Immediately it takes us off schedule from what we're trying to do offensively," said Gallo.

South scored the last 20 points of the

game in the fourth quarter from Christian Kranz touchdown throws. He connected twice with Adrian Wood from 65 and 70 yards and once with Jake Keim from 28 yards out. Wood finished with five receptions for 178 yards. Keim caught two balls for 43 yards. Kranz completed 8-of-17 passes for 209 yards and an interception. DaeShaune Clark ran six times for 55 yards.

Nick Brace and Andrew Esposito each made 13 tackles to lead the Billies' defense.

It doesn't get any easier for South when they travel to Cardinal O'Hara for a 2 p.m. game Saturday. Cardinal O'Hara pounded St. Mary's of Lancaster, 42-19 last week.

"We've seen Cardinal O'Hara play a cou-

ple of times," said Gallo. "They may feature the best combination of backs that we've seen so far this year in Reggie Garner and Jackie Feggans. They pose a lot of speed and very shifty. They're going to be a tall challenge to corral them on a consistent basis defensively. We feel we can do some things on them but if we continue to self-destruct we're not going to move the football at all."

"It's just a matter of us putting a complete game together," he continued. "We've haven't done it since week one. You can use all the excuses you like. We have to go out and play a complete football game. It's on the coaches and players to put together."

e-mail: pnagy@beenews.com

Sweet Home beats Grand Island, wins fourth straight on road

by PATRICK J. NAGY
Reporter

For the fourth straight game, the Sweet Home offense has scored 40 points and for the fourth consecutive contest, it has resulted in a Panthers road victory.

Sweet Home (5-1, 5-1) used a 21-6 halftime lead to win at Grand Island (3-3, 3-3), 42-14. It was a rematch of the Section VI Class A finals won by Grand Island, 20-14.

"It's four games in a row where we scored 40 or better," said Sweet Home coach John Faller. "I think we're getting better and the kids are gaining confidence in themselves. Offensively, we'll find something that will work whether it be run or pass."

Sweet Home scored on its opening drive capped off by a

1-yard Joel Tilman run. Grand Island tried to respond but Sean Burns recovered an Alex Webb fumble at the Sweet Home 15 which led to a 70-yard TD from Ian Goree to Glenroy Carr. Goree (6-of-12, 135 yards, two interceptions) would also hook up with Eric Lawrence for a 32-yard strike in the second quarter to put the Panthers ahead 21-0. Lawrence would return an interception 54 yards in the third quarter.

Grand Island scored a late second quarter TD, a 25-yard pass from Joe Oliverio to Phil Wendt. However, any momentum Grand Island had from the score was quickly killed when Sweet Home drove 70 yards in 11 plays on the first drive of the third quarter, finished off by a 3-yard Marcus Johnson score to take a 28-6 lead. Johnson also caught an interception.

"We mixed it up," said Faller.

"We went to our spread then our tight formation."

Goree ran in a 2-yard score in the fourth.

Sweet Home rushed for 234 yards led by Allen Douglas (14 carries, 83 yards).

It was his first action since suffering a high right ankle sprain against Jamestown in week one. He ran four times in week two

against Williamsville East.

"He's almost there," said Faller. "He said he just has to get his game legs back. That was the first time he was running and getting hit (since week two)."

Sweet Home held Grand Island to 154 passing yards and 99 yards rushing.

Sweet Home hosts Lew-Port in the Panthers' homecoming at 2

p.m. Saturday. If Sweet Home beats Lew-Port and Starpoint in Week Eight, they are guaranteed a playoff spot.

"We're a target right now," said Faller. "Everybody that's coming to play us, no matter what their position is in the league, is going to want to knock us off."

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IN MEMORY — The Williamsville South boys soccer team, including Chris Amara (8) and Trevor Lawler (11) wore armbands in memory of Melissa Chudy during the team's game last Wednesday at Amherst. Chudy passed away Oct. 1. Her son, Rob, is a former South player. Another son, James, attends South.

Photo by John Rusac

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