



Vacaville High School football breaks away to defeat Will C. Wood 42-24

By Tim Roe | Vacaville Reporter | November 8, 2013

VACAVILLE - Adjustments ... and big hits ... turned the tide.

The Black and Blue Bowl was one giant party for both Vacaville and Will C. Wood high schools for most of Friday night's marathon game at Tom Zunino Stadium ... at least when the Bulldogs and Wildcats weren't giving the ball away.

Vacaville ended up with a 42-24 victory, despite committing five turnovers. Will C. Wood held an early 14-0 lead and looked poised to pull off its first win in the crosstown showdown since 1997, but the Wildcats fumbled the ball on a pair of kickoff returns.

"We changed some things. We stayed focused, and the score shows what we did," said Vacaville's Drew Chitwood, who knocked the ball loose on both kickoff returns. Bulldog teammate Dulon Stevens recovered both fumbles, with the second recovery leading to a 4-yard touchdown run by Connor Kanellis that gave Vacaville the lead for good.

Vacaville improved to 7-3 overall and finished the Monticello Empire League season with a perfect 5-0 record for the fifth straight season.

Wood fell to 7-3 overall and 3-2 in MEL play. Both teams will learn their Sac-Joaquin Section playoff fates when pairings are released this afternoon.

Vacaville appeared to be in trouble from the start, as a fired-up Wood defense forced the Bulldogs to punt, fumble, punt and fumble on their first four possessions.

Wood drove 40 yards after the first fumble, with Damon Lewis going the final six yards and Adam Cunning added the extra point for a 7-0 lead.

Wood drove 83 yards after the second Vacaville punt, with Lewis scoring from 19 yards out for a 14-0 advantage.

Lewis finished with 170 yards rushing and all three Wood TDs, including a 60-yard run in the second quarter.

"I can't say enough about Damon," Wood head coach Carlos Meraz said. "The little man played big. He's 5-foot-5, but he played 6-foot-4." But it was a game of momentum. We had the momentum in the first quarter, but they got it back when we fumbled those kickoffs. The turnovers hurt us a lot."

Vacaville finally scored on a 62-yard run by Kane Cunningham with a 4:54 left before halftime. The sellout crowd, which was engaged in a phone-off light show at the time, had no idea that Cunningham's score was the start of a 35-point barrage in less than four minutes.

Wood fumbled the ensuing kickoff, and the Bulldogs tied the game two plays later on a 28-yard run by David Mewborn.

Lewis added his 60-yard scoring run on the next play from scrimmage for the Wildcats.

But Vacaville marched 85 yards in eight plays after Lewis' third TD, with Kanellis scoring from 2 yards out to tie the game at 21-21. Wood fumbled again, and Kanellis scored one play later.

The second half was more sedate, even though the carnival atmosphere continued in the stands.

Cunning booted a 26-yard field goal to cut the Bulldog lead to 28-24, but Wood didn't score again.

Vacaville added second-half touchdowns on a 66-yard run by Damonte Moore, and a 16-yard pass play from Chad Hekking to Tanner Donaldson.

Moore led the Bulldogs with 164 yards rushing, and Cunningham added 111. Hekking completed 10 of 12 passes for 139 yards. Donaldson had four catches for 74.

Wood's Tyler Bailey added 109 yards passing