

Dailey leads 'Dogs to the title

December 10, 2006 - The money back paid off huge in the biggest game of them all.

Terrance Dailey, who ran behind a big, strong and quick offensive line and then darted around and dazzled opponents all season, saved arguably his biggest effort for the biggest game in Vacaville High School"s 37-36 victory over Merced Saturday.

Dailey bolted and bruised his way to 221 yards and four touchdowns as the Bulldogs won their first-ever Sac-Joaquin Section championship in the most dramatic fashion imaginable.

"Honestly, there was a lot of hype, but it"s all about the win," Dailey said afterward. "If I get zero TDs and negative yards, and we still win, that"s OK."

Honestly, if Dailey would have gotten negative yardage, the Bulldogs would have lost.

He didn"t, and they didn"t.

No coincidence there.

"He"s been a huge part of what we"ve done all season, but today, he did some things ... at pivotal points in the game, he had some great runs," Vacaville head coach Mike Papadopoulos said. "He"s a great back, but to come to a stage like this, with all the buildup, it"s hard to come through. And he did."

Did he ever.

Merced came into the game geared to stop Dailey, who entered the contest with 2,125 yards on the ground.

Yards were hard to come by early, as the Bears limited Dailey to 68 rushing yards on 15 attempts in the first half.

Bobby Ortiz benefited the most from Merced"s extra attention to Dailey, rushing for 75 yards in the first half and scoring the game"s first touchdown.

But Dailey added a 1-yard vault over the pile midway through the second quarter, and another 1-yard burst in the third period gave Vacaville the lead for good.

The fireworks were just beginning, though.

Vacaville's defense stopped Merced deep in Vacaville territory on its next drive. Three plays later, Dailey burst up the middle on a trap play, cut to the left sideline and put the Bulldogs up by two scores with a 72-yard touchdown run, more than doubling his total yards to that point.

Merced responded with a 12-play drive for a touchdown, and tacked on another score to pull within a point.

But the trap play worked again, as Dailey capped a 61-yard drive with another burst up the middle for a 31-yard TD and a 37-30 lead.

Vacaville got the ball back, and Dailey got the Bulldogs out of a big hole with a 46-yard jaunt. He even added Vacaville's only quarterback sack with 13 seconds left, a play that might have ended the game were it not for a slip-up by the chain gang that forced a stoppage of time.

No matter. Led by Dailey and Vacaville"s offensive line, the Bulldogs rolled up all 376 of their offensive yards on the ground, including 212 in the second half.

"It was hard. They"re a very strong team," said Bulldog tackle Mike Posey. "But we did a better job after halftime, and Terrance was great … very strong."

Adding to Posey"s blocking were Nathan Mittelstadt, David Tejeda, Clayton Jack, Nick Feldman, Bo Lukehart and others.

And Dailey took advantage.

"He"s a monster," Ortiz said. "He"s absolutely unstoppable."

And he"s only a junior.

"He"s a great back," Merced head coach Rob Scheidt said. "They"ve got to be so glad he"s only a junior, and they get him back next year."