



Trojans spoil Homecoming

By Douglas Benton | Nor Cal Preps | September 22, 2012

VACAVILLE - Two quality football teams met on Friday night as Vacaville hosted newly ranked Oak Ridge.

With back and forth action throughout, the Trojans got an 11 yard touchdown pass from Jason Samuels to Byron Spain to secure the 24-21 road win after the Bulldogs missed a 42 yard field goal as time expired.

The play which will be lasting from the Trojans' win was the eventual game winning touchdown pass. It proved to be one of if not the best throw of the night for Samuels against good coverage on a comeback route and Spain did a good job of corralling the ball near the sideline in traffic.

"We ran a comeback route. Tough to do against press coverage. Going up against No. 4 (Jacob Te'o), one of the best players on this field, Byron had a great release," Oak Ridge head coach Eric Cavaliere said. "(Spain) ran a physical route, got leverage on him, got separation and Jason put the ball on the money and Byron made a hell of a catch."

Samuels has been one of the emerging players through the first month of the season in helping lead Oak Ridge to a 5-0 mark. Against Vacaville, he did a number of positive things, which should garner more college interest. On the night, the 6-foot-4, 185 pound senior went 18-for-31 for 236 yards, two touchdowns and an interception.

His favorite target was tight end Ross Dwelley, who caught six passes for 115 yards while Spain caught both touchdown passes. Running a pro-style system at Oak Ridge, Samuels has nice footwork and showed good ball skills on his play fakes with the mobility to use rollouts and avoid defenders. He is especially good at putting touch on the ball to all levels and withstood a number of hits from Vacaville. He had a couple of missed throws, including a late throw which resulted in the interception, but Samuels fits the mold of a high 2-star quarterback prospect.

"He's a hell of a player. He's tough, he's gritty, he's smart, and he's accurate. He's a college level quarterback no doubt," Cavaliere said of Samuels.

The win carried extra significance for Cavaliere, a Vacaville alum, and possibly marked his best win since becoming head coach as the Trojans go into the bye week before opening up league play at home against Top 10 ranked Folsom.

"I will never forget this. This was a lot of fun. Coming to this environment, it's exacting how I remembered it. Highly spirited. Fast, aggressive," Cavaliere said of the win and returning to Vacaville. "It's exactly the reason why I wanted to bring our football team into here."

Vacaville bounced back well from a blowout loss at Granite Bay despite losing its second straight game.

They rushed for 252 yards including 175 yards and a touchdown from senior Curtis Goins. The Bulldogs hit a couple of big runs, but were also successful running a high tempo attack with fakes inside and getting the ball out wide to Goins and junior David Mewborn. They also were able to hit a couple of pass plays late and had Oak Ridge worn down from time to time.

"Their tempo is brutal," Cavaliere said. "The play comes in, goes into the huddle, get to the line of scrimmage, snap the ball and go. They can wear a team down and we did wear down. When we needed a play, we were able to make a play."