



Vacaville's 1-2 punch knocks out Rodriguez

By Jason Nahal – Vacaville Reporter

Every great fighter has a strong one-two punch.

If the Vacaville High School football team had one Friday night, it would've been senior running backs Roman Conner-Owens and Dylan Borjesson.

"We practice all day and every single day" Conner-Owens said. "Truly, we want to find a team that can stop us."

Conner-Owens and Borjesson piled up 222 yards and four touchdowns on 26 carries to power the Bulldogs to a dominant 42-25 victory over Rodriguez. The win comes one year after the Mustangs defeated Vacaville for the first time in program history.

"I couldn't ask for better running backs," said Vacaville senior quarterback Brendan Jackson. "Roma and Borj are just my favorite people."

Jackson wasn't too shabby himself.

The senior quarterback completed 12 of 20 passes for 153 yards and two touchdowns. His most impressive stretch came early in the first quarter, when he orchestrated an 11-play, 80 yard drive that ended with a four-yard touchdown pass to Bradyn Wight.

"We saw that they were playing Cover 3 on film," Jackson said. "We decided to throw in trips to single up our best receiver, and when they took away our best receiver, they left something else open."

That drive was especially crucial because on the very first play from scrimmage, Rodriguez forced a fumble for a 14-yard scoop-and-score.

“We had this hiccup in the very beginning of the game and it didn’t deter them from what we were attempting to do,” said Vacaville head coach Mike Papadopoulos. “They stayed the course with what we were asking of them and they played pretty well.”

Although the Mustangs’ defense got them on the board early, their offense sputtered due to Vacaville’s dominant pass rush and great pass coverage. Dino Menicou led the defense with seven tackles, while Nicholas Lozano had five and a tackle for loss.

Three plays after hauling in a 21-yard touchdown pass, Brody Rogers pressured Rodriguez quarterback Mancianno Syess into throwing an interception to Menicou. Borjesson followed with a 12-yard touchdown run created by exceptional blocking from interior offensive linemen Ezra Cremo, Eli Cremo and Dylan Proctor.

“Syess is very dangerous. I just have a lot of respect for how hard the kid plays,” Papadopoulos said. “We did a nice job, for the most part, of containing him. We knew we needed to stay in front of him.”

Syess finally sparked Rodriguez’s offense with a 39-yard touchdown run, but Vacaville responded with a 70-yard scoring drive consisting of six carries from Conner-Owens. He capped the drive with a 27-yard touchdown run after breaking free up the middle.

“My O-line provided me clear, open lanes,” Conner-Owens said. “I was just seeing free land.”

Borjesson and Conner-Owens each added rushing touchdowns in the third quarter to put the game out of reach. The latter was set up after Chance Fritch cam out of nowhere for an interception.

“Recently our defense has really stepped up,” Jackson said. “I feel like our offense is always pretty solid, but our defense has definitely stepped up, which makes it easier on the offense.”

With the win, the Bulldogs extended their win streak to four and improved to 2-0 in the Monticello Empire League. They will now turn their attention to the Vanden Vikings, who will also enter Tom Zunino Stadium on Friday, Oct.3 with an undefeated MEL record.