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# prep football

spotlight game eden prairie 35, east ridge 14

## Another chance to be the best

### Eden Prairie, more scrappy than stellar, wins after erasing 14-point deficit

By DAVID LA VAQUE [dlaquake@startribune.com](mailto:dlaquake@startribune.com)

Eden Prairie football coach Mike Grant doesn't rank this season's Eagles team among the most talented in the program's rich tradition of state champions.

Try convincing East Ridge of so much.

Explosive touchdowns from their top athletes helped the No. 1 ranked Eagles overcome a two-touchdown deficit. The three-time defending state champions defeated East Ridge 35-14 in the Class 6A state tournament quarterfinal Friday at Woodbury High School, and advanced to play Maple Grove.

East Ridge built a 14-0 second quarter lead as Oregon recruit Seth Green ran and threw for touchdowns.

Eden Prairie (11-0) responded with five unanswered scores. Four touchdowns covered between 52 and 80 yards, touching the Raptors' chances and Grant's resolve of a talent-deprived team. "We have a few kids," Grant acknowledged. "Your great players have to make big plays in big games."

First up: Junior JD Spielman. The son of Wing General Manager Rick Spielman has a college future in lacrosse. He's no slouch on the football field, either.

He hauled in a 80-yard touchdown pass from quarterback Grantman Gillett on the Eagles' out East Ridge's lead to 14-7 before halftime.

Spielman tied the score at 14 in the third quarter on a 52-yard run.

"I'd really set the tempo for us with both of his long touchdowns," Eagles running back Will Rains said.

Blake Cashman was next. His interception on the ensuing East Ridge drive gave Eden Prairie the ball at the Raptors' 26.

"When I made the play... I was just looking the offense would make their plays and we could get in there," Cashman said.

Rains delivered his 31st touchdown of the season and

**Key of the game:** Blake Cashman's interception of Seth Green gave Eden Prairie the ball at the East Ridge 26. Taking full advantage of their golden starting field position, the Eagles corralled Green with a short 'Will Rains' touchdown. Taking the first lead at 21-14 late in the third quarter, Eden Prairie never looked back.

**Quote:** "You've got to knock a champion out." —Eden Prairie coach Mike Grant

**One thing to know:** Eden Prairie's defense, galvanized for solid gains in the first half by East Ridge running back Darrin London, clamped down hard in the second half. Linebacker Carter Goughlin "had [Green] running all over the place," Mike Grant said. Traeson Clay led the game with a 45-yard interception return for a touchdown.

DAVID LA VAQUE

Eden Prairie led 21-14. Touchdown No. 21 followed in the fourth quarter as Rains broke loose for a 69-yard scoring run.

"We're up big plays in the second half," East Ridge coach Mike Prud'homme said. "You have a 14-0 lead, you've got to find a way to win the football game and we didn't do it."

State tournament newcomer East Ridge (9-2) became the latest addition to Eden Prairie's 26-game winning streak. The Raptors, in just their sixth year as a program, enjoyed a geographic edge, playing just a 4.6-mile drive from its high school.

Now they were playing in hostile territory and spent to be down at halftime. Eden Prairie players responded.

"We definitely know we're not the most talented team. Eden Prairie's never had," Rains said. "But we come out fighting and we never give up."



When East Ridge quarterback Seth Green was wrapped up by Eden Prairie's Blake Cashman, the result was an Eagles interception.

AROUND THE METRO Video from Friday night's games and all the latest scores at [mnsportsball.com](http://mnsportsball.com)

#### MINNEAPOLIS NORTH 14, BLOOMING PRAIRIE 6

In a battle of two undefeated teams that averaged more than 40 points per game, it was defense that stepped up to lift Minneapolis North to a Class 2A quarterfinal victory. The Polars overcame five turnovers behind their swarming defense, which limited the high-powered Blooming Prairie offense to 195 yards. The Aweesome Bombers had multiple chances to get back into the game, but were unable to break through the Polars' stifling defense. Quarterback Tyler Johnson led the Polars' offense with 186 rushing yards on 22 carries.

**Key of the game:** With the Polars leading by two points late in the second quarter and facing a third and 8 from their own 9-yard line, Johnson ran 91 yards for a touchdown.

**Quote:** "We're not just a small school anymore, we're a big program now." —Johnson, on lifting his team to the semifinals

**One thing to know:** Blooming Prairie quarterback John Bumpas entered the game with 3,291 passing yards and 48 touchdowns all year. He was held to 30 completions on 51 attempts for 100 yards and one touchdown.

MIKE ZANAKTA

#### MAPLE GROVE 10, PRIOR LAKE 7

## Maple Grove's defense denies Prior Lake



Prior Lake was done when Maple Grove's Isaac Collins, left, broke up a pass to Sam Schultz.

**HUTCHINSON 45, HOLY ANGELS 14**

It was more of the same on the scoreboard Friday in a rematch of last year's Class 4A state title game and a battle of 10-0 teams. The Tigers extended their winning streak, now at 37 games. After a scoreless first quarter,

Hutchinson scored 24 points in the second quarter alone, propelling it to a double-digit halftime lead.

**Key of the game:** With the Tigers up 7-0, Holy Angels fumbled a punt that turned out to be costly. Billy Steen hook recovered the ball, and Marcus Holm threw a

26-yard touchdown pass to senior Grant Baumert.

**Quote:** "I told our kids, it is the state tournament. They are 12-0. And you can't just expect that you come out here and you will over everybody and nobody's ever going to make you a punt." —Hutchinson head

coach Andy Ruettinger, on the Tigers' slow start before they jumped to a 24-7 halftime lead.

**One thing to know:** The Tigers, who defeated Holy Angels 49-7 in last year's Prep Bowl, are seeking their third consecutive state title.

HEATHER HULE

#### DELSALLE 55, CLOQUET 21

The Islanders stormed out to a 48-point lead in the first half — scoring on offense, defense and special teams — in a rout of previously undefeated Cloquet in the Class 4A quarterfinal at Chicago Lakes High School. Senior receiver Mar



Bridges

quise Bridges and freshman running back Sage Booker each had three touchdowns in the first half. Del's kicker led 28-0 after running just 11 plays on offense. It held Cloquet to 77 yards in the first half and forced three first-half turnovers — one fumble and two interceptions, one of which was returned for a touchdown by senior linebacker Isaac Hoag.

**Key of the game:** The Islanders racked up 465 yards of offense.

**Quote:** "All it takes is to listen to what our coaches tell us to do and good enough players to do it." —Marquise Bridges

**One thing to know:** Del's kicker will face No. 1-ranked and two-time defending champion Hutchinson in the semifinals. "We've been waiting for this for years," Bridges said. "Now we finally get the chance."

PATRICK JOHNSON