



PREPS EXTRA

MOUNDS VIEW 48, BUFFALO 13



Mounds View quarterback Cole Stenstrom was knocked off balance by Buffalo defensive back Brandon Lampi (29) but still got a first down in the third quarter. He threw for three TDs on two

Mounds View limits foe's air show

QB Cole Stenstrom and the Mustangs' defense shined. The victory clinched the Mustangs' first state tournament appearance in five years. Mounds View (8-2), ranked No. 8 in the Associated Press poll, advances to play No. 2 Lakeville South next Friday in the Class 6A quarterfinals at Eden Prairie High School. Senior quarterback Cole Stenstrom of the Mustangs threw three touchdowns to senior Jack Roeder and ran for two scores. Mounds View's defense limited the renowned Buffalo duo of quarterback Adam Bowman and receiver Michael Twisten to two touchdowns. When the Bison (5-5) did score, Mounds View responded with touchdown drives of its own each time. "That's probably what I was most



Mounds View linebacker Owen Pfisterich (32) celebrated a tackle he made on special teams against Buffalo in the first half.

proud of tonight," Moberg said. "When they did make a play, we took the momentum right back." The Mustangs' gangster defense, which came into the game riding two consecutive shutouts, dictated the action. Buffalo's six first-half possessions resulted in one touchdown, one punt, two drives ending on downs and two interceptions by Mounds View's Mateo Cisneros. "They dropped a lot of guys back into coverage," Twisten said. "It was either run the ball or pass into a pretty loaded secondary." Said Moberg: "Our defense is the staple of Mustang football." "Our defense played probably the best they have all year because Buffalo has a really good offense and they did an awesome job against them." The Mounds' offense went on

slouch either. Two conversions on fourth down propelled a scoring drive capped by Brian Tolbert's 6-yard touchdown run for a 21-7 lead. The second Stenstrom-to-Roeder connection for a touchdown came on a designed 36-yard heave to the end zone with no time left in the first half. Trailing 27-7, Buffalo started the second half by recovering a Mounds View fumble. Facing fourth-and-8, Bowman hit Twisten for a 38-yard touchdown and the deficit was trimmed to 27-14. But the Mustangs answered, Tolbert got yards for a 23-yard touchdown, his second score of the game, for a 34-14 lead. "We struggled with that at the beginning of the season, so we emphasized coming back," Stenstrom said.

SMB 36, BENILDE-ST. MARGARET'S 30

Suggs sparks SMB's late comeback

The defending champs went up for good with 44 seconds to go. The defending Class 4A football champion SMB Woodcock don't fall behind often. But when they do, coach Chris Goodwin doesn't panic. He knows the offense led by senior quarterback, on-scene in a hurry. With John Suggs, you always have a chance. John and some of the other guys have been state champions in basketball, too. They know how to come from behind. "Goodwin said, 'The Woodcock had to come from behind for the first time this season Friday in the Section 3 title game. SMB overcame a 13-point second-half deficit to beat fellow unbeaten Benilde-St. Margaret's 36-30 and will return to the state tournament riding a 23-game winning streak. Suggs threw three second-half touchdown passes to lead the rally. With SMB trailing 30-28, his 61-yard scramble set up a 17-yard TD pass to a leaping Terry Lockett with 46 seconds left. Suggs threw a clutch, clutch interception in the closing seconds. "We always knew the game went, once it was never in doubt. We know each other's strengths and we know we would all come up big and play for four quarters," said Suggs, holding

back tears. "I love my brothers and we've been through so much adversity and been so resilient. I can't help but shed some tears." SMB (10-0), a cooperative of St. Paul Academy, Minnesota Academy and Blaha, scored two first-quarter touchdowns including a 34-yard throw from Nick Peterson to Jerry Woodcock with 14 seconds left in the half. Benilde still led 30-21 after Louis Hyde's 43-yard field goal with 8:53 remaining in the game. MATT STECHER



Senior star John Suggs put SMB in the end zone with just 44 seconds to play with a 61-yard run at Benilde-St. Margaret's on Friday.

FRIDLEY 28, ST. ANTHONY 27

QB Blaha leads successful rally

Senior quarterback Elio Blaha led host Friday back from a 20-point deficit to beat St. Anthony Village 28-27 for the Class 4A, Section 4 title Friday and a fourth state appearance in five years. Friday trailed 27-7 in the second quarter. "No one blamed anyone," Blaha said. "We all did our job and came out." Blaha accounted for four touchdowns — three rushing and one passing. He threw for 113 yards and rushed for 66. Friday (10-0) allowed six touchdowns all season, but St. Anthony was able to move the ball. Huskies senior quarterback Troy Ellison threw two touchdowns in the first quarter. Senior running back Jonathan Kieren added two rushing TDs in the second quarter and rushed for 120 yards for the game. "We know we could just crank out 5.10 yards each play, so that's what we came out here and did," Kieren said. The Huskies (8-2) had a final chance after a Blaha fumble late in the game, but Tigers junior defensive back Micah Niewald sealed the game with an interception with 1:15 remaining. The victory averaged a section final loss to the Huskies last year. "It's just excitement. You get to see cover-ups, tripping and downs," said Niewald, who also caught a TD pass. MATT THOMAS



CENTENNIAL 21, EDINA 20 (OT)

Victory is announced with a 'smack'

Sophomore's first varsity time includes a game-saving hit. Centennial sophomore linebacker Mason Michaluk never played a down of varsity football before Friday. With the Cougars leading by one point in overtime against Edina, the Hornets went for a two-point conversion to win the game. But Michaluk and the rest of the defense made the stop, and second-seeded Centennial took a 21-20 overtime victory over No. 3 seed Edina and advanced to the Class 6A quarterfinals next week. "He stepped up big in the end zone," coach Mike Diggins said of Michaluk. "He's the one that made the smack and kept him out." The Cougars hitred, and Michaluk took on the fullback. "Then it was just a group effort," Michaluk said. "We all came together, and then we just made a huge play all together." Centennial senior Timothy O'Neill II also ran in on the decisive defensive play, following up on his interception in the end zone with 87 seconds left in regulation. "I saw the ball coming, and I caught it," O'Neill said. HEATHER RULE

Centennial's Austin Wlaschin pulled for a 5-yard score in overtime. Edina responded with a fourth-down, 12-yard touchdown run from Jonathan Hance that set up the final drama. The Cougars lost Carter Anderson's broken ankle when he caught a 37-yard touchdown pass for a 34-0 lead in the second quarter. "It changed our game plan a ton because we thought we could do play-action with him and go deep," Diggins said. "Once that happened, everything kind of got a little tighter on us." HEATHER RULE



Centennial's Timothy O'Neill II hit Edina's Edina drive with an interception in the end zone in the final seconds of regulation.