

★ SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2010 • STAR TRIBUNE • SPORTS • C13

prep football state semifinals

CLASS 1A
NEW ULM CATHEDRAL 34, MINNETONKA 33

Take a bow, Coach Boone

Using a two-point conversion play from a movie, the Greyhounds rove for the title.

By RON HAGGSTRÖM • rhaggstrom@startribune.com

Remember the Titans? New Ulm Cathedral does. The Greyhounds used a play from the 2000 movie for the game-winning two-point conversion with 3:43 left to edge Minnesota 34-33 Sunday in the Class 1A semifinals at the Metrodome. New Ulm Cathedral (12-0) will go after its first state title against Bemisville (13-0) in the Prep Bowl.

"We just put that play [Titans Right] in yesterday," said Greyhounds coach Denny Lux, who is in his 10th season at the helm. "We first ran it in 2000, but haven't used it in about three or four years."

Senior quarterback Kevin Larson moved up in the pocket before finding Nick Simon in the end zone on the two-point conversion play. Simon only had two catches for 20 yards prior to the call. "Their defensive end came up the field hard, and I stepped up," Larson said. "Initially, I thought I was going to have to run, but then I saw Nick open."

The Greyhounds pulled within 33-32 when 6-foot-4 Brian Noshub outwrestled a Minnesota defender for a 29-yard touchdown pass from Larson, who completed 14 of 18 passes for 222 yards and two scores. Larson directed back-to-back scoring drives in the fourth quarter after Cathedral fell behind 35-20.

"Kevin has transferred into a leader this year," Noshub said.

"That development is what led to the decision to go for two. Lux asked his signal caller what he thought after the TD, and he promptly responded, 'Let's go for two.' Kevin wanted the pressure on himself," Lux said. "The moment had swung our way, and it was the right thing to do."

NINE MAN
CROWWELL 18, UNDERWOOD 12



Crowwell QB Jordan Subonen had a fancy move to avoid the Underwood defense in first-half action.

From tragedy to triumph

Crowwell, after a season filled with ups and downs, pulled to win in the final minutes.

By RON HAGGSTRÖM • rhaggstrom@startribune.com

Nick Berg epitomizes Crowwell's football season. He knew first-hand what it's like to be down, yet bounce back and persevere. The senior came up with two critical turnovers in the final eight minutes and set up the game-winning score in the final minute with a 40-yard run, keying the Cardinals' comeback from a two-touchdown deficit in the fourth quarter to beat Underwood 18-12 Sunday in the Nine-man semifinals at the Metrodome. The victory sends Crowwell (9-4) to its eighth Prep Bowl, where it will meet Lacrosse (11-2).

"We were in the gutter, but have since risen up," Berg said. "One of his close friends and a former teammate committed suicide two weeks after graduation earlier this year, and Berg missed the first two games of the season because of a state high school league rules violation. "This is awesome after what we have been through."

His run set up senior quarterback Jordan Subonen's 39-yard, go-ahead TD with 59 seconds remaining. Subonen, who rushed for 172 yards on 32 carries, had tied it with a 26-yard run three minutes earlier. The tying score was set up by Berg's fumble recovery on a punt.

"This is unbelievable," said Subonen, who started the comeback with a 48-yard touchdown pass to Tyler Subrowski. "It's surreal."

The Cardinals still had to withstand a last-second drive by Underwood (10-3). The Rockets marched from their 41 to the Crowwell 3 with five seconds left.

"We were present, but we were too soft," Crowwell coach Jeff Grosser said. "We usually try to put more pressure on the quarterback."

"Two incomplete passes later — the last a fade to regular quarterback C-4 Dalton Janspa that was batted down by Subonen — Grosser was breathing a sigh of relief.

"We knew it was going to be a fade because we saw it on film," Grosser said. "He had both hands on it, but Jordan knocked it out."

CLASS 3A
HOLY FAMILY 55, DELASALLE 29



DeLaSalle running back Reggie Gandy ran past the Holy Family defense for his team's first touchdown of the game. He finished with 36 carries for 274 yards, added another 55 yards in receptions and scored three times.

Holy Family holds off relentless DeLaSalle

The Fire outscored the Islanders 14-0 in the third.

By DAVID LA VAKER • dlavaker@startribune.com

Holy Family linebacker/running back Peter Westcham had to ask teammates how to properly react to DeLaSalle's touchdown with no time remaining in the fourth quarter.

"Wherever displeasure he felt seeing the Islanders score turned to elation when teammates told him the game was over. Holy Family's 35-29 victory in Saturday's Class 3A state tournament semifinal puts the No. 5 Fire (13-0) in next week's championship game against Rochester Lourdes.

The Fire outscored DeLaSalle 14-0 in the pivotal third quarter. Quarterback Jeff Soule, connected with Peter Valakhan for a 50-yard

pass to set up the first touchdown, a 15-yard Soule pass to Westcham. The team then traded punts, but DeLaSalle (12-2) was penalized on its return. The bad field position made a fumble by DeLaSalle star running back Reggie Gandy two plays later all the more painful. Holy Family drove the short field (13 yards) for a TD and a 28-17 lead.

Gandy's fumble was the lone blemish on an otherwise monster performance. He started his day where most running backs hope to finish theirs, picking up 107 yards and two touchdowns in the first quarter. He finished with 56 carries for 254 yards, added another 55 yards in receptions and scored three times.

"He's outstanding," said Westcham, who joined Gandy on the Star Tribune's all-metro first team. "We tried to limit his cut backs and we

tried to fly over him to make tackles." DeLaSalle refused to relent. Facing a fourth-and-two, Islanders quarterback Tyler Harper ran right with Gandy in position to take the pitch. The ball never came. Harper kept for 20 yards and the touchdown, cutting Holy Family's lead to 28-21.

Restoring a double-digit lead required Holy Family to make a clutch fourth-down play of its own as Valakhan ran for 11 yards to the Islanders' 8-yard line. Westcham later scored to make it 35-23.

A scary moment occurred in the fourth as Fire defensive back Michael Warren lost his helmet making a tackle and slammed his head on the turf. He lay motionless for several minutes and was carried off as a precaution.

"He was moving his fingers and toes," Westcham said. "Our popcorn go out to him."

CLASS 2A
TRITON 12, EDEN VALLEY-WATKINS 6



Triton players were a happy bunch after defeating Eden Valley-Watkins 12-6 for the chance to play in the 2A Prep Bowl. The celebration erupted after Eden Valley-Watkins' last-second pass attempt for a touchdown was intercepted.

'Awesome' defense gets credit

Undefeated Triton will play Caledonia in the 2A Prep Bowl.

By MICHAEL RAND • mrand@startribune.com

Senior quarterback Logan Spitzack's completion for a first down with less than three minutes remaining wasn't quite enough to seal Triton's Class 2A semifinal victory over Eden Valley-Watkins.

No matter: It was fitting that Triton's defense had to snuff out one more desperate drive with an interception to officially claim the 12-6 win that gave the Cobras a berth in next Friday's Prep Bowl against Caledonia.

"Our defense was awesome," Spitzack said. "They really stepped up"

out in the first quarter to put Triton up 6-0. From there, a series of turnovers, punts and steps (the teams were 6-6) combined on fourth down conversions) ruled until the fourth quarter, when jetretings dashed for a 39-yard TD and gave the Cobras a 12-0 lead.

"One credit to them," Spitzack said. "They really bottled up the middle and forced us to run outside and throw more."

Triton's defense was just a little better. Eden Valley-Watkins' final chance to rally came in the closing seconds, after a pair of look-and-lateral moves the Eagles to Triton's 47 with seven seconds left. Justin Eckman's interception of a desperation heave came as time expired.

Nickell had a hat trick in just over two minutes time. The Robins kept up the intensity and never looked back. Seventh grader Gypson Nichol scored the lone goal for the Hawks at the start of the second.

With a lot of new team members this year, an undefeated season and a state title weren't exactly expected, Osum said. But with Nickell's leadership and other veteran players, the new kids fit right in.

"It means a lot to me that we can win it all, especially my senior year," Nichol said. "A goal is nice, but just winning is enough."

ADAPTED SOCCER

Anoka-Hennepin wins triple crown

The Mustangs won the soccer title in CI, while the Robins won in PI division.

By HEATHER M.L.E. hml@startribune.com

Hiring already won the floor hockey and softball state titles this year, all that was left for Anoka-Hennepin was a soccer championship to complete the grand slam of adapted sports.

The Mustangs achieved that feat with a 5-4 victory over defending champion Park Center in the CI division of the adapted soccer tournament Sunday at Stillwater Area High School.

It was the first CI adapted soccer state title for Anoka-Hennepin since 1993. The Mustangs were the runner-up in 2007.

Something had to give between two teams that came into the tournament with identical 8-4 records. The difference in the game was junior Zach Theroux, who scored all five goals.

Zach is one of the hardest working kids that I have ever had," said head coach Ted Johnson. "He never gives up, he never quits. He just goes out and works every day."

Scoring began as a back-and-forth battle between Theroux and Park Center sophomore August Wodrich. Zach accomplished a hat trick in the first half, giving two the break knotted at three goals.

"Park Center is an amazing team," Theroux said. "They play good, they play hard."

Fight battles for possession of the ball continued into the second half, but the turning point came on a penalty kick with a little more than 12 minutes remaining. Theroux put his foot on 64, yet a hard shot to the left side of the goal.

It was a nail-biter until the end. Theroux added his fifth goal with about three minutes left. But Park Center fired right back with a goal from center, keeping pace at 4-4.

With the sound of the final buzzer, there was jubilation on the floor. The Mustangs celebrated a year of state championships. "This is amazing," Theroux said.

PI Division

Senior Erin Nichell went on a scoring spree to help the Robins/Eden Valley/Mound-Westonka Robins come away with a third PI state championship in a row.

It's no surprise that the program's leading goal scorer came up with seven goals on the way to an 8-4 victory over Dakota United. The victory also gave the Robins an undefeated season.

Nichell says soccer is her sport, and it showed. The forward was always on the lookout for the next opportunity to get a pass and connect.

"I think it really worked in our favor that they [Dakota United] really didn't have an answer for Erin Nichell," Robins head coach Marcus Osum said.

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