

Sports

Big blue loss

By Peter Legasey/Correspondent

Thu Nov 08, 2007, 03:10 PM EST

BEVERLY, MASS. - Late into the second quarter of its game last Friday, the Beverly football team must have felt good about its chances to upend Swampscott and take control of the Northeastern Conference standings.

Beverly's Greg Pierce had already stomped over the Big Blue defense for 140 rushing yards, which included touchdown runs of 53 and 54 yards. And now the Panthers were in Swampscott territory again with a first down at the 25, leading 13-7.

But it was then that the Swampscott coaching staff decided to take their defensive game plan back to the drawing board on the fly. In an effort to close more gaps on the line of scrimmage, they switched from a three-man defensive line to a four-man front. With the extra man up front, they stopped the Panthers cold.

After the Big Blue defense turned the tide, their offense ensured that it would not be turned again. It embarked on a 75-yard drive, ending with a 10-yard strike from quarterback Peter Kinchley to Justin Mitchell as time expired in the first half.

Beverly head coach Dan Bauer said he thought that score was the play that changed the game.

"I guess one of the big impacting plays was the score right before the half," Bauer said. "That's always tough when a team scores right before the half. It's a big blow to your confidence, especially heading in to the locker room after you'd kept them to only one touchdown."

Swampscott went on to out-score Beverly 27-0 in the final two and a half quarters, winning 34-13.

"Stopping them first and 10 at our 25 was huge," said Swampscott head coach Steve Dembowski. "The game was going back-and-forth for the first quarter-and-a-half, and the key for us was when we made some adjustments to clog the running lanes."

Swampscott kept their foot on the throttle after the break, driving across the field with authority before Kinchley found Mitchell again for a 19-yard touchdown pass.

By the end of the game, Kinchley had put together a monster performance with 227 yards on 20-of-27 passing, plus another 79 rushing yards on 11 carries. He added a rushing touchdown to go along with his two TD passes, an 11-yard run in the second quarter that gave Swampscott a lead they would not relinquish.

Kinchley's stellar numbers were indicative of an all-around clinic put on by the Big Blue offense. Everyone got in on the fun with seven different players catching at least one pass (Mitchell, Jordan Kelly, Steve Moran, Trevor Wheeler, Kyle Shonio, Stephan Khouri and Ilya Levin).

Four different players had opportunities to run with the ball (Kinchley, Levin, Shonio and Shawn Hubauer), three of whom scored touchdowns (Kinchley, Levin and Shonio).

Bauer said he was particularly impressed with Kinchley's play.

"Their quarterback had a heck of a game," Bauer said. "My hat goes off to them. We slowed them down for a little while, but they executed better than they had all season."

Dembowski agreed.

“I think we clicked offensively for the first time,” Dembowski said. “That’s what we try to do every week. This team has a lot of good players on it. The more we can spread the ball around to those guys, the harder it is for the defense to figure out who’s going to be the guy. That makes us particularly hard to defend.”

It was a big loss for the Panthers, who fell to 5-4 overall and – more importantly – 3-1 in the Northeastern Conference Small with two games to play. For Beverly to have a shot at a league title, the Panthers will need to win their last two games and hope Swampscott loses its final two contests.

“Our kids never gave in, and that’s a positive thing you take away from a loss like that,” Bauer said. “We’re in a position now where we need some help to win the league, but that doesn’t change our philosophy. The only thing we can control is our preparation. We’ve got to prepare the way we have all season and try to win both games. If we do that, we’ve done all we can do.”

Bauer said he was excited for this weekend’s game against defending Div. 2A Super Bowl champions Winthrop. It’s the last home game at Hurd Stadium for the seniors on the team.

“That’s always a big one for our seniors,” Bauer said. “It’s their chance to go out at home with a big win over a very good football team.”

Record wise, Winthrop (4-4 overall) isn’t quite what it was last year, but Bauer said last year’s NEC Small champions are still dangerous.

“Records are deceiving,” Bauer said. “Look around our league and you can see that. We’ll be in for a tough football game, and I’m hoping we send the seniors off with a win in their last home game.”

Kickoff is scheduled for this Saturday at 1 p.m.

Comments (0)

Leave a Comment:

[Kissimmee DUI Attorney](#)

Been convicted of drunk driving? Criminal Law, It's All We Do.
www.Defense-Grp-Orl.com

[Jones - Baypath Realty](#)

Belchertown Area's Largest Selection of Real Estate.
www.jonesgrouponline.com

Ads by Google

Powered by: [SEO by eLocalListing](#), [Advertiser profiles](#), [Business directory by Planet Discover](#), [Zope Corp.](#)