

Press Clippings 10/14/2017

---Daily Herald--- 10/14/17

ECC to host fair featuring historically black colleges, universities Oct. 21

SUBMITTED BY ELGIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Representatives from more than 20 historically black colleges and universities will be at Elgin Community College Saturday, Oct. 21, for a college fair.

The event, which is free and open to the public, will be held from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the Building B Jobe Lounge, 1700 Spartan Drive in Elgin.

ECC is hosting the HBCU fair as a way to expose area high school and college students to more diverse educational opportunities, said Brittany Barber, student life coordinator for targeted populations.

"The goal of this fair is not to detract from the excellent colleges and universities we have in Illinois," Barber said. "This fair aims to expand the possibilities for students, as well as show them what HBCUs can offer."

ECC representatives also will be present to help students and families understand the academic, social, and financial advantages of starting their educations at ECC and transferring to an HBCU after two years.

The fair also will feature presentations by the United Negro College Fund, which funds scholarships for African-American students and general scholarship funds for 37 private HBCUs. The fair is sponsored by ECC, **Elgin Area School District U-46**, the United Negro College Fund, the Black History Family Festival Board, and Delta Sigma Theta Inc.

For more information, contact Brittany Barber at (847) 214-7078.

SPORTS ARTICLES

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Batavia stymies Larkin to move to 8-0

BY SCOTT MILLER

It wasn't exactly smooth sailing for heavily favored Batavia on Friday night at Memorial Field in Elgin, but the Bulldogs still managed to navigate their way through some rough waters especially early on to defeat Larkin 35-6 in Upstate Eight River Division action.

The Bulldogs remained undefeated at 8-0, 5-0 and now play for the division title next week against St. Charles North, which is also undefeated in conference play.

The Bulldogs turned the ball over 3 times in the first half, including a fumble at the Larkin 1-yard line after marching 52 yards on the opening drive of the game. Batavia was also whistled for 10 penalties in the game.

The Bulldogs finally got on track late in the first quarter. A 71-yard run by Jeremiah Evers to the Larkin 17-yard line set up a 1-yard touchdown run 3 plays later by Jared Martin.

Batavia tacked on 2 more scores in the first half. A fumble recovery by John Golden at the Larkin 39 set up a 21-yard touchdown pass from Riley Cooper to Collin Richter for the Bulldog's second score. Martin added another touchdown run of 8 yards that capped a 95-yard, 10 play drive late in the second quarter to make it 21-0 at the half.

"I would liked to have come out and played better at the outset," Batavia coach Dennis Piron said. "But this Larkin team always comes out and plays us tough. It was one of those crazy games. There were some goofy things going on out there with the penalties and turnovers. That's the fifth time this year where we've had the ball at the 1-yard line and didn't score. We need to improve that. But it was just one of those games you had to battle through and I'm proud of the way our guys maintained their focus and rose to the occasion."

Larkin (3-5, 1-4) made it interesting with a long 80-yard touchdown drive to open the second half that nearly used 9 minutes of the clock. It culminated on an 8-yard touchdown pass from A.J. Ball to Jahari Stubbs to cut the deficit to 21-6.

However, Batavia shut the door from that point and added 2 late touchdowns. Quin Urwiler had a 10-yard touchdown run and following a Larkin interception Evers scored from 2 yards out.

Evers finished with a game-high 113 yards on 7 carries.

"It was just a matter of trusting my line and following their blocks," Evers said. "We came out a little shaky, but eventually got settled in. It feels great to stay undefeated. We set a lot of big goals and we are getting them done. Now we just need to keep doing it."

Martin finished with 62 yards rushing on 6 carries and another 40 yards on 4 receptions.

Kindrell Morris had 82 yards rushing to lead the Royals. Max Wickerchen and Pierre Black each had fumble recoveries and Stubbs added an interception for Larkin.

"We showed a lot of fight," Larkin coach Dragon Teonic said. "That's something we didn't do last week. So that was great to see. I'm proud of the way the kids battled. We made them earn it."

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St. Charles East hammers Elgin

BY CRAIG BRUESKE

Needing a win to secure a state playoff berth, St. Charles East's football team left little doubt about its postseason plans Friday night.

Seven different players scored touchdowns as the Saints (6-2, 3-2) rolled to a 77-0 Upstate Eight Conference River Division victory over Elgin at Norris Stadium.

"I thought we executed well tonight," said Saints coach Bryce Farquhar, whose team outgained the Maroons (2-6, 1-4) by a staggering 379-24 margin. "That was one of the biggest things."

Senior quarterback Clayton Isbell returned to the starting lineup for the first time in 3 weeks due to a foot/ankle injury and made his presence felt on the Saints' opening drive.

Isbell capped a 5-play, 51-yard drive with an electrifying 26-yard touchdown run as the Saints grabbed a 7-0 lead with 8:44 left in the first quarter.

"Clayton coming out and getting a few series in -- that was big for us," said Farquhar. "I was really glad to see him get back and get a few reps in, fine-tuning for the playoffs. We know that's the direction we're heading.

"We talk to the kids all the time about taking playoff reps no matter who your opponent is. I think they did that tonight."

The Saints' lead swelled to 21-0 after 1 quarter before a 35-point second quarter extended the margin to 56-0 by halftime.

Junior Justin Jett (11 carries, 63 yards) scored on runs of 3 and 4 yards, respectively, while senior 2-way standout Nick Garlisch (4 carries, 75 yards) added TD runs of 27 and 31 yards before his 43-yard punt return for a TD with 49 seconds left in the half.

"That was the first one this season," said Garlisch. "It felt good. I've come close a couple times but it felt good to finally get it. I thought for sure I'd turn around and see a bunch of flags but there was none."

Abe Swanson (14-yard run) and Ronan Macaluso (11-yard run) added first-half touchdowns for the Saints.

Junior backup quarterback Jake Guzick scored a pair of second-half touchdowns while junior Dan Goetsch closed out the scoring on a 20-yard TD run with 2:20 remaining.

"We put a lot of our backups in and they've been waiting for their chance," said Farquhar.

Drew Conn, Pat Griffin and Robert Carne recovered fumbles while Jacob Molina added an interception for the Saints.

"We had the two-game skid so it feels good now to get the wins under our belt and prepare for the playoffs," said Garlisch.

Held to just 4 first-half yards of total offense, Elgin finished the contest with 4 first downs.

"It's really tough," said Elgin tailback Brandon Bridges. "We've just got to bounce back from this and give everything we've got for next week's Larkin game."

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West Aurora handles Bartlett to earn playoff bid

BY JONATHAN JONES

West Aurora (6-2, 3-1) punched its third consecutive ticket to the playoffs after spoiling Bartlett's senior night Friday with a 56-14 victory at Streamwood's Millennium Field.

The Blackhawks welcomed back running back Cameron Donaltan with open arms and he did not disappoint. The West Aurora senior scampered for 4 touchdowns and each of the runs were over 20 yards. Donaltan finished his rushing clinic with 200 yards.

Donaltan had been sidelined with an injury since Week 4.

"The guards were pulling well," said Donaltan. "It's great to have other running backs doing big things on their touches. Our line gives us big holes for explosive plays for me, (Trevon Tittle and Hezekiah Salter). It feels good to (to be back in the playoffs). No one can take it away from us."

Besides Donaltan's day on the ground, the West Aurora rushing effort racked up a collective 371 yards.

The Blackhawks began their day in the end zone midway through the first quarter with an interception snagged by the leaping junior cornerback Reggieon Autman-Suggs who returned his pick for a 75 yard return.

Donaltan was responsible for the following West Aurora touchdowns for 51 and 27 yards respectively.

The Bartlett (2-6, 2-2) offense wouldn't go down without a fight. Junior Hawk wideout Austin Gates connected with junior quarterback Dean Kotsovetis for a jump ball touchdown, tapping his toes in the corner of the end zone. Gates finished the day with 139 receiving yards.

"When they get going you have to give them credit," said Bartlett coach Eric Ilich about West Aurora. "They do their thing and are a high-quality, well-oiled machine. That being said, we have a lot of young inexperienced guys and we're trying to get to where

they are. I'm proud of our guys, being able to get some stops. There are a lot of positive things to build on."

West Aurora made one more trip to the end zone after Salter absorbed an 18-yard toss from Blackhawks sophomore quarterback William Tammaru. West Aurora took a 28-14 lead into the locker room.

Bartlett senior Joey Allen wrestled for a 2-yard touchdown late in the second quarter, but the Hawks would not be able to put any more points on the board.

Other West Aurora players that tallied 6-pointers included Salter (113 yards, 2 TDs) and Moshe Rogers. Tammaru finished the day with 2 passing touchdowns.

Geneva hosts West Aurora next week.

"Getting to the playoffs in the third year now, I'm in a good place right now," said West Aurora coach Nate Eimer. "This is the first time we've done this in school history. (Geneva) is a great matchup for week nine. The seniors will be playing hard (from Geneva) because it's their senior night, and we'll be battling for a seed."

Press Clippings 10/15/2017

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Expo focuses on career pathways for U46 students

Local businesses, industry officials to attend district event

BY RAFAEL GUERRERO

The 3rd annual career expo for School District U46 will focus on curriculum and career pathways for students.

The expo, titled "Explore 2017: A Community, Curriculum, and Career Expo," will feature more than 65 careers, with dozens of local businesses and industry officials leading discussions and demonstrations.

"Community and business leaders who understand the importance of showcasing careers to middle and high school students will create a rich experience for students in various career fields, from environmental sciences to culinary arts," said Nancy Coleman, executive director of the local non-profit Alignment Collaborative for Education, which helped organize the event.

The expo runs from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 14, at Elgin Community College. The district recommends entering through Building A, although the expo is in Building B. Free shuttle buses are available to and from U46 middle schools. Students must be accompanied by an adult to the free event.

District educators and officials want the expo to be a chance for students and families to witness the opportunities in the area. For instance, local manufacturer Fabric Images will help students assemble a frame, while the AVID CNA school will perform day-to-day procedures taught at the location, among others. Students may also have the opportunity to learn more about public safety careers from the Elgin Police Department, who will bring along a SWAT truck, and the Elgin and Carol Stream fire departments.

According to a U46 news release, district faculty and staff will explain core classes, electives and popular course sequences based on a student's career interest, whether it be automotive welding, health care science, manufacturing, or something else. Two automotive teams -- including one all-female group -- will race the clock in an engine tear-down.

"It's never too early to start thinking about high school courses as well as college and careers," said U46 CEO Tony Sanders. "Explore 2017 will provide an opportunity for families to engage with U46 teachers, guidance counselors and local organizations on possible career pathways their students can take."

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City: Building is ready for EMSA

Elgin officials, contractor agree that only cosmetic work needed for school

BY RAFAEL GUERRERO



The Neil Building, at the former Fox River Country Day School in Elgin, will need only minor repairs before the Elgin Math and Science Academy can open in the fall of 2018. (Rafael Guerrero / Courier-News)

The former Fox River Country Day School campus can give off a horror movie-like vibe because of all the aged and abandoned structures — except for the Neil Building, proposed home of the Elgin Math and Science Academy.

On the property's southeast side and shuttered by the school in 2011, the building has been maintained by its owners, the City of Elgin.

Heating and lighting have been on for years, said Rich Hoke, Elgin's building maintenance superintendent, during a recent tour of the structure, built in 2005. A pipe burst inside the building some years ago and was repaired, the only significant fix needed from the city, he said.

Its condition and location are reasons the Elgin Charter School Initiative chose it for the proposed school. Local contractor representatives and city officials agree the building is in good shape to house students next school year.

The building is approximately 2,900 square feet, has 13 classrooms, two administrative offices, a conference room, an assistant's room, and common space. Each classroom is between 700 and 800 square feet.

Hoke said it needs only cosmetic work.

"What you'd have to do to get it up to shape, it's very minor," he said. Repairs were estimated to cost \$200,000 by the charter group.

Marty Dwyer, an Elgin-area construction laborer, visited the building for the first time.

"To walk into something like this is incredible," said Dwyer, business manager for Laborers' Local 582, with three decades of construction experience and working with contractors.

Dwyer added his wife, who works in a private school, would love to have such a school building.

Some of the state commissioners who reversed School District U46's decision to reject the charter shared similar sentiments.

"I have never encountered a building as suitable for a new school as the Neil Building," said commissioner David Feinberg during an Oct. 3 meeting.

Hoke said some of the rooms need new drywall because portions have been removed, and a new coat of paint.

"As you can see, they do need tables and chairs," he said, pointing to the empty rooms.

The physically handicapped will be able to access all but one room, which is on the second floor and accessible only by stairs.

When the day school operated, the cafeteria was in a separate building. The EMSA charter only grants access to Neil, prompting such ideas as a temporary lunchroom in the large gathering space. Should the school operators wish to repair and reopen any other buildings, it would have to be done with private dollars and with permission from the state charter commission.

As for capacity, Hoke and Dwyer were uncertain. The commission said EMSA must cap enrollment at 400 students. If every classroom is filled, class size would be about 31.

Under EMSA's proposal, there would only be grades kindergarten through third the first year.

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Column: Persistence pays off for Elgin charter initiative

BY LINDA MCDANIEL-HALE

By a 5-3 vote, the Illinois State Charter School commission has given the green light for the Elgin Math and Science Academy to open next fall.

This process has not been easy for the Elgin Charter School Initiative, the group behind the proposed school. The first go-around in 2014 found both U-46 and the state commission voting against what would have been the district's first charter school.

With a lot of determination, even a second refusal by the U-46 board did not discourage the group. Instead, members appealed to the Illinois State Charter School Commission and their diligence paid off.

EMSA's website sincerely thanked "the commission and their staff for their thoughtful consideration of our appeal. A big thank-you also goes out to all of our volunteers, supporters, future families, and design team!"

I have been a supporter of this project right from the get-go. According to EMSA, this school will "benefit children of all backgrounds" and "engage parents, community leaders, and experts in support of student learning."

At the appeal hearing, Tony Sanders, U-46 CEO, stated financial concerns were one of the reasons the district had been against this charter school. Under terms of the charter, U-46 will be paying \$10,368 per pupil. District officials also questioned the group's business plan.

U-46 also told the state charter school commission of concerns about lack of services for special need students and lack of space in the proposed school site in the Neil Building on the campus of the former Fox River Country Day School.

EMSA pledges to create a learning environment that "implements field work, project-based learning, and community service." Students will also have a curriculum that "generates critical thinking, problem-solving and team-work."

With the proposed site being such a peaceful and serene campus, these lucky students will be given the opportunity to learn in a beautiful environment not available at other Elgin schools.

Although the Elgin Charter School Initiative has much work ahead, in the end this is an outstanding educational opportunity for those students who are selected to attend.

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Bartlett High School earns Democracy School honor for civics classes, programs

SUBMITTED BY ELGIN AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT U-46

A state organization recently recognized Bartlett High School for offering outstanding civics courses and extracurricular opportunities that help students become involved in local and state issues that impact local communities.

The Illinois Civic Mission Coalition honored Bartlett High School's 10 years of fostering a school climate that cultivates and models civic learning and builds strong relationships within the surrounding community.

The U-46 school is among 67 Illinois high schools since 2006 that have earned the designation of a Democracy School.

The designation requires submitting proof or demonstrating teaching practices that encourage student growth in civic education.

Bartlett High School, one of the original Democracy Schools, has been vigilant about creating opportunities and experiences that empower students to nurture and sustain democracy.

This includes engaging in discussions about current and controversial issues, as well as, participating in democratic simulations such as mock trials and mock elections, and providing service learning opportunities in the community such as handing out care packages to the homeless, or the Buddy program, which helps inform elementary school students about the dangers of underage drinking.

The Bartlett school assembled a democracy school team, which consisted of teachers in world language, science, special education and language arts to support the Democracy School Initiative.

The initiative brings civics into the entire school with all departments committed to teach good citizenship.

"We commend Bartlett High School for their tenacity and enthusiasm in expanding and improving civic learning across the curriculum and throughout Illinois," said Sonia Mathew, Civic Learning manager at the Robert R. McCormick Foundation. "Through

these practices and experiences students see firsthand the critical role they play in shaping government and society."

For its long-term commitment, Bartlett High School will receive a \$3,000 stipend in December from the Robert R. McCormick Foundation, which convenes the Illinois Civic Mission Coalition, to continue their civic learning initiatives, as well as a new banner for public display.

"Bartlett High School receiving recognition as a Democracy School is a notice to ourselves and our constituencies that we take seriously the maintenance and promotion of vigorous democratic processes," said Larry Pahl, Bartlett High School civics and world history instructor. "We want all levels of our school district community, including administrators, teachers, parents, and students to have a voice, to be heard and to be treated with respect and civility."

In 2015, the Illinois Civic Mission Coalition also named U-46's Streamwood High School an Illinois Democracy School. A Streamwood High teacher and two students explain their plan for developing their civic courses and opportunities on a YouTube video, "SHS named Illinois Democracy School."

SPORTS ARTICLES

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Girls Volleyball: South Elgin takes Elgin tourney, sets wins record

South Elgin's girls volleyball team had a historic day for the program on Saturday.

Not only did the Storm win its third straight weekend tournament by going undefeated at the Elgin Tournament, South Elgin also set a program record for wins in a season and extended its winning streak this season to 13 straight.

The Storm (24-7) downed St. Edward 25-19, 25-13, Elgin 25-17, 25-9, Dundee-Crown 25-20, 25-20, Elgin Academy 25-6, 25-10 and Leyden 25-10, 25-16 to win the Elgin tourney.

Leading the way for coach Joni Plach's Storm were Hayley Fisher (44 kills), Elizabeth Vadrine (27 kills), Amelia O'Neal (13 kills), Casie Swanson (45 assists, 12 digs), Emily Wellman (25 digs), Kendall Richardson (53 assists), Kylee Hunter (11 kills), McKayla Geraghty (24 digs), Sarah Murray (16 digs) and Yvalis Cortes-Rojas (17 digs).

Dundee-Crown went 4-1 in the tournament to take second place.

The Chargers (8-17) defeated Elgin Academy 25-10, 25-12, Elgin 25-21, 25-23, St. Edward 25-15, 25-16 and Leyden 25-23, 25-18 but lost to champion South Elgin.

D-C was paced by Tarrah Kamp (34 kills), Jenna Thelen (29 kills), Irene Martin (29 kills, 31 digs, 12 aces), Jenna Brown (14 kills, 56 assists, 21 digs, 10 aces), Claire Muhvic (9 kills, 45 assists, 17 digs), Zoe Sitarz (66 digs) and Carolyn Ptaszek (33 digs, 11 aces).

Batavia 2nd at Maine West: Batavia, which has been in the Maine West Pumpkin tournament since 1991, finished second in only its third trip to the Gold Division. The Bulldogs defeated Maine West 26-24, 25-16 and Hoffman Estates 25-13, 25-8 on Friday then downed Lockport 22-25, 25-13, 25-17 and Belleville West 25-14, 25-20 on Saturday before falling to Sandburg 23-25, 25-16, 25-21 in the championship game. Leading Batavia (20-13) for the tournament were Sam Juarez (11 aces, 36 of 37 passing, 73 digs), Jenna Garrett (106 assists, 45 digs), Hannah Yaconis (12 blocks, 43 kills), Maddy Boyer (31 kills) and Becca Robinson (6 aces, 30 digs).

Westminster Christian 11th at Beecher: The Warriors (10-14) lost to Grant Park 25-17, 25-12, Fieldcrest 25-17, 25-14, Peotone: 25-16, 25-10 and defeated Morgan Park 25-16, 25-13. They were led by Grace Bickford (5 aces, 4 digs, 18 kills); Sophia Hopkins (2 aces, 30 assists, 4 kills); Kristen Mason (4 aces, 9 kills) and Elise VanNoord (3 1/2 blocks, 7 kills).

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Family sues Kenyon Woods, U46 following February assault in South Elgin

BY JANELLE WALKER

The family of a boy seriously injured in February in what was described as a brutal assault by another student has sued his South Elgin middle school, School District U46 and school officials.

The lawsuit by Henry and his parents Karen Sembdner and Henry Sembdner, was filed in Kane County Circuit Court on Oct. 4.

In addition to Kenyon Woods Middle School, 1515 Raymond St. in South Elgin, and the district, School Nurse Susan Harness, Principal Lisa Olsem and assistant principal Edward Amos were named in the complaint. It alleges that the school waited nearly 45 minutes after the hallway attack to call 911 and that the school should have been aware of the danger the other student posed to other students.

Elgin District U46 denied comment, noting the case was pending, according to spokeswoman Mary Fergus.

According to reports, the younger Sembdner, then a seventh grader at the school, suffered severe injuries and was taken to Presence Saint Joseph Hospital in Elgin and later to Advocate Lutheran General Hospital in Park Ridge.

The complaint alleges that the eighth grade student accused in the attack, called "John Doe" in the complaint, had a "significant and lengthy history," of infractions at the school, including prior violent attacks against other students that resulted in physical injuries.

According to the suit, Sembdner encountered the other student in that hallway, who then picked him up off the ground, immobilizing him, before throwing Sembdner headfirst to the ground and/or striking him in the face and head.

Sembdner, the suit said, was unconscious immediately following the attack.

According to the suit, the attack happened during a passing period in a hallway that did not have surveillance cameras or an adult watching. Instead, the complaint states, two teachers did come out of their rooms shortly after the incident, saw Sembdner was bleeding and did not call 911.

The school nurse, Harness, took an unconscious Sembdner to her office and called the boy's mother, the suit said, but only indicated that Sembdner had a broken tooth and a bloody nose.

It was not until Sembdner's eyes began to bulge and he became nauseated that 911 was called, the suit said.

Sembdner began convulsing in the ambulance, it stated.

The suit is seeking in excess of \$50,000 in damages.

The other student, who has not been identified because of his age, pleaded guilty to one count of aggravated battery causing bodily harm before Kane County Juvenile Court Judge Clint Hull in July. Under the agreement, the student will serve 12 months probation, 100 hours of community service, submit to random drug testing, attend school, cover court fees, and complete counseling, such as for anger management.

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South Elgin digs deep, contains Cary-Grove

BY JERRY FITZPATRICK

The South Elgin football team gave its doubters something to chew on and gave visiting Cary-Grove plenty to think about moving forward with Sunday's 21-6 nonconference victory at Streamwood's Millennium Field.

Nine days after slugging it out with undefeated Batavia in a 10-7 loss, Class 8A South Elgin (7-1) again played well defensively. The Storm limited the third-ranked team in Class 6A to 243 total yards and a third-quarter touchdown. Cary-Grove (5-3) had been averaging 38 ppg.

"It's crazy, man. I'm at a loss for words. It feels great," South Elgin senior cornerback Anthony Zabran said. "We had assignment defense. We had people on pitch, quarterback, dive all game and just shut them down. Just more physical, got to the ball. Lots of hats around the ball."

Cary-Grove junior fullback Max Buss returned from injury to carry 30 times for 150 yards and a touchdown. Likewise, junior back Danny Daigle returned from injury to gain 23 yards on 8 carries.

However, the Trojans didn't maximize their offensive opportunities. In 6 possessions they scored one touchdown, punted twice, turned the ball over on downs twice after long drives and fumbled once.

Defensively, the Trojans limited the Storm to 273 yards but yielded 3 touchdowns in 6 South Elgin possessions.

"We got beat in a lot of facets today," Cary-Grove coach Brad Seaburg said. "Like I told the guys, it starts and ends with me. We got out-coached, we got outplayed, we got out-physicalized. We've got a lot of work to do this week."

Cary-Grove came up empty on a mammoth first-quarter drive, which began at its own 1-yard line and ended 78 yards and 17 plays later. On fourth-and-6 at the South Elgin 21, Zabran felled Daigle for a 3-yard loss before he could get outside.

Quarterback Nate Gomez subsequently drove the Storm 76 yards the other way in 11 plays, capped by a 5-yard flip on third down to senior receiver Kyle Pollert. The drive's big play was a 40-yard pass from Gomez to Pollert to the Cary-Grove 29.

"They had no one over the top," said Pollert, who made 5 catches for 60 yards. "We worked on it all week. We knew it was going to be there."

The game's only turnover loomed large. Cary-Grove got the ball to begin the second half but on the first play from scrimmage quarterback Quinn Priester lost control after the

center exchange and South Elgin's Colt Doherty recovered the fumble at the 30-yard line.

Gomez capitalized 10 plays later on third-and-goal from the 5 when he connected with senior receiver Jauron Wells on a slant for a touchdown. Andrew Bucaro's extra point made it 14-0 with 7:57 left in the third quarter.

Cary-Grove answered with a 16-play, 90-yard scoring drive. Buss carried 9 times for 43 yards, including a 1-yard plunge with 1:19 left in the third quarter. However, the extra point kick sailed left of the goal post, leaving the score 14-6.

After the teams traded fourth-quarter punts, the Storm offense put the game away by driving 64 yards in 10 plays. Senior running back Pierre Toussaint finished it off by taking a pitch 11 yards up the right sideline for a touchdown with 3:40 to play.

It was sweet redemption for South Elgin's seniors, who coach Pat Pistorio said "tapped out" last year when Cary-Grove ripped the Storm 50-6 in Cary.

"It was a statement game," Pollert said. "We knew all week that we had to come back. We had to show them that we're better than last year and that we needed to win this game."

Gomez carried 20 times for 64 yards and efficiently completed 15 of 18 attempts for 127 yards and 2 touchdowns, mostly on bubble screens and short routes.

"They were (leaving) a backside receiver one on one all day," Gomez said of the Cary-Grove defense. "I took advantage of that. As well as on the perimeter they were giving a lot of cushion to those quick screens. Get 7 or 8 yards every time and that'll get the job done."

Cary-Grove completes the regular season with a Fox Valley Conference game at Crystal Lake Central (4-3) next Friday.

South Elgin can seal the Upstate Eight Valley outright title next Saturday with a home victory against winless East Aurora. A win would give the Storm an 8-1 record, thereby tying them with the 2015 team for best regular-season record in the program's 12-year history.

"Everyone was doubting us this whole year," Gomez said. "People were saying we were going 5-4 and maybe not even make playoffs. We proved them wrong. We play with a lot of heart and we're very physical and very fast."