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SPORTS SECTION

West Aurora pounds Streamwood

By Kevin McGavin

Hezzy Slaughter, Moshe Rogers, Will Tammaru and Denver Warren were on another level against Streamwood Friday night in Aurora.

West Aurora was anointed the prohibitive preseason Upstate Eight Conference football favorite for a reason with the aforementioned quartet of athletes manning both sides of the ball.

But they are hardly the Blackhawks' only weapons.

Streamwood found out the hard way as seven different players scored for West Aurora in its third consecutive blowout victory to start the season.

West Aurora averaged almost 17 yards per play in outgaining the Sabres 486-56 during its 54-0 victory.

The Blackhawks are 3-0 overall and in the league while keeping Streamwood winless (0-3, 0-3).

Salter began the Blackhawks' latest running-clock game with 59 of his game-high 172 yards -- on a mere five touches -- on the second play from scrimmage.

Salter added his second score from 16 yards out late in the first half as the Blackhawks led 41-0 at the break.

"A big shout-out to the O-line (tackles Evan Alexandrou, Tyler Akins; guards Eddie Wilson, Ian Mooney; center Anthony Chavez and tight end Derek Dodson)," Salter said. "They worked their butts off the whole week. We never worry about the score."

Tammaru, the Blackhawks' starting quarterback who connected on all 5 passing attempts for 143 yards and a pair of scores, collaborated with Rogers, the latest three-sport star for West Aurora, from 61 yards out on the fourth play from scrimmage.

"Will is a Division-I quarterback," Rogers said. "Will threw a perfect ball. I had to break it. He comes up big for us."

"A lot of people think (Tammaru) is one of the better (Class of) 2020 quarterbacks in the state," West Aurora coach Nate Eimer said.

There is no question Warren is one of Illinois' finest juniors.

The 6-foot-3, 300-pound Miller has already orally committed to Michigan; the junior nose guard and end single-handedly disrupted the Sabres' offense.

"(Warren) controls a lot of stuff," said Streamwood coach Don Guindon, whose team managed only 35 yards' passing and 21 more on the ground in 41 offensive snaps. "Even when he doesn't make the play, he creates for their linebackers. (The Blackhawks) are going to be playing a lot of football (after the regular season)."

"I like playing inside more," Miller said. "Everybody (on defense) got after it. We had our goal: that was to dominate."

Zach Jacobson (45-yard punt return), Rhadarious Lomax (37-yard reception), Trevon Tittle (1-yard plunge), Antwone Rayford (44-yard run) and Tony Rayford (73-yard run) had the Blackhawks' other touchdowns.

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Bartlett wins wild one over Glenbard South

By Scott Walsh

Carrying an American flag with a half dozen youngsters in his wake, some wearing his jersey, Bartlett senior tailback Nick Deckard looked every bit the warrior as he walked off the field after the leading the Hawks to their inaugural victory at their new Bartlett Sports Complex.

And he played like one, too. The 5-6, 170-pound senior pounded the Glenbard South defense to the tune of 186 yards on 29 carries as Bartlett bested the Raiders 33-23 in Bartlett. Senior signal caller Jonah O'Brien, a transfer from Wisconsin, picked apart the Raiders defense in the air, completing 13 of 24 passes for 292 yards and three touchdowns.

"I absolutely could not have done what I did without the guys in front of me," Deckard said after the game on his march with Old Glory. "They were incredible tonight. I got the ball a lot tonight and that's exactly the way I want it. No one wants the ball late in the game more than I do, and I know I can handle it."

As is so often the case with dominant players, Deckard seemed to get stronger as the game wore on. Head coach Matt Erlenbaugh called Deckard's number on 12 of the 16 plays the Hawks ran in fourth quarter. One of those was a 27-yard scamper on which he nearly got knocked down before righting himself and scoring his lone touchdown of the evening.

"We had a lot of adversity in the first half," explained Erlenbaugh about a penalty-laden first 24 minutes for both teams. "But I thought we executed well and we did a good job of hanging in there. We're back on track."

Glenbard South's Nick Plaso had a, well, strange night behind center. The 6-2, 165-pound junior missed on his first seven passes, connected on his next five and wound up completing just 9 of 30 -- but six of those nine went for 24 yards or more, allowing him to rack up 254 yards. He also had one touchdown pass, a 61-yard strike to Trevor Burnett to give the Raiders (2-1, 2-1) their last lead of the game, 20-13 with 1:14 left in the first half.

"The effort was there tonight, but the execution was not," assessed Raiders head coach Ryan Crissey. "I thought we let them off the hook and gave them two and three chances. This is a huge gut check moment for our team."

O'Brien got the Hawks on the board on their first possession when he found Nick Mansk alone near the left sideline. The 6-3 senior raced 35 yards to pay dirt to give Bartlett (2-1, 2-1) a 7-0 lead. Plaso engineered a 13-play drive that culminated with a 5-yard scoring run by Antonio Carter (15 carries, 26 yards) to knot it at 7-7 after 12 minutes.

After stopping the Hawks on downs inside their own 10-yard line, Plaso pieced together an 11-play scoring drive that included long completions to Cade Hardtke (29 yards) and Burnett (42 yards) and capitalized on a pair of Bartlett personal fouls to put Glenbard South on top 14-7 with just over two minutes gone in the second quarter.

O'Brien scored on a 15-yard run on the Hawks' ensuing possession, but Amari Babers missed the extra point to make it 14-13 Raiders. After the Plaso-to-Burnett connection made it 20-13, O'Brien sent it to halftime knotted at 20-20 when his 36-yard arrow to Austin Gates was tipped by Glenbard South's Tony Ashley at the 5, right into the waiting arms of Gates as the first half expired.

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SPORTS SECTION

South Elgin blanks Elgin for 3rd straight shutout

By Scott Miller

The South Elgin defense continued its dominance on Friday night recording its third straight shutout in a 51-0 win over Elgin at Memorial Field.

The Storm held the Maroons to zero yards of offense in the first half and just 98 for the game.

It's the first time a South Elgin team has recorded 3 shutouts in a season and the key to the success has been pretty simple according to head coach Dragan Teonic.

"We are not doing anything complicated," Teonic said. "We just have some really bright football players who play smart and physical and get to the ball. On top of that we don't miss many tackles. It's a unit that takes a lot of pride in what they do."

Defensive back Patrick Noworol is just one of 4 senior starters for the Storm defensive and serves as a catalyst.

"Our coaches deserve a lot of credit," Noworol said. "They do a great job of researching the other teams and getting us ready with a game plan. When you are prepared you can just fly to the ball. Our motto is 9-5-9. That stands for 9 players 5 yards from the ball 90 percent of the time. We try to do that every play."

Noworol also played a big role on the offensive with a team leading 97 yards rushing on 5 carries, including a 54-yard touchdown run in the second half.

"Davion Cherwin my lead blocker deserves all the credit (on the touchdown run)," Noworol said. "He sealed the block on the corner and left me with a clear path. We have a lot of good running backs on our team all with different skill sets."

Noworol was one of 10 South Elgin backs to combine for 257 yards rushing on 38 carries with 5 different backs combining for 6 rushing touchdowns.

Cherwin had a pair of touchdown runs. His first came just 15 seconds into the game on a 12-yard run following a long return off an onside kick attempt to start the game. Cherwin later had a 6-yard touchdown run just before halftime to make it 24-0.

Azxavier Salinas added a 2-yard touchdown run in the first half while the defense recorded a safety on a sack by Keshawn Smith.

Quarterback Jakob Johnson got in on the scoring with a 2-yard touchdown run in the third quarter while Travis Tranchitella scored on a 19-yard run.

"Our running backs are like hockey lines," Teonic said. "We can just keep rolling out a fresh set of legs. We believe in playing a lot of people."

Ian Nathan had the defensive play of the game with a 52-yard interception return for a touchdown in the second half.

"I had their best player in a one-on-one and I knew they were going to him," Nathan said. "I just read my steps and made a break on the ball. It was pretty exciting to score. We just work real hard on defense and outlast our opponents."

Elgin falls to 0-3 with the loss.

"There's no where to go but up," said Elgin coach Anthony Mason. "We just have to keep working on executing better."

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SPORTS SECTION

Standout Sabre

By Patrick Z. McGavin The Courier-News

Streamwood coach says Chavez, a 4-year starter, is 'one of the best offensive players in the state'

Streamwood's Alex Chavez signals to teammates that he's open during a game against Marmion at the Barrington Classic earlier this season. Chavez has three goals and four assists through six games. (H. Rick Bamman/Courier-News)

Senior forward Alex Chavez loves having the freedom to make his own mark for Streamwood.

“When I think about soccer and my own style and what I bring to the game, I think what defines me is the flair I bring to the game,” Chavez said. “I love to play with energy and a kind of high style.”

Chavez, a four-year varsity starter, is the player who ignites Streamwood’s attack. As a junior, he scored 12 goals and contributed 10 assists as the Sabres reached a Class 3A sectional final and finished 14-6-2.

Streamwood coach Matt Polovin said Chavez brings a brash personality to the team. Polovin quickly added that Chavez is not in the least bit a selfish player.

“He’s one of the best offensive players in the state, and he is very fun to watch,” Polovin said. “He is a great talent who makes his teammates around him better.”

Chavez has scored three goals and added four assists this season for the Sabres (5-1). Streamwood beat Mount Carmel 1-0 on Sept. 1 to win the prestigious Barrington Classic.

In the past, his leadership was more by example. This season, he has become more direct and vocal.

“We have a lot of young guys — sophomores and juniors — on the team now,” Chavez said. “I think it is my job to show them the right way and how to play the game.”

Due to graduation, Streamwood has been tasked with replacing quality players such as all-state forward Aldo Lazaro.

The most significant absence to Chavez also is the most personal: his older brother, Oscar, who was a four-year starting midfielder.

“Once Oscar graduated, Alex opened up his game even more,” Polovin said. “He has the speed and technical ability as any top forward. His finishing capabilities are one to watch.”

Now, Alex Chavez is ready to go out in style.

“Soccer is all about making memories,” he said. “That’s why I play — having fun times with my friends and teammates.”

Rivalry game: Senior forward Omar Lopez continued his torrid start by scoring both goals as Elgin edged rival Larkin 2-1 at home Wednesday afternoon.

Lopez has scored 13 goals for the Maroons (5-1). Senior defender Alex Kunicki assisted on Lopez’s game-winner.

Another standout has been senior midfielder Jesus Millan, who has one goal and three assists.

“Our captains are leading the charge,” Elgin coach David Borg said. “We have 15 players back from last year who saw action. The new guys are also fitting in.

“We strengthened our schedule, and we are taking every team we play very seriously.”

With so many returning players, continuity has been a breeze.

“We have almost the same team back as last year, and we are winning with the same mentality,” Kunicki said.

Size doesn’t matter: With an enrollment of 207, Harvest Christian has had early success by underscoring quality over quantity.

In his debut, coach Sina Vidic established a program record for victories in a season by going 15-3-1. The Lions won a 1A regional title for only the second time in program history.

The record dipped last year to 9-7-1, but a lot of younger players had significant time on the field. The team graduated just three seniors. Senior forward Eric Oehler, senior midfielder Patrick D'Alessandro and junior midfielder Johnny Constante have been the early standouts for the Lions (2-1).

“We have 18 players back, and our core has been together for a couple of years now,” Vidic said. “It’s a seasoned and hungry group, and we have set our goals very high this year.”

Patrick Z. McGavin is a freelance reporter.

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U-46 teacher touts importance of students' cultural background

Daily Herald report



Gregorio Posada joins some of his first-grade students in a lesson at Harriet Gifford Elementary School in Elgin. *Courtesy of Elgin Area School District U-46*

Understanding the cultural background of students has an important role in Gregorio Posada's approach to teaching first grade at Harriet Gifford Elementary School in Elgin Area School District U-46.

His teaching career has included 12 years at Harriet Gifford and four years at Lords Park Elementary, also in U-46. He also taught first grade for two years at Lords Park and taught elementary grade levels in his native Mexico.

Even before school starts, Posada calls parents and introduces himself. He has taught Mexican folk dance to students as well as taught Muay Thai (martial arts).

Each year, he organizes a huge Mother's Day celebration at Harriet Gifford, where students dance and sing for their mothers.

Q. Why is social-emotional learning important in education today?

A. Socio-emotional learning has always been a paramount aspect in any educational system. However, in this current paradigm of thought, there is a missing element, which is culture. I would say the whole society and school districts around the nation should be talking about sociocultural and emotional development. Culture is an embedded part in the human cultivation. Educating the young child involves not only his/her emotions, but his cultural heritage and his family.

Q. What are some of the most important lessons you try to teach students within this discipline?

A. The term "socio" involves a group of people interacting together. It is impossible to think about the child's social development without thinking and acknowledging his/her cultural background.

We want our students to be able to understand differences and find a common ground. How do we do that? At district level, we have a program called PBIS (Positive Behaviors Interventions and Support). We work hard to persuade, educate, and convince our students that responsibility, respect, and safety are important values they can use, not only in our school setting, but also in their personal lives.

Q. What are some ways those lessons are taught in your classroom?

A. At school level, we teach a program called "Second Steps." This program contains lessons taught on a weekly basis. The goals begin with the skills for learning and the listening rules. The next lessons are aimed for students to start understanding and developing their own emotional intelligence.

Besides the programs, we need to teach as educators. I personally use the cultural part to fortify respect and understanding among the different cultures in my class.

Getting to know about parents and their culture is quite important. Parents and children also have taught me important ways to recognize who they are, their abilities, their social funds of knowledge, pains and fears.

No matter where they come from or who they are, parents love their children and they love their culture to be respected, recognized, and acknowledged.

Q. What is a real-life example of how your students have positively applied these lessons?

A. Two years ago, I had a family from Samoa, African-American families, Caucasian, and Hispanic (from Mexico and Central America). I taught them our "Second Steps"

program with the different lessons to teach about their feelings, emotions, and basic rules to interact among Harriet Gifford students and the school staff. Respect, however, is always the strongest value to pursue and very difficult to achieve in the current world.

Our approach led to one of our families from the Samoan Islands teaching our students a local dance, replete with costumes ordered from their country.

I believe any human who feels respected, appreciated, and acknowledged can academically flourish.