

Believe it: Vikings in a rout

Geneva 37, Morris 0

Why Geneva won: As is the case in most blowouts, it started at the line of scrimmage. Geneva quarterback Shaun Ratay had plenty of time to throw, and Morris run-first quarterback Brenton Valentine had few opportunities to showcase his wheels with black jerseys buzzing everywhere.

Turning point: In the second quarter, Geneva running back Chris Modjeski made one of his few mistakes, fumbling deep in Morris territory. But offensive lineman Dustin Douell fell on the ball at the Morris 3, and the Vikings scored two plays later to go up 19-0.

Outstanding player of the game: Tough call here, but Modjeski gets the nod. His 194 yards on the ground were also critical for Geneva's psyche after preseason injuries made the Vikings' rushing attack seem vulnerable.

By JAY SCHWAB

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GENEVA – In a sea of final scores from across the state Friday, the Geneva football team made sure its will not be overlooked.

Geneva 37, defending 6A state champion Morris, zip.

"I think [fans are] going to have to check [the score] again," Geneva linebacker Pat Schiller said. "I don't think they're going to believe it."

For those who saw it with their own eyes, though, it didn't take long to come away thinking Geneva was in a different class than the visitors.

The Vikings scored two touchdowns apiece in each of the first two quarters and kept Morris from a single first-half first down.

It was Geneva's first win against Morris since 1987 and first shutout over the Redskins since 1977.

"I thought the players thought we could win," Geneva coach Rob Wicinski said. "I don't think we believed it would happen in that fashion."

This year's Geneva defense is the strongest since Wicinski has been on the job, the coach said. Morris isn't arguing.

The Vikings outmuscled Morris on the line and missed few tackles. Geneva forced five Morris turnovers, and did not allow the first of five Morris first downs until more than halfway through the third quarter.

Offensively, Geneva's success was expected through the air, surprising on the ground.

Senior quarterback Shaun Ratay was 12-for-15 for 191 yards, including three touchdown passes.

The 6-foot-7 Ratay is a known commodity. The revelation for Geneva was Chris Modjeski, slated to play defense-only before preseason injuries decimated the Vikings' rushing arsenal.

Modjeski ran 24 times for 196 yards, and turned his first touch of the night into a 56-yard touchdown less than 2

minutes in. That suspect ground game suddenly looks pretty slick.

"He's a ham andegger," Wicinski said of his would-be safety. "He just grinds it, doesn't say boo and really leads these guys."

Geneva's Michael Mayszak caught touchdown passes of 46 and 17 yards in the first half, including a catch in the second quarter despite being bullied toward the right boundary by a Morris defender who was flagged for pass interference.

Mayszak said the win was extra delicious since Morris beat Geneva twice last season, including in the playoffs.

"It made them feel our pain from last year," Mayszak said.

Morris' undefeated 2005 championship team was gutted by graduation. The new crop of Redskins looked woozy in the limelight, said Morris coach George Dergo.

"After a while, it just gets old that you're out there looking like that," Dergo said.

Geneva's Week 2 opponent is senior-less South Elgin.

Wicinski wants his team to be mindful that "we haven't reached our goals yet," but euphoria was a tough feeling for the Vikings to shake Friday night.

"Shutting down the defending state champs, I couldn't ask for any more than that," Schiller said.