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Geneva rallies to upend Hubbard

By Steve Reaven

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Facing a decidedly bigger and faster opponent probably had a lot to do with Geneva's early malaise Saturday, but the Vikings mustered two fourth-quarter touchdowns to pull away for a 21-13 Class 6A home victory over Hubbard.

"It just didn't seem like we had our normal step; we were just flat," said Geneva senior quarterback Shaun Ratay, whose 24-yard strike to Mike Mayszak with 11:22 remaining gave the Vikings a 14-13 lead. "But this could have been our last game on this field and we didn't want to go out with a loss."

Ratay's 4-yard play-action toss on fourth-and-goal to Pat Schiller capped the Vikings' first possession, but the Geneva offense went dormant for almost the next three quarters.

Hubbard senior back Robert Hughes (23 carries, 101 yards) answered Geneva's early score with an 11-yard dash to cap an 80-yard drive featuring 11 runs in 12 plays, and he tossed a 25-yard halfback option touchdown to Darius Purcell with 41 seconds left in the second quarter to give Hubbard (8-3) a 13-7 halftime advantage.

The Greyhounds' rushing attack had enough success (185 yards) to warrant staying predominantly on the ground. But the Vikings (10-1) came up with two key fourth-down stops deep in their own territory in the second and third quarters and halted Hughes' fourth-down effort midway through the fourth to give Geneva possession at the Greyhounds' 15. Ratay (13 of 25 for 162 yards and two touchdowns) scrambled in from 12 yards three plays later to build Geneva's lead to 21-13.

"It's tough, knowing that you have an offensive line coming at you that weighs almost a ton," said Geneva senior linebacker Josh Brennan. "We just tried to gang tackle and get as many people to the ball as we could."

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