

# Nothing can spoil Vikings' homecoming

Geneva 35, Sycamore 7

Why the Vikings won: After allowing a 47-yard run on Sycamore's first play, the Vikings allowed a total of 109 yards for the rest of the game.

Turning point: Down 20-7, the Spartans opened the second half with a 12-play, 41-yard drive, but were forced to punt. The Spartans managed just one first down the rest of the game.

Player of the game: Geneva running back Chris Modjeski ran for 111 yards on 22 carries and scored two touchdowns for the Vikings.

By KEVIN CHROUST

editorial@kcchronicle.com

GENEVA – With tornado sirens sounding about 2 hours before kickoff, it looked like Geneva's homecoming game Friday night would have to wait for less threatening skies.

But the storm clouds parted and the Vikings emerged in a 35-7 win against Sycamore to improve to 5-0 overall and 3-0 in the Western Sun Conference on a saturated Burgess Field.

Geneva coach Rob Wicinski wasn't concerned the poor field conditions would lead to the Spartans spoiling homecoming.

"We'd like to throw maybe a little bit more, but our linemen stepped up to the challenge and said, 'Let's run the ball,' so we did," Wicinski said. "I think it's an advantage for our offense with the field conditions. We know where we're going."

The Vikings jumped out to an early 7-0 lead on the first drive of the game. They capped the eight-play, 68-yard drive with a 12-yard touchdown run by senior quarterback Shaun Ratay.

"The nice thing about a junior is he becomes a senior," said Wicinski of the progress Ratay has made since last year. "He's really making some nice decisions and he's making some plays with his feet, which your quarterback has to do."

Sycamore answered back with a three-play drive to even the score, but offense was limited for the Spartans the rest of the game.

"Just because you score in three plays doesn't mean you've solved the things that they do defensively," Sycamore coach Joe Ryan said. "We came out and executed the plays we wanted to start off with and got in the end zone, but you've got to be more consistent than just three plays."

The Spartans weren't able to solve the Vikings' attack on the other side of the ball, either.

Geneva running back Chris Modjeski ran for 99 first-half yards on 18 carries, including two touchdown runs from inside the 5-yard line.

Taking a level-headed approach on the festive night, the senior finished with 111 yards on 22 carries.

"Homecoming's a lot of fun, but you have to remember to keep your head in [the game] all the time," Modjeski said. "It

gets everyone in the community involved. We played well. That's all you can say."

Geneva led, 20-7, at halftime, and the Vikings' defense had little trouble protecting the lead. It allowed just 156 total yards despite Sycamore controlling the ball for nearly 9 minutes in the third quarter.

"Against a good team, keeping the ball in your possession without scoring just keeps the game close, and I'm not about keeping it close," said Ryan, whose Spartans fell to 2-3, 1-2 in the Western Sun. "We wanted to win."

A week after Spartans running back Dane Pritchard ran for more than 200 yards against Kaneland, the Vikings held the senior to 15 yards on eight carries after he broke his first carry of the game for 47 yards.

"Our defense has been pretty tough all year," Wicinski said. "We asked them to really step up to the plate this year, and they have. The coaches do a nice job, and the kids believe in the system. Those two combinations are pretty tough for us."