



[Print Page](#)

Pressure gets to Saints

By ANDREW SEIDLER - aseidler@kccchronicle.com

 Comments (No comments posted.)

GENEVA – Midway through the second quarter, the St. Charles East football team, already up a touchdown, appeared primed to gain a firm upper hand in its IHSA Class 7A second-round matchup with top-seeded Geneva.

That's when the first glimpse of what would be an ugly game-long pattern emerged, as a holding call pushed the Saints back to the Geneva 49. Forced into a passing situation, East left itself at the mercy of a ferocious Vikings pass rush, as 280-pound sophomore lineman Frank Boenzi recorded the first of six Geneva sacks of quarterback Sam Gunther, wiping out East's chance to build a two-score lead. The Saints, who were shut out in the second half, eventually fell, 35-14.

"We didn't have an answer for their pressure," East coach Ted Monken said. "They got to our quarterback way too much for us to be successful. We ran the ball successfully at times, similar to the North game – we'd get the ball moving a little bit, next thing there's a penalty that killed the drive."

Following the Saints' stalled drive, Geneva (11-0) quickly tied the score at 14-all on a 64-yard play-action pass from Mike Mayszak to Joe Augustine. The Vikings would add three more unanswered touchdowns to seize control.

Given the way East (8-3) opened the game, driving down the field with strong play from running back Wes Allen (80 yards rushing), who scored the game's first touchdown on a 4-yard run, and Gunther, who hooked up with Matt Hammer (eight catches, 118 yards) for a 62-yard score, it was a dramatic shift in momentum.

"After the beginning, I figured we'd be able to keep moving the ball and put more points on the board," said Gunther, who passed for 209 yards in his final game at East. "But we were plagued by pressure and sacks, and we just couldn't get it done in the third and fourth quarter. Our defense has done a great job all year, but you can't always rely on your defense."

That defense clearly was hurt by the loss of defensive tackle and team captain Dave Mashal, who went down with a right leg injury late in the first quarter and did not return.

"I think losing him was an emotional letdown as much as it was a physical letdown, not having him out there cheering us on," Monken said. "When you lose a big leader like that, it makes a difference, you know. I'm sure the Bears of '85 wouldn't have been the same without Singletary. You have that guy in there, it makes a whole lot of difference."

Trailing 28-14 midway through the fourth quarter, the Saints' fate was sealed when they were flagged for roughing the punter, giving Geneva a fresh set of downs.

For the Saints, the loss marked the end of a memorable era.

"I still remember them when I first got hired in '04 – they were the first freshman class – watching those scrubby little kids running around trying to play football four years ago," Monken said. "We've come such a long way since that first year. It's exciting to see where we've come, and it's sad to see those guys go. They've been a great asset to the program."

COMMENTS

The following are comments from the readers. In no way do they represent the view of NWHerald.com or Shaw Newspapers.

[\[x\] Close Window](#)

Copyright © 2007 NorthWest Herald. All rights reserved.