


[Print Page](#)

Geneva 2 wins away from perfect season

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 Comments (No comments posted.)

ROCHELLE – Senior running back Michael Ratay scored two touchdowns in the game's first five minutes, and it looked like another relatively easy win was in the works for the Geneva football team.

But there were a few minutes Friday when the Vikings' 35-14 victory against Rochelle (4-3, 2-3 Western Sun Conference) was not so certain.

The Hubs rallied to tie the score with two touchdown passes from senior quarterback Nate Eyster – one to sophomore C.J. Navarro in the first quarter, and a 40-yard pass to senior Ben Schwartz a minute and a half into the second quarter.

Geneva coach Rob Wicinski said he was worried about losing the lead the moment after Ratay's second score.

"When we don't score, I'm mad," he said, "and when we score too fast, I'm mad."

But the Vikings (7-0, 5-0 WSC) rebounded and regained their 14-point lead by the end of the half.

Geneva senior Brennan Quinn, who scored the Vikings' fourth touchdown, bringing their lead to 28-14, credited the tightened up offensive line.

"I didn't even get touched," he said of his 8-yard touchdown run. "And neither did Drew [Fagot], and he ran deeper than me."

Fagot regained the lead for the Vikings thanks to a 17-yard rush with 5:36 left in the half.

From there, both teams seemed to step up their defense.

"They're a tough, tough team," Wicinski said. "Our kids did a nice job of holding them down."

They did such a nice job, in fact, that Eyster could not complete one pass in the second half.

But the Hubs still posed a challenge. Ratay, who chalked up 248 rushing yards, said he had to work harder against the Rochelle defense.

"They started firing off right from the start," he said, "hitting low and hitting hard."

Ratay managed the only touchdown of the second half – a 55-yard rush two minutes into the fourth quarter, securing the seventh straight win for the Vikings.

Despite the prospects of a perfect season looming, the Vikings stress they are a one-game-at-a-time team. Geneva closes out its regular season at home against rivals Kaneland and Batavia.

"We want to win conference," Wicinski said, "but first we have to beat Kaneland."

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