



## Grady, Geneva pick off Saints

By Chris Walker | Daily Herald Correspondent

Published: 9/6/2008 1:25 AM

Sean Grady returned a pair of interceptions for touchdowns and running back Michael Ratay rushed for three more as Geneva took advantage of several St. Charles East mistakes to defeat the Saints 34-7 Friday night at Burgess Field.

It certainly didn't look like it was going to be the Vikings' night early on. Geneva (2-0) didn't convert a first down during its two opening quarter possessions but set the tone for the evening on the first play of the second quarter.

With the Saints driving, defensive back Sean Grady snatched Tim Russell's pass and rambled 77 yards for the score. The Vikings missed the PAT but led 6-0 even though they hadn't converted a first down and had just 1 yard of offense.

"We struggled offensively in the first quarter and second quarter and our defense was on the field a long time," Geneva coach Rob Wicinski said. "But we preach patience all the time and it's not where you're at in the first quarter but when you walk off the field."

St. Charles East (1-1) finally yielded a first down with 7:14 remaining in the second quarter. That drive would stall, but the Vikings would get the ball back on Michael Santacaterina's interception which six plays later culminated in a 1-yard TD run by Ratay.

"He tried to squeeze it (the pass) in there and all of a sudden instead of being up 14-0 we're down 13-0," Saints coach Ted Monken said. "So it's a 27-point swing in about five minutes. Those things you can't come back from in a big game."

The worst part about it for the Saints was that they were moving the ball consistently. Wes Allen had 113 of his 118 rushing yards in the first half, but his fumble at the 1-yard line during the game's opening drive was one of three pivotal turnovers.

"You can say that not many teams win games but more lose games," Wicinski said. "You hear it all the time and it's true. Turnovers were key."

Trailing 13-0 in the second half, the Saints were forced to turn to an aerial attack. They only collected 28 rushing yards in the final two quarters.

"I just felt that our defensive line was a lot more in shape," Geneva lineman Andrew Clausen said. "In the second half they just weren't the same."

Geneva extended its lead to 27-0 thanks to Ratay (27 carries, 143 yards). The first score came on 10-play drive with Ratay twisting his way in from 13 yards out with less than a minute left in the third quarter.

The next came less than two minutes later on Ratay's 5-yard run, his eighth touchdown of the young season.

The Saints finally broke the shutout with 6:28 left on Kyle Wiebe's 1-yard run. They were looking to put it in the end zone a second time with under a minute left, but Grady snared another Russell pass and made the marathon 100-yard sprint to the end zone.

"We feel like we gave it away," Monken said. "We moved the ball and had opportunities but we didn't get the job done."