

 Daily Herald

# Last-minute TD lifts Geneva past Glenbard South

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Published: 9/20/2008 12:37 AM

Geneva hitched its wagon on the 5-foot-10, 200-pound frame of running back Michael Ratay and the long arms of 6-4 defensive end Cory Hofstetter to survive a Western Sun Conference scare Friday night.

Ratay barreled over from 3 yards out with 24 seconds left to lift the host Vikings to a tense 14-7 victory over Glenbard South in front of a nervous Burgess Field crowd.

It was Ratay's second touchdown of the fourth quarter, as Geneva (2-0, 4-0) escaped with its second conference victory after trailing 7-0 early in the final frame.

The Vikings were celebrating at game's end, mostly because of the defensive heroics of Hofstetter, who blocked a Raiders field-goal attempt early in the final quarter that put the Vikings' first scoring drive in gear, and he recovered a fumbled high snap on a punt attempt in the game's final minute and rumbled to the Glenbard South 5-yard line to set up Ratay's game-winner.

The teams battled through a scoreless first half, even though Geneva enjoyed better field position most of time. The Vikings held Glenbard South (2-2, 1-1) to only 21 yards rushing in the game, but the Raiders found some holes in the Vikings secondary.

The Raiders compiled 283 yards through the air, including a 22-yard, third-quarter scoring pass from quarterback Kevin Marshall to wideout Jon Holland. Meanwhile, Vikings quarterback Brandon Beitzel was struggling, throwing 3 interceptions while completing only 6 passes for the night. He was fortunate to avoid a fourth interception during the Vikings' first scoring drive, as three Raiders collided trying to make the grab deep in Raiders territory.

"We definitely have some stuff to work on," Geneva coach Rob Wicinski said. "Glenbard South did a great job with their kids and they had a great game plan.

"We really dodged a bullet tonight, even though we didn't take care of the ball, with three interceptions."

The Raiders game plan was basically to keep Ratay from breaking long runs. Ratay had one run of 16 yards, and the rest were of the 7 yards or less variety. But he followed Geneva's big offensive line in eventually breaking down a strong Glenbard defense in the game's final minutes.

"All I can say is positive things about our kids," Glenbard South coach Dan Starkey said. "We battled our butts off, and we had several kids going both ways and there was a lot of big hitting going on out there.

"It was a fun game and unfortunately we came out on the wrong end of the stick."