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Ratay rumbles for 6 TDs

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 Comments (No comments posted.)

GENEVA – Michael Ratay loves his mother, Peggy, and is happy to be here.

Apparently, saying as much to the media grants the Geneva senior running back a free steak dinner. Hey, a guy deserves something after this kind of Friday night.

One-third of Ratay's 18 carries went for touchdowns as he rumbled for a career-high 353 yards. His sixth and final score in the Vikings' 47-14 victory against Batavia even triggered something unprecedented in this Western Sun Conference rivalry.

"Getting the running clock on them felt pretty good," Ratay said.



Ditto for completing a perfect regular season and clinching the outright conference title, the biggest fruits of a blowout win.

Next up: the Class 7A playoffs. Geneva (9-0, 7-0 WSC) will learn its first-round opponent when pairings are announced tonight.

"We're starting a new season," Vikings junior Michael Santacaterina said. "We're going to do what we can to go as far as we can."

Presumably, the refrain remained the same from the Batavia sideline, though coach Mike Gaspari left the field swiftly after addressing the postseason-bound Bulldogs (6-3, 5-2 WSC).

The Batavia defense trudged through the same mud Geneva appeared to romp in. Batavia's five-game winning streak ended as it lost consecutive meetings with its Tri-Cities rival for the first time since 1987-88.

The game started just more than one hour late thanks to a drawn-out sophomore game and a lightning delay. Senior Brennan Quinn planted the team's traditional "Momentum" sword in the sideline turf before the game, and the Vikings seized it immediately.

Ratay began the game well enough, dashing 86 yards to the end zone on the first play from scrimmage. He cut back perfectly on an off-tackle play that set the tone for the night as Geneva's veteran offensive line helped maintain the season average of more than 300 rushing yards a game.

Ratay credited the line as well as strong blocking from the wide receivers. He dedicated the effort to his brother, Shaun, and the 2006 Geneva team, which lost twice to eventual Class 6A runner-up Batavia, including 28-0 in the regular season.

"Some of that was for them out there," he said.

Batavia's running game bogged down against the Vikings, but Bulldogs quarterback Jordan Coffey had some success through the air, going 18-for-29 for 211 yards. He did throw two interceptions, though, including one that was returned for a touchdown by Alexander Olenek to make it 35-0 in the second quarter.

Vikings coach Rob Wicinski grinned about Ratay's 12th career game with three or more touchdowns. He called No. 21 a "horse" and "stud" on a rainy night when even the finest-trained animal might have had trouble running.

“With the weather conditions the way they were, I was freaking out on the offensive end,” Wicinski said. “The defensive coaches, they were laughing and giggling. They thought that was the greatest thing since sliced bread.”

COMMENTS

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