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## Vikings ride Ratay

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 Comments (No comments posted.)

GENEVA – After scoring 13 touchdowns in his first three games, it took Michael Ratay 40 carries and 181 yards Friday to reach paydirt.

He did it again four carries later, and although the scores were the tying and winning touchdowns, there was nothing left in the tank for celebration.

The Vikings' standout senior running back had 47 touches – 44 on the ground – and two of the most exhausting fourth-quarter touchdowns of his high school career as he and the Geneva defense overcame four turnovers and scored in the final minute for a 14-7 win against a pesky Glenbard South team that quickly is earning some Western Sun Conference credibility.



"Keep pounding it, keep pounding it away," a visibly exhausted Ratay said between deep breaths after the game. "The O-line kept blocking. We're a fourth-quarter team. We always do this. I don't know why we can't get it going."

The Vikings (4-0 overall, 2-0 WSC) couldn't get it going because drive after drive stalled with turnovers, including three in a scoreless first half. But the Geneva defense bailed out its sloppy offense for 29 minutes until the Raiders' passing game got going.

Glenbard South (2-2, 1-1) broke the stalemate with 6:18 remaining in the third quarter on consecutive 22-yard passes. The first was a halfback pass from Trace Wanless to Austin Teitsma, followed by a pretty fade from quarterback Kevin Marshall to Jon Holland.

"We were able to pass the ball a little bit more in the second half and get the ball in space, and that's what we want to do, but we had opportunities in the first half we should have taken advantage of," Glenbard South coach Dan Starkey said.

Geneva went three-and-out on the ensuing drive, wasting solid field position after Ratay returned the kickoff 40 yards to the Raiders' 46.

With a 7-0 lead, Glenbard South again marched down the field, all the way to the Geneva 3 with a first-and-goal situation, but the Vikings defense held, forcing a field goal attempt that 6-foot-4 lineman Cory Hofstetter got a hand on to keep it a one-possession game.

"I just went in there like everybody else with my hands up," Hofstetter said. "I've got long arms that are good for blocking field goals."

Ratay (44 carries, 191 yards) took it from there, carrying the ball 15 times, including the last eight plays on a 19-play, 80-yard game-tying drive that ran 7 minutes, 26 seconds off the clock.

"He's a horse," Geneva coach Rob Wicinski said. "The game just rolled into that. I didn't want to roll it into that, but with a little bit of struggles with our passing game, I had to be careful. We did pass it down there and we almost had another pick. ... So I just had to go to the ground and try to muscle it."

With its backup quarterback in the game because of a Marshall hand injury, Glenbard South's ensuing drive stalled, facing a fourth-and-10 at the Geneva 45 with 1:12 remaining.

The Raiders elected to punt, but the snap sailed far over the punter's head and bounced inside the Glenbard South 20, where Hofstetter recovered and rumbled down to the 5-yard line.

Four plays later, Ratay was in the end zone with 24 seconds to go, keeping the Vikings undefeated after quite a scare.

"I guess the idea is you stop Ratay, you stop Geneva offense," Wicinski said. "I guess that was kind of the idea coming in. If somebody does it, they win. I guess that's kind of where I'm at right now."

## COMMENTS

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