

Bulldogs Finish Season in Almena

By Judy Rogers

The Golden Plains High School football team finished their season on the road in Almena on October 25 as they faced down the Northern Valley Huskies in non-district action. This was also the last time the four senior team members—Jose Bermudez, Jesus Garcia, Andrew Luna, and Camron Spresser—would play football in a Golden Plains uniform.

The boys entered this game with a 2-6 overall record knowing they were out of district post-season contention, but that did not deter the boys as they stepped on the field with their pride on the line. They played an exciting game in the bitter cold but still fell short as they lost 36-50 after leading for much of the four quarters of action.

The game started off with the Bulldogs kicking off to the Huskies. Benny Martinez and Camron Spresser pushed the Huskies back. A Husky penalty for chop blocking pushed them back even farther. Jose Bermudez and Tristan Schwarz each had stops before Bermudez blocked the Huskies punt. Chance Hoeting grabbed the ball on the 20 yard line. He then gained 13 yards for a first down putting the 'Dogs on the 7 yard line. The Bulldogs continued to play with intensity as Tristan pumped forward for 3 yards only to be backed up 5 for a false start. Spresser then passed to Andrew Luna in the end zone for the first touchdown of the game. After a false start flag on the PAT, a successful pass from Grant Spresser to Schwarz gave the Bulldogs an 8-0 lead.

Schwarz recovered the kick to the Huskies to put the Bulldogs back on offense but, following some tough downs, had to punt back to the Huskies. The Huskies marched the ball into the end zone, made their extra points, and tied the game up 8-8. The first quarter continued to see a lot of action as Luna broke through and ran a 60-yard touchdown untouched. A pass to Chance Hoeting connected and he ran through a pack of Huskies for the extra points and a 16-8 Bulldog lead with over six minutes remaining in the first.

A fumble recovery put the Bulldogs back in the driver's seat and Jose Bermudez ran in a 23-yard touchdown on the first play for his first rushing touchdown of the season and a 22-8 Bulldog lead. Northern Valley broke up the PAT pass and the Huskies took possession. Following punts from the Huskies and the Bulldogs, the Huskies took over with good field position. They ran to the 2-yard line before being pushed out of bounds by Schwarz, but pushed through for the touchdown and made their extra points to narrow the Bulldog lead to 22-16. With 47 seconds until the first quarter buzzer, the Bulldogs took over the ball and Andrew Luna made a power play running 68 yards to the end zone. Luna then ran in the 2-point conversion and extended the Bulldog lead to 30-16 to end the first.

The Huskies took over in the second quarter as the quarterback ran in a touchdown to start the clock. Following a Bulldog punt, the Huskies quickly punched in a 47-yard touchdown. A successful 2-point conversion tied the game up at 30 with six minutes until the half. As the temperature continued to drop, so did the players on the field as both teams stepped up their defense to put a stop to scoring for the remainder of the half.

The Bulldogs stepped on the field in the third ready to play as Bermudez promptly ran in a 20-yard touchdown and regained the lead 36-30. Northern Valley answered by

pushing the ball toward their goal only to have the Bulldogs chase them down and push them back. On a 4th and 13, a Husky pass connected but the ball hit the dirt as the receiver caught it and the Bulldogs took over on their own 31-yard line. Following the punt back to Northern Valley, the Huskies started clicking on offense and tied the game up at 36 with another touchdown. With a successful 2-point conversion, the Huskies gained their first lead of the game 38-36 as the third quarter clock wound down.

The Bulldogs continued to fight in the fourth as Camron Spresser ran down a Husky runner bringing him down as he approached the end zone. However, the Huskies ran in the next play for a 44-36 lead with just under one minute clicked off the clock. Jose Bermudez showed a lot of toughness for the Bulldogs with a good catch that he held on to for a long gain. Luna then gained 14 yards and Schwarz carried the ball to inside the 10. Following a carry by QB Grant Spresser, Northern Valley took over only to be stopped repeatedly by Jesus Garcia. The Huskies then had a penalty flag in this clean game with not many penalties to set them back. Hoeting stopped their next play and the Huskies punted back to Golden Plains.

The Bulldogs were not giving up as a double handoff to Luna gained five yards. Luna then fought through three defenders for a first down drive. The Bulldogs continued to march down the field with a 4-yard gain from Luna, a carry by Hoeting, and another Luna carry before turning over the ball as the Huskies intercepted a pass. Josh Barnhart brought down the Huskies, but the quarterback kept the next ball and ran in a 10-yard touchdown. Braden Korte stopped the PAT and the Huskies led with the final score of 50-36.

Senior Andrew Luna played his last game for the Bulldogs by rushing for 217 yards, receiving for 11 yards, and scored 3 touchdowns and 1 conversion. He also had 8 tackles. Jose Bermudez concluded his senior season with 43 rushing yards, 37 receiving yards, 15 tackles, 1 blocked punt and 2 touchdowns. Seniors Camron Spesser and Jesus Garcia each had 11 tackles in their final Bulldog game. Junior Grant Spresser threw for 54 yards as quarterback and rushed for 12. Junior Tristan Schwarz rushed for 24 yards and received for 6 including a 2-point conversion, while Junior Chance Hoeting rounded out the teams' 319 rushing yards with 23 and scored a conversion. Additional tackles came from Hoeting-15, Benny Martinez-13, Schwarz-12, Zach Spresser-3, Josh Barnhart-3, Braden Korte-2, and Joseph Koerperich-1. This loss ended both the Bulldog and Husky seasons with the Bulldogs wrapping up a 2-7 record as the Huskies finished with a 7-2 record. Neither team will advance to bi-district play.