

## Cougars Knock Down the Bulldogs

By Judy Rogers

The GPHS Bulldogs returned to their home field on September 28 to host the Cougars from Cheylin. This was the 'Dogs third district game of the season following a loss to Weskan the previous week and a win over Greeley County earlier in the season. Both teams entered the contest with 2-2 records.

The home town team kicked off to the Cougars to get the game started. The Bulldogs defense stopped the Cougars throughout the first series forcing them to punt. The punt was caught by Hoeting, but a fumble on the play was recovered by the Cougars. The Cougars gained yards before being taken down by Jesus Garcia on the ten yard line. The Cougars were set back due to repetitive penalties and stopped by Camron Spresser before turning the ball over on downs. The Bulldogs failed to make adequate progress and Tristan Schwarz punted. The Cougars finally connected with a pass that was run into the end zone. Garcia grabbed the feet of the PAT runner and held on while Hoeting rushed in to finish him off and the Cougars held the lead 6-0.

Hoeting caught the kick behind the goal line and returned it to the 15 yard line. Additional Cougar penalties helped the Bulldogs gain a first down. The Bulldogs answered with their own penalties before the offensive line opened a hole for Andrew Luna to shoot through and run 53 yards to the end zone. The two-point conversion did not succeed and the game was tied up 6-6 with just over three minutes remaining in the quarter. The Cougars pushed through to score one more time in the first as the clock wound down with the Bulldogs trailing 6-14.

Penalties continued to plague both sides as the game progressed. The Cougars gradually moved the ball down the field ending with another touchdown and PAT extending their lead to 22-6. Back on offense with a long field ahead of them, the Bulldogs gained short yards before Joseph Koerperich flew through the air to connect with a pass and a first down gain. Hoeting, Jose Bermudez, and Andrew Luna all attempted to gain yards, but the Cougars were right on top of them and Schwarz was forced to punt again. Battling back and forth and fighting yellow flags, neither team was able to add to their score before the half.

It took nearly the entire third quarter for the Cougars to pass in for a fourth touchdown. The 2-point conversion increased their lead to 30-6. Following a first down gain by Grant Spresser as the third quarter wound down, the Bulldogs threw a pass only to have it intercepted by the Cougars. Bermudez was right there and quickly dropped the receiver. Bermudez continued to play quick on defense and intercepted a Cougar pass at the beginning of the fourth and the Bulldogs took over on the Cougars 10-yard line. After several short gains, Luna broke through for a full-field Bulldog touchdown only to have it called back for a block in the back penalty, but still a first down.

Turning the ball back over to the Cougars, a Bulldog penalty gave their opponents the first down. The Cougars then ran in another touchdown, but it, too, was called back due to penalties. They continued to push the ball down field and scored their final touchdown of the night with just over four minutes remaining in the game. The Bulldogs stopped the conversion and the Cougars led 36-6.

Back on offense, Bermudez ran the ball to the 25 yard line before the Cougars intercepted the pass out of bounds. With no more touchdowns, the Cougars claimed the

36-6 win and improved their standings in the district to 2-1 while the Bulldogs fell to 1-2 in the district and 2-3 overall.

This game had 31 penalties distributed on both sides of the ball. According to Chance Hoeting, the Bulldog team just “was not focused.” Andrew Luna did finish with 144 rushing yards and the only GP touchdown of the game. Grant Spresser rushed for 23 yards, Hoeting for 10, Schwarz for 9, along with a 2-yard gain from Josh Barnhart and a 1-yard gain from Bermudez. Bermudez also received three passes for a total of 56 yards along with a 15-yard catch from Joseph Koerperich. Grant Spresser connected on 4 of his 7 pass attempts for a total of 71 yards. Coach Travis Smith said, “Jose continues to be a great leader for this team. Grant and Tristan played their best games of the year, but we need everyone to play well to win, not just a few.”

Bermudez also contributed 13 tackles and 1 interception to the Bulldog stats. Other tacklers were Andrew Luna-12, Hoeting-11, Jesus Garcia-10, Benny Martinez-10, Zach Spresser-6, Camron Spresser-5, Domonic Luna-2, and Josh Barnhart-1. Coach Smith continued, “Attitude and effort continue to hurt our team. We have to continue to work to get better and that takes the entire team, not just a few individuals.” The Bulldogs will head to Brewster on October 5 for another district match-up with the 0-5 Triplains/Brewster Titans.