

## Bulldogs Outscore Spartans in Second Half

By Judy Rogers

The Golden Plains Bulldog Football Team played their first away game in Deerfield on September 15 against the Spartans. The Dogs came from behind to outscore the Spartans in the second half, but their first half deficit led to a 39-51 loss.

“We had trouble getting started,” said junior Josh Rath. “They hit harder and didn’t quit so we backed off. We turned it around in the second half and played much better. Our defense is getting stronger and we are getting better at running the ball.”

The Bulldogs kicked off in the first quarter and the Spartans, who played a passing game most of the night, quickly scored their first touchdown. Miguel Garcia caught their point after attempt to hold the Spartans at 6-0. The Dogs answered with a couple of runs by Dylan Wark and Diego Perez, but the Spartans intercepted a pass and ran it in for another score. Wark caught the point after pass attempt and the Spartans led by 12.

Garcia caught a couple of passes from Rath on the next drive but the Dogs ended with a turnover to the Spartans. Deerfield continued to pass the ball to score a third time to end the first with an 18-0 head start.

The Dogs opened the second in possession of the ball but Deerfield intercepted a pass to take over. After a good long gain, Perez hit the Spartans hard to force a fumble which was recovered by Rath for the Dogs. Rath connected with Wark who ran down the sidelines into the end zone for the Dogs first score of the night. The point after kick did not succeed and the Dogs were on the board 6-18.

Jose Rios-Mendoza kicked the ball deep to the Spartans. They returned the kick with a long run to the 25 before passing into the end zone. This time, they ran in the extra point to increase their lead to 25-6. The Dogs defense held on tight as they stopped the Spartans repeatedly. Rath intercepted the ball only to have the Spartans recover a fumble after several Bulldog gains. The Spartans were able to pass for one more score to lead 31-6 at the half.

The Bulldogs took over in the second half and worked hard to make up the deficit created in the first half. Perez made a long run to the end zone breaking repeated tackles attempts on his way. The Spartans answered with a QB run and connected on their extra point. The Dogs were determined and worked their way down field with runs by Wark, Perez and Rath. Rath then connected with Wyatt Amlong and connected once more with Will Bruggeman who finished in the end zone. Rath connected once again with Wark for another GP score. Rios kicked the extra point through the uprights bringing the Dogs to within 2 td’s at 26-38. As the offensive third quarter continued, the Spartans added another TD and the Dogs scored with a run by Perez and an extra point pass from Rios to Taylor to end the third 33-44.

Deerfield made a final touchdown pass in the fourth quarter adding an extra point. The Dogs also added one more touchdown run by Wark to end the game 39-51.

Wark had a total of 135 yards and 11 tackles throughout the game scoring 3 TDs for the Dogs. Rath had 207 total yards—183 passing along with 9 tackles and 1 interception and 1 fumble recovery. Perez had 13 tackles, 130 yards, 2 sacks, and 1 touchdown. Amlong had 8 tackles and 10 total yards, Garcia had 5 tackles and 24 yards, Will Bruggeman had 4 tackles, 40 yards, and 1 touchdown, Rios-Mendoza had 39 yards and kicked for 2 extra points, and Taylor had 3 yards and 1 conversion.

The Bulldogs return to Rexford for their Homecoming game as they host Greeley County on September 22.