

Prep football: Bureau Valley 13, St. Bede 7

Maynard, Storm rumble past St. Bede

By Andrew Douglas
NewsTribune Sports Writer

Bureau Valley turned a two-minute drill into a two-second drill, scoring the go-ahead touchdown on the last play of the first half to come away from St. Bede with a 13-7 conference win.

The victory snaps the Storm's seven-game losing streak against the Bruins, and moves the Big Rivers Illinois leaders to 4-1, 2-0 in conference, two games ahead of St. Bede (2-3, 1-1).

"They just came out a little more fired up," said Bruins head coach John Bellino. "They have some good leadership on that team, and they showed it down the stretch."

The game-clinching drive didn't go exactly as Bureau Valley probably would have liked. After the Storm turned the ball over on downs, Ben Doty intercepted Bruins quarterback Grant Johnson on the next play and returned the pick to the St. Bede 37.

With under two minutes to go in the

first half and the score tied at 7-7, Bureau Valley tried for a big play to score quickly.

But halfback Preston Jones was sacked for a 12-yard loss on the option pass. Two plays and one offsides call against St. Bede later, Bureau Valley faced fourth-and-11.

Quarterback Brad Monier then found wideout Nick Davis for 15 yards and Jones for 20 to get down to the two-yard line with 2.3 seconds on the clock, time enough for just one play.

Bureau Valley made it the right play, as Todd Maynard punched in his second score of the night to send his team into the locker room with a big lift.

"They just made a great situation there take hold," Storm head coach Jason Kirby said. "Nicky made a great catch. Brad stood up in the pocket, made a great delivery, and then Preston made an awesome run after he made the catch.

"It was do or die," he continued. "To be honest, if we wouldn't have scored there, momentum would have been huge

on their side. The fact that we scored put momentum on our side made a big difference in the game."

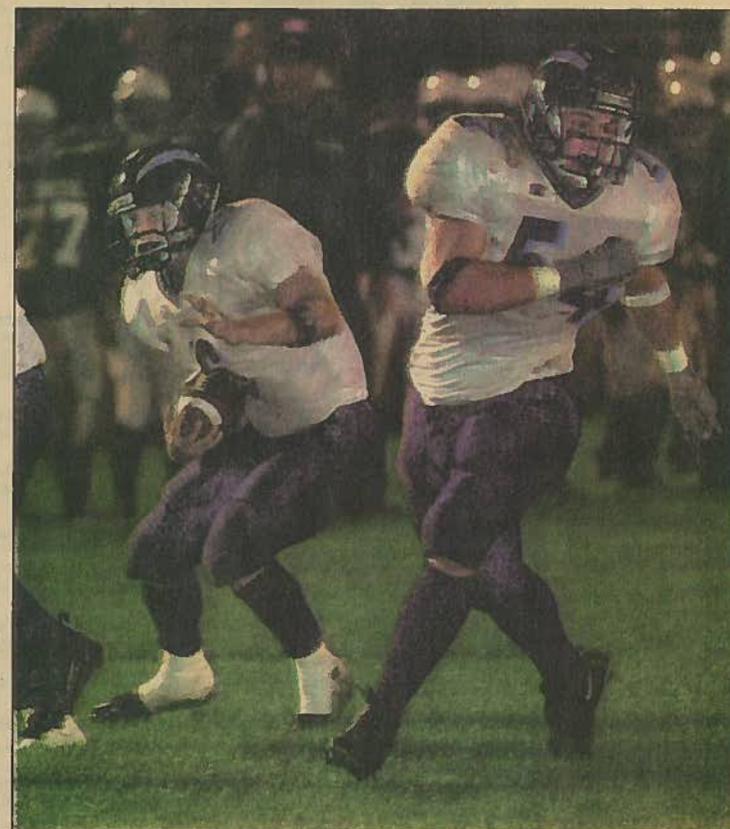
Maynard finished with a game-high 81 yards on 27 carries, the first time he's failed to crack the 100-yard mark in three weeks. He also intercepted Johnson in the waning moments of the game to quash St. Bede's last comeback attempt and seal the win.

"I told him at halftime, 'Put a saddle on, we're gonna ride you.' And I wasn't lying," said Kirby.

Maynard opened the scoring with a 1-yard touchdown run on Bureau Valley's first possession of the game, capping a 12-play, 56 yard drive. The 5-foot-11, 200-pound fullback touched the ball on all but three of those plays, picking up first downs on third-and-one and fourth-and-two along the way.

The Bruins came right back to tie the game on their next possession. Tailback Adam Miranda picked up 24 yards on six

See 'Rumble' Page B3



NewsTribune photo/Cory Soldwedel

Bureau Valley's Tommy Tumbleson (right) prepares to set a block for running back Preston Jones (left) during the first quarter of the Storm's 13-7 win over St. Bede Friday at the Academy.

Rumble

Continued from Page B1

carries before scoring from one yard out on his seventh to make it 7-7 early in the second quarter.

Miranda had 32 yards on 12 carries for the game, combining with Luke Balestri (8 carries, 36 yards) to lead the Bruin ground attack.

Johnson was 5-for-11 through the air for 65 yards. Three of those passes were caught by Andy Hurst for 52 yards, including a critical 15-yard completion over the middle on fourth-and-7 with three minutes remaining to keep the Bruins' final drive alive.

But that last-ditch effort was foiled by consecutive false start and delay of game penalties that turned a third-and-inches opportunity at Bureau Valley's 26 into a third-and-10 uphill climb.

"Kids getting excited, I guess," said Bellino of the high-pressure penalties. "Until I see the film I won't know."

Johnson threw incomplete on third down and was picked off by Maynard on fourth to halt the comeback bid.

"We had a couple of chances. The big thing is, we didn't execute down

the stretch very well," Bellino said. "We couldn't contain their size and speed."

Somewhat surprising was Bureau Valley's decision to go to the air 10 times, with Monier connecting on four passes for 41 yards.

On one third-and-9 play, Monier was chased down 12 yards into the backfield but managed to elude the sack and scramble long enough to find Jones just beyond the first-down marker.

After besting the Bruins for the first time in his tenure, Kirby emphasized that ending the losing streak was just one step towards the ultimate goal of another postseason berth.

"This isn't the end of our season," he said. "Beating St. Bede isn't the thing we put at the top of our list - winning our conference championship is. We have to make sure this wasn't the highlight of our football season."

Andrew Douglas is a News Tribune sports writer. He can be reached at 223-3200, ext. 195, or at sports@news-trib.com.



NewsTribune photo/Cory Soldwedel

St. Bede quarterback Grant Johnson (No. 8) launches a pass down the field during the third quarter of the Bruins' 13-7 loss to Bureau Valley Friday at the Academy.