



SPORTS

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Ambushed by a pack of angry Bears

Five Packer turnovers fuel 2nd-half comeback by Chicago

By CHRIS JENKINS
AP Sports Writer

GREEN BAY — The Green Bay Packers coughed up five turnovers and their chance to remain undefeated, blowing a second-half lead and handing a 27-20 victory to the Chicago Bears at Lambeau Field Sunday night.

Bears quarterback Brian Griese threw the go-ahead touchdown to tight end Desmond Clark with 2:05 left. Brett Favre drove the Packers to the Bears 31 and called the Packers' final timeout with 13 seconds remaining, but Favre threw an incomplete pass and an interception to Bears safety Brandon McGowan in the end zone to end the game.

"It was huge, man," linebacker Brian Urlacher said in a television interview on the field. "This is a big game for us."

Favre had marched the Packers (4-1) up and down the field in the first half, shredding a Chicago defense that continued to look nothing like the unit that led the Bears (2-3) to the Super Bowl last season.

But the old Favre reared his ugly head late in the third quarter, when he threw a head-scratching interception to Urlacher that let Chicago back into the game.

"I was trying to make something out of nothing," Favre said.

Griese made the Packers pay for Favre's mistake right away, throwing a 19-yard touchdown pass to rookie tight end Greg Olsen to cut the Packers' lead to 20-17 with 4:19 left in the third quarter. Olsen caught the pass out of bounds, but officials ruled he had been pushed out by Packers safety Atari Bigby, a call that is not subject to replay review.

Green Bay held Chicago on its next possession, but Charles Woodson fumbled on a punt return to give the ball back to the Bears at the Green Bay 41. Chicago drove for a 36-yard field goal by Robbie Gould, tying the game with 14:13 remaining.

The teams traded defensive stops deep into the fourth quarter, when the Bears appeared to convert a third-and-4 at the Packers 42 with 3:13 remaining. Packers coach Mike McCarthy challenged the spot and got the ball moved, just not enough to take away the first down.

After a 7-yard run by Cedric Benson, the Bears faced a third-and-2 at the Packers 34. Griese faked a hand-off and threw down the seam to Clark, who had broken free from safety Nick Collins and linebacker Brady Poppinga. Clark ran to the end zone, giving the Bears a 27-20 lead.

Griese, playing his second game



The Associated Press

Green Bay Packers' running back DeShawn Wynn leaps over Chicago Bears Brian Urlacher (54), Adam Archuleta (20) and Mark Anderson (97) for a two-yard touchdown run during the first half of their game Sunday.

as the Bears' starter after Rex Grossman was benched, finished the game 15-of-25 for 214 yards with two touchdowns and one interception.

Favre was 29-of-40 for 322 yards with a touchdown and two interceptions, tying George Blanda's record

of 277 career interceptions.

Favre said the Bears are a better team than people were giving them credit for coming into Sunday's game — good enough to not allow the Packers to get away with so many mistakes.

"They don't need any help," Favre

said.

Favre threw for 243 yards in the first half — the most he has thrown in the first half of a game since his often-cited performance in a Monday night at Oakland soon after his father's death in December 2003 — and the Packers led 17-7 at halftime despite two first-quarter fumbles by rookie receiver James Jones in Bears territory.

"I thought we were going to put a lot of points on the board," McCarthy said. "To play the way we did in the first half and not finish it was very disappointing."

The Packers drove 83 yards on their first possession, scoring on a 2-yard run by rookie DeShawn Wynn. Wynn set up the touchdown with a 44-yard burst up the middle earlier in the drive, the longest rushing play of the season for what has been a dormant Packers running game.

After a three-and-out by the Bears' offense, the Packers drove deep into Bears territory until Jones, a normally sure-handed third-round pick out of San Jose State, caught a pass and was stripped by Bears cornerback Charles Tillman on Chicago's 16. The ball was recovered by cornerback Ricky Manning Jr., but the Bears went three-and-out again.

The Packers drove back into Chicago territory, only to have Jones again stripped by Tillman. The rookie's second fumble earned him a stern lecture from McCarthy and a seat on the sideline for the remainder of the first half.

A Force of their own Timberjacks battle champs to the end

MENOMINEE — "What a game. I would pay money to see this one," a Fox Valley Force player said during Saturday's pad-crunching battle with the M&M Timberjacks.

Fox Valley (8-1) clinched the North Division title with a 19-12 win, but not until the Force endured 60 minutes of focused fury from the Timberjacks.

"I was very happy with the effort and the 'never quit' attitude we had," said coach Joe Plautz. "After they came out strong in the second half it would've been easy to pack it. We kept battling and were able to make a game of it. We had a chance to win at the end."

The Timberjacks and Force both left points on the field during a scoreless, defensive tug-of-war in the first half.

The Timberjacks marched to a first down at the 3 on their first drive of the second quarter. A penalty and sack shoved them back to the 18, where the threat fizzled out.

"I'd like the execution to be better," said Plautz. "The early penalty on first and goal at the 3 hurt us. It snowballed from there. We can't put ourselves in those situations."

Late in the half, the Force drove down to the Timberjacks' 3-yard line. With seven

seconds left, quarterback Gary Griffin made a move up the middle but slipped to the turf on the wet grass as time expired.

Two plays into the third period, the Timberjacks handed the Force another scoring opportunity when the Force recovered an M&M fumble at the Timberjacks' 48.

Former Stephenson High School running back Brad Ruleau ripped through an opening off right tack and scorched the T-Jacks for a 36-yard scoring jaunt.

After the Force defense stopped the next T-Jacks series on four plays, the Force went back to what worked on Ruleau's run.

Tyler Mickelson got the handoff this time and dashed through a hole for a 71-yard touchdown burst. The PAT gave the Force a 13-0 lead with 10:04 left in the third period.

"We call it our 'Special' play," said coach Jimmy Sampson. "We overloaded the right side and he went through the hole."

Trailing by two touchdowns against the division champs, the Timberjacks answered the gut-check with their first scoring drive of the night.

A Force penalty on the

kickoff gave M&M the ball at the Fox Valley 45. The hard running of Dan Ries and Drew Buyarski hammered the ball to the 3, where Buyarski finished off the eight-play march.

After an errant PAT try, Fox Valley held a 13-6 lead with 5:23 left in the game.

The Timberjacks' defense chilled a nine-play drive by the Force before mounting their second scoring drive.

"I continue to be impressed with our defense. I'll take them over any D that I've seen in the league," said Plautz. "That has been our strength all year and continues to be. Ten straight quarters without allowing a point and to hold an offense like Fox Valley down is an accomplishment."

Aric Chaltry struck for a pair of crucial sideline passes to Randy Hoheneder, and a roughing-the-passer flag gave the T-Jacks a first down at the 15. Jim Ahrndt worked himself free on the left side and made a dive into the end zone to complete a 16-yard TD reception from Chaltry.

The Timberjacks went for two points to take the lead, but Chaltry's pass to the end zone sailed over the fingertips of Wortner with just 4:50 left in the game.

Facing a pivotal posses-



EagleHerald/Tom Kaeser

M&M Timberjacks' tailback Dan Ries follows the blocking of the offensive line for a gain in Saturday's game against the Fox Valley Force. Color reprints: (www.eagleherald.com)

sion, the Force responded with a championship march. They ran three minutes off the clock with a nine-play drive. With coach Sampson ready to run down the clock, the Timberjacks had no choice but to let the Force score, in order to get the ball back. Griffin bulled over from a yard out, but a fumbled snap on the conversion kept the lead at 19-12 with 1:58 left.

A 15-yard pass from Chaltry to Wortner set the Timberjacks up at the 22. Three plays later, the Force recovered a fumble at the 20 to bury the comeback drive.

"The (Timberjacks) seemed to have more focus than the last time we played," said Sampson. "They didn't let down tonight. They're a good

program and they're well-coached. Hopefully, we'll see them again in the final game (of the playoffs)."

Ries led the Timberjacks' ground game with 82 yards on 18 carries, and Buyarski had 44 yards on 11 carries. Chaltry completed four of six passes for 72 yards.

Ahrndt led the defense with 11 tackles, including two solos, and a blocked pass. Noseguard Tom Emmes had 10 tackles, four solos; Wortner had five tackles, a solo, a sack and a blocked pass; Chuck Cobb collected five tackles, three solos, and a sack; and Chaltry had five tackles, a solo and a sack.

The Timberjacks (6-3) play host to the Saukville Demons Saturday at 7 p.m.

Ruleau still on the run for Force

MENOMINEE — Almost a decade after his graduation from Stephenson High School, Brad Ruleau got his chance to play against Menominee.

Ruleau, who helped led the Eagles to the playoffs in the late 1990s, is a first-year member of the Fox Valley Force semipro football team. The Force clinched the North Division title of the Wisconsin State Football league with a 19-12 win over the Menominee Timberjacks Saturday night.

Ruleau, who was a medal winner in the sprints and relays at the U.P. Track & Field Finals, broke a scoreless tie when he tore past the T-Jacks for a 36-yard scoring run.

"It felt good, especially coming against Menominee," said Ruleau. "We were rivals with Menominee, but we never got to play them. That makes (the TD run) even better."

The red-haired rocket has been a big asset to the Force, according to Chris Czarnik, director of player personnel for the Force.

"Brad just walked on and he never said a bad word," said Czarnik. "He just came in and worked his butt off. We couldn't ask for a better kid."

Ruleau's touchdown run Saturday recalled his glory days in the Eagle backfield under coach Chad Brandt.

"I told our coach what Chad Brandt used to run, sprint draws," Ruleau said. "It worked tonight."

Stephenson is well-represented on the field when the Timberjacks play the Force. Tight end and former Eagle Jim Ahrndt caught a 20-yard touchdown pass to pull the M&M team within a point of the Force. Heading into Saturday's game, Ahrndt was second on the team in receiving with 12 catches for 149 yards, and led the defense with 30 solo tackles and 39 assists.

Peshtigo boys make early run at Tomahawk

WISCONSIN DELLS, Wis. — The Peshtigo boys' cross country squad showed how it stacks up against top Division 2 competition Saturday, placing second to Tomahawk at the Wisconsin Dells Invitational.

The Bulldog girls were seventh in their competition.

Set to battle against Tomahawk among 17 teams at the Oconto Falls sectional Oct. 20, the Peshtigo boys had 55 points to Tomahawk's 50. James Menor set the Bulldog pace with a fourth-place overall effort in a time of 17:48, while Jake Bayer was sixth (18:26) and Doug Meyer eighth (18:33).

"For our kids to finish like they did against teams like that really shows

something," said coach Jim Stillman.

"James beat (Tomahawk's) No. 1 runner, Jake beat their two and Doug beat their No. 3," he later added. "They caught us on the fourth and fifth runner, so that helped them."

Ethan Nault was 15th overall (18:45) and Josh Bayer 22nd (19:32). Rounding out the varsity effort were Mike Orear in 25th (19:56) and Nik Krawczyk in 33rd (20:37).

In the girls race, the Bulldogs ran as group with Ashley Borkovec taking 25th overall in a time of 19:47 with Phoebe Krawczyk 26th (19:57). Kellie Becker was 35th (20:47), Alyson Eparvier 42nd (22:38), Alexa Rayla 44th (24:42) and Rachel Badgely 45th (27:39).

In nonvarsity competition, the Peshtigo boys had Bobby Orwig take 30th (25:31) in the junior varsity run with Adam Thill 41st (29:53). Brandon Barrette and Libby Abel continued their middle school dominance, winning their respective runs. Ross Menor took 11th.

Wisconsin Rapids Invite

WISCONSIN RAPIDS, Wis. — Battling in a field with over 300 varsity runners, Gillett battled to a second-place boys' finish among Division 2-3 schools in sloppy, wet course conditions.

The Tigers had five of the top 22 runners in the bracket, barely getting nipped by Nekoosa in a field that also included Division 1 competition.

Josh Clark led the Gillett boys with a fifth-place effort (17:33), while Dusty Raatz was seventh (17:42) and Trent Smits eighth (17:56). Josh Kohn took 11th (18:36) and Curtis Horsens 22nd (18:44) to round out the Tiger top five.

Andrew Clark added a 30th-place finish (19:17), while Alex Kohn was 33rd (19:29) and Tyler Schroeder 43rd (20:01).

The Tiger girls, with only three runners, finished out of the team points race but still impressed coach Bill Greiten. Katie Collins ran a personal-best 17:01, placing fifth in Division 2-3 and 30th overall. Breanne Johnson was 14th (18:14) with Sarah Clark 21st (19:00).

the brothers three

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