

Sports

Wenhold, Tribe flex muscles against Cardinals

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By Jake Hallman, Special to The Mercury

FORT WASHINGTON — Shawn Wenhold and his Upper Perkiomen teammates made sure history didn't repeat itself in Friday night's non-league game at Upper Dublin.

In last week's season opener, the Indians were forced to rally twice before securing their first victory. In Week Two, Wenhold and the Tribe grabbed the lead from the onset and didn't look back.

And when it was all said and done, the scoreboard reflected the Indians' focus in a 34-0 rout with weather conditions more suited for a water polo match than a football game.

Wenhold, the Indians' (2-0 overall) senior tailback, accounted for a big share of the offensive workload as he carried the ball 25 times for 165 yards and two scores. He also made his presence felt as he scrambled for a 52-yard punt return for a score in the second quarter.

"We just wanted to come here and show everyone what Upper Perk is all about," Wenhold said. "We planned on airing the ball out a little bit more, but when we heard about the weather, we just wanted to shove the ball down their throats. The power game suited me just fine."

Fellow senior running back Mark Cole also got in the scoring action, notching a three-yard score off the left side early in the second quarter. Esomchim Akpunonu rounded out the romp with a seven-yard run off right tackle with four minutes left in regulation.

Not to be outdone was Upper Perk's defensive effort. The Indians held the Cardinals (0-2) to 108 total yards, forced seven fumbles (recovering four of them) and came up with one pick.

Nate Pompei helped key the defense with three tackles for a loss and two solo at outside linebacker. Chase Fleming had three solo stops and a tackle for a loss at inside linebacker and Cole came up with an interception to turn away the Cards' first offensive touch of the second half.

Jody Peart (fumble recovery), Dan Wolfrom (sack), Dalton Fleming (fumble recovery), Nick Hale (sack), Dwayne Gillespie (sack) and Andrew Orlick (pass break-up) also came up big on defense for the Tribe.

"We challenged our guys to make sure we didn't come out flat," said Upper Perk head coach Keith Leamer. "The weather situation was a little crazy, but our kids dealt with it the best they could."

Wenhold opened the scoring with a second-effort dive on fourth-and-three late in the first quarter — one of three fourth-down conversions the Indians successfully executed. Upper Perk scored again on its next offensive series in a five-minute, clock-chewing drive capped off by Cole's three-yard burst.

After forcing the Cards to punt a series later, Wenhold again found the end zone on the ensuing punt return down the left sideline to put Upper Perk ahead 28-0 at the half. That's where the score stayed until late in the fourth quarter as Akpunonu capped the scoring on his third carry.

"Now with our first two non-league games out of the way, we're prepared for our league schedule," Leamer said. "We'll go back to work Monday, focus on getting better and prepare ourselves for Perk Valley."

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