

**Blocked punt tells story**

# Churchill tops Thurston, 20-8

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Something had to give. Thurston did the giving and Churchill the taking.

Both the Chargers of Livonia Churchill and the Eagles of Thurston High had dropped their final three games of the '73 football campaign.

Something had to give and it was Thurston High's kicking game with two blocked punts opening the door to Churchill scores and leading the way to a 20-8 Charger opening victory.

John Curran did the blocking of the punts for Churchill and head Charger mentor Ken Kaestner had to have the inside snickers at the close of this one.

"This one really tickled me," commented Kaestner.

"Thurston outweighed us by some 45 pounds per man on the line and the kids just put it to them."

"Sure I was surprised at the out-

come but this group doesn't want to do anything but win."

**BILL REARDON**, Mat Foster and Scott Shepard on a punt return accounted for the Churchill scores along with a two-point safety which Thurston also picked up against Charger offense.

Thurston's lone six-pointer was scored off the Charger offense when Gary Abundis picked off a stray Churchill pass and dashed into the end zone.

Both clubs picked up 10 first downs. The real difference came in the rusing game where Churchill pounded out 151 yards while its defense held Thurston to just 65 yards.

Of Churchill's 151 yards on the ground, Reardon and Foster accounted for 118. Reardon carried the ball 17 times for 69 while Foster picked up 49 yards in five tries.

The passing game saw Churchill hit on two of seven for 32 yards and Thurston, three of 11 for 30 yards.

"Our kicking game simply let us down," commented Thurston Coach Don Riehl. "Two blocked punts and one punt return accounted for the three giveaway touchdowns."

"Here we work on our kicking game every day and it winds up beating us in game one. We are a young team and we came up with our share of first-game mistakes. "We had the ball on Churchill's six with a first down and couldn't put it in. If we can't accomplish this, we don't deserve to win."

**CHURCHILL TOOK** the opening kickoff, got as far as its 35 and punted. Thurston did a notch better as it moved into Charger territory only to be stopped on the Churchill 36.

On the first play from scrimmage, Charger QB Mike Strehler fumbled and Thurston's Greg Harakas recovered on the 33. It was giveaway time as Thurston's first offensive play this time around featured a fumble by Thurston QB Jerry Janssens.

Curran recovered for the Chargers but the tide quickly changed again. On a third down and five play, Strehler's aim was off and Abundis intercepted and dashed in for six points, 5:20 remaining in the first quarter.

Churchill then started a drive that lasted until the end of the quarter with Matt Foster picking up two first downs and Fred Groth one with Thurston's defense stopping the Chargers on the Eagle 16.

After Churchill's Mike Welch had dropped Thurston's QB for a loss, the stage was set for blocked punt No. 1, with Curran doing his thing on Janssens' punt and Kurt Fitcher recovering for the Chargers on the Thurston four.

On the first play from scrimmage, Reardon went the four yards off right-tackle. John Miller blocked the point after attempt and it was 6-6, 10:23 left in the first half.

**THURSTON'S** offense showed sign of coming back to life with

Janssens getting Eagles down to the Churchill 27 before Andy Fabian picked off a pass to give the Chargers control on the Thurston 42.

Churchill ran out of steam at midfield, Thurston took over at its 20 after a punt but again ran into a punting situation from deep inside its zone.

Curran partially deflected this one and Churchill was in command on the Thurston 26.

After Groth and Reardon moved the ball deep, Foster plunged in from four yards out. The point after was blocked and it was 12-6.

Thurston's offense then ran into a stone wall Churchill defense and also found out it too can put numbers on the board.

The Eagles failed to move the ball on their first set of downs on the third. A punt got them out of their zone but Shepard hauled it in and scampered right back for another six Charger points. A two-point pass play missed and with 10:05 left in the second half, it was Churchill 18-6.

Thurston showed signs of coming to life after being stalled deep in Charger territory. Its defense scored two points trapping Churchill QB Strehler in the end zone.

**CHURCHILL** got those two points back in the early moments of the fourth. After a Charger field goal wound up short on the Thurston one, Churchill's defense smothered Janssens for a two-point safety and it was 20-8, seven minutes remaining, and the opening day deed was done.

For Churchill it was the stepping stone it needed before taking on the likes of John Glenn this Friday and Waterford Mott on Sept. 27.

For Thurston, it was a discouraging blow in the awakening of the Northwest "sleeper" role.

The Eagles go up against Royal Oak Kimball this Saturday afternoon at home before jumping into loop battle with Garden City East on Sept. 27.

## 1st quarter explosion

# Livonia Stevenson whips RU, 27-0

"One victory doesn't make a season," said Coach Jack Reardon after his Livonia Stevenson Spartans crushed Redford Union in the home opener, 27-0.

"But I will have to say this team has a lot of enthusiasm, probably more than that of a year ago. On that basis, then I believe we should have a much better record."

It was the opening test for both teams and it appeared as if Stevenson was a bit better prepared. At least Reardon had a hard-charging, hard-hitting outfit that never eased up a bit. RU on the other hand wasn't quite as crisp in its execution of plays as one expects

from a Bobby Atkins coached club. Just to add a bit of glory to the victory, Reardon saw two of the four touchdowns scored by sophomores and unveiled an excellent defensive back in Ron Colone who intercepted passes for long gains. One went 38 yards for a touchdown and the second for 71 yards before he was nailed on the three yard line.

**SENIOR QUARTERBACK** Bruce Nichols started the Spartans on the road to a victory when he fired a 25 yard pass into the arms of end Dave Galindo, another senior, in the end zone for six

points. Paul Lokar's placement made it 7-0.

Then it was sophomore Ron Colone's turn to give the home rosters something to cheer. The defensive halfback grabbed a Mike Watson pass on the RU 38 and darted down the sidelines for the first touchdown of his varsity career. Lokar missed the placement but Stevenson had a 13-0 edge.

Before the end of the half, the Spartans drove down to the Panther seven where Nichols circled end and went into the end zone for the third six points. Lokar split the uprights this time and the Spartans walked off the field with

a 20-0 margin.

**COACH REARDON** decided to give his second stringers a chance in the second half with the result that most of the play was between the 30-yard stripes.

Then, just when most folks in the rather slim crowd figured the Spartans had done all of their scoring, Colone grabbed another RU aerial with 5:26 on the clock and raced all the way to the three before he was halted by Ron Miller.

Two plays netted a scant yard and then Sophomore Quarterback Jim Dolmetsch wiggled through an opening in the right side of the line to pay dirt. Lokar added his third extra point of the afternoon to make it 27-0.

**WITH THE SPARTAN** second stringers in the game, RU worked the ball deep into the Stevenson territory principally on a 30 yard pass from Quarterback Watson to end Craig Hill.

But that hope ended with 28 seconds to play when Stevenson's Chuck Demareo intercepted an RU aerial on the Spartan 14. That was all for the day with the final whistle sounding seconds later.

Stevenson faces a bigger test next Friday afternoon when it entertains Livonia Franklin in a battle of crosstown rivals. A year ago it was all Franklin but somehow Stevenson looks like a different and tougher outfit this time around.

## Fumbles are costly

# Grosse Ile blanks Plymouth Canton, 14-0

Plymouth Canton grid Coach Jim Muneio would just as soon forget game No. 1 in the '74 campaign.

The Canton Chiefs, who were 2-7 last season, fumbled three times in the opener with Grosse Ile with two of those paving the way for six-pointers and a 14-0 Canton loss.

It was this same Grosse Ile squad that battered the Chiefs in the opener last year, 25-0.

"It was just a disappointing night all around," commented Muneio whose Chiefs go against Dearborn Heights Annapolis this Saturday (Sept. 21) at home. "It was a real letdown."

"A COUPLE of breakdowns in the first half cost us two touchdowns. We got it together in the second half and did about everything but cross the goal line."

Grosse Ile took the opening kickoff and marched down field only to have Canton's defense come up with the key play and halt the Red Devils.

But Canton's first offensive drive was cut short when a Brian

Stemberger to Kim Hammonds handoff squirted loose and Grosse Ile pounced on it on the Canton 13. Five plays later, Paul Cowley,

## Falcons have ILL victory

Farmington High defeated Walled Lake Central, 24-37, last week in an InterLakes League cross country meet. Central's Gary Williams was the first across in 16:02, Farmington's Al VanMeter finished second in 15:42, Stuart Gladfelter of Farmington took fourth in 14:58.

Coach Gerald Young's Farmington runners took first place in a multi-team meet last week at Cass Benton Park. Redford Union was second with 40 points, and Livonia Franklin took third with 52. Farmington's best runner was VanMeter, who finished third in 17:06. Another Falcon, Craig Bloomer, finished fourth in 17:10, and Gladfelter took sixth in 17:15.

who wound up with all of Grosse Ile's points, carried the ball in from three yards out, Cowley converted and it stood at 7-0 after one quarter.

**ANOTHER COSTLY** turnover hit Canton, this time with seven minutes remaining in the first half.

On his own 15, Hammonds was jarred on a trap play, the ball fumbled and the Red Devils were set for another turnover score.

After chalking up a firstdown, Cowley went in from one yard out, made good the point-after and it was 14-0 at the half and at the final buzzer.

Canton's deepest drive came early in the fourth stanza when, after grinding out 55 yards, Jim Tiller was stopped on the Grosse Ile one yard line on a fourth down play.

Grosse Ile took over and Canton, which collected only eight first-downs, was blanked for the second straight season in its opener.

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