

## FALCONS

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not sure we stuffed these people," Farmington coach John Bechtel said.

"That running back is an outstanding back. They did move the ball at times, but it seemed we found a way to come up big." Following a scoreless first half, Farmington's first big break occurred when Courtland Bartlett recovered a fumble at the Central 35-yard line.

On third down, Matt Corrigan's pass was tipped twice at the goal line — once by teammate Sherman Taylor and then an opposing player — before it fell into the hands of Farmington's Joe Green for a 29-yard TD with 6:13 remaining in the third quarter.

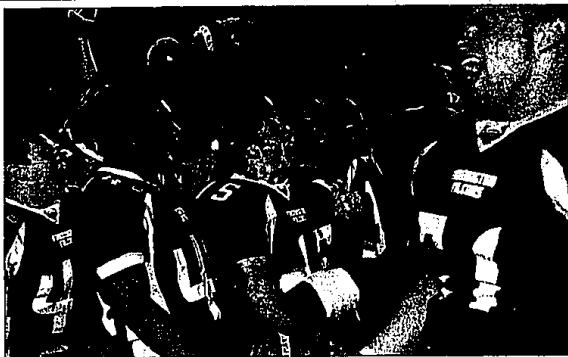
As was the case a week earlier in a 21-14 win over Detroit Henry Ford, a pass play fired up the Falcons and gave them momentum.

"It just ignites us," Bechtel said. "It doesn't take much and it snowballs. Our energy level just jumps."

The sideline jumps but the energy on the field is always steady. We don't get rattled. We haven't all year." The next big play by the Falcons provided more *deja vu*. As in the Ford game, a muffed punt resulted in Farmington points.

Intending to punt from his 36, Walker was forced to run when the snap was high, but Bartlett tackled him at the Central 30.

The Falcons had a six-play drive that ended in their second TD on a 2-yard run by Eric Halberstadt at 11:55 in the fourth quarter.



Farmington celebrates after winning the district title on Friday.

Farmington clinched the win when Jeff Fischer returned the first of his two interceptions 62 yards for a TD with 6:33 left to play. Kacey Lopata kicked his third extra point for the 21-0 score.

"All year we've won with our defense and kicking game, and eventually we capitalize on mistakes," Bechtel said.

"We're not a dominating offensive football team; yet, we're still finding ourselves and getting better. But we played the way we needed to play. We had very few errors."

While the Trailblazers had more yards, they also had more of the latter. Central was penalized 15 times — nine for illegal procedure on offenses — for 110 yards and had three turnovers. Farmington was 4-for-30 on

penalties with one giveaway. All of Central's yardage came on the ground. Quarterback Chris Jones was 0-for-12 passing and the Trailblazers 0-for-15 overall.

"Our goal was to take away the run and force them to throw the ball, because our guys come up with big plays," Bechtel said.

"It's tough to pass on us, because we play good pass defense and our down kids get after the quarterback." Bechtel's concern had been the size and strength of Central's offensive line, especially when the Trailblazers showed narrow splits in their pre-game warmup.

"We never saw a team that played with huge line splits as this team," Bechtel said. "We

knew our (smaller) defensive line had to move and take advantage of space."

"But they come out for their pre-game and they're foot-to-foot. What we were going to attempt to do changed. We wanted to beat them in space."

"We really needed to play low. Their goal was to go shoulder to shoulder and create seams. We did a great job of not letting them get underneath us."

Central's tighter formation included two tight ends and three backs. Farmington had expected to see a one-back set. It was obvious what Central planned to do.

"We haven't had the power game thrown at us," Bechtel said. "We were the power team in our league."

"We had to prove to ourselves we could handle that punishment, and as the game went on, maybe we started delivering it. That back (Walker) is a big-time back, but he took some big-time hits from our kids."

Halberstadt rushed 19 times for 75 yards; Mike Murphy added 39 yards on seven carries. The TD pass was the only one the Falcons completed in seven attempts.

"This game is just a step in the process," Bechtel added. "We've set our sights high. There's no other way to do that. Dream high and play big, and we've done that."

"Our approach is 'Let's keep working hard and getting better,' and so far that's what has happened."

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## REGIONAL

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"(Vozina) is their blitzer; their big-play guy," Bechtel said. "He's their No. 1 tackler and we need to know where he is at all times. That's our take on him."

"All their kids hit you. There's no doubt they like to get to the ball and finish you. We've done that all year, too, but they're just as good at it."

Offensively, Allen Park uses multiple formations, and the Farmington defenders had to go to school on the opposition this week.

"We need to play a great defensive game, mentally as well as physically, recognizing sets, adjusting to motion," Bechtel said. "We need to do it quickly, because they like to get set and quick-count us."

"They're a lot more multiple than we are. We may never see them in the same set twice. They try to keep your defense off balance, and they spend a lot of time at it."

"We need to be real sharp, and it will be a little more difficult because we have a short week, going from Saturday to Friday eliminates a day. So the kids have to be students first this week."

The Jaguars are a little more run-oriented this year as opposed to last season when they had a veteran quarterback in Bobby Martens and threw a lot.

Junior tailback Brian Brighton is the leading rusher with 1,237 yards and has scored 22 touchdowns. Junior fullback Chris Sinnott has 621 yards and nine TDs.

Junior quarterback Anthony Grose has completed 49 of 101 passes for 700 yards and six touchdowns, and the top receiver is senior Rob Klefer with 27 catches for 451 yards and six scores.

"We have a little bigger line and we're running the ball more effectively this year," Hoover said. "Our passing game isn't what it was last year, but we're playing tough defense. The kids are playing together as a team."

"The challenge will be to move the ball. We have to block very well up front. I think our defense can hold us in the ball game, but we have to do the job up front."

The Jaguars have good size on the offensive line. The tackles are 245 and 260; the center and guards are in the 205 range. Allen Park averages 211 with the tight and included and 206 on the defensive front.

"That's not a little group," Bechtel said. "But, as we've seen, the size of kids is not the key. The key is playing together with great pad level."

"They may be a little more physical in the defensive line, and we may be a little quicker than they are."

The inside linebackers for Farmington are senior Chase Kowalski (6-1, 207) and Brad Walsh (6-0, 195).

"Kowalski is probably the unsung hero," Bechtel said. "He probably gets the least amount of recognition. The kids count on him to be in the right spot and he is."

"We've heard the Detroit Central coaches asking, 'Who is 55? He's killing us; he's hurting us bad.' Chase played a great game like he always does."

"Brad, on the other hand, is our thumper. He's all over the field. He can afford to play like that and we want him to, because Chase is so stable on the other side."

The Falcons must have one of the tallest secondaries in the state with junior Jeff Fischer (6-4, 182) and sophomore Ryan Brodowsky (6-2, 185) at the corners, junior Ben Bersche (6-0, 165) at free safety and seniors Anthony Wilson (6-1, 180) and Danny Preston (6-4, 195) at the strong safeties.

Seniors Mike Kish (6-0, 165), Eric Halberstadt (6-1, 190) and Dru Frechette (5-9, 160) also have played in the defensive backfield this year when other players were hurt.

FARMINGTON STATE: The leading rusher is Danny Preston with 471 yards and three touchdowns on 92 carries. Following him are Eric Halberstadt (295-98-4), Mike Murphy (22-249-2) and Philip Champion (53-213-6). Henry Martin has four rushing touchdowns.

Bryan Dickey is 24-of-57 passing for 314 yards and four touchdowns. Matt Corrigan has completed 12 of 42 attempts for 257 yards and six touchdowns.

Champion has 12 receptions for 198 yards and two TDs. Preston four catches for 105 yards and three TDs and Joe James six for 11 yards and one TD.

Brad Walsh is the leading tackler with 59. Courtland Bartlett has 81 tackles. Ben Bersche 76, Chase Kowalski 73, Chad Burns 70 and Sherman Taylor 65.

Bersche also has five interceptions. Jeff Fischer four, Ryan Brodowsky and Mike Kish three apiece.

SIZING UP THE TOE: Allen Park could be the best team to oppose Farmington this year. What does coach John Bechtel think of the Jaguars in that regard?

"We're not going to know until we're on the field with them," he said. "I would assume as there are only eight of us left."

"You have to believe they're an awfully good football team. We have no common opponents. I know the league they play in is very tough."

"We're not going to know how we match up until we're on the field with them and, frankly, neither are they."

"It's difficult to gauge the quality of an opponent on film, but I do know they're tough kids, good athletes and extremely well coached."

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