

WLUC TV 6

Saturday, June 28, 2008

West Dominates East, 38-14

The first Upper Peninsula All-Star Football Game since 1951 saw the West jump out to a 24-0 halftime lead and coast to a 38-14 victory over the East. The contest was held at the Superior Dome in Marquette. The West recovered a fumbled punt in the first quarter and quickly drove to the end zone. U.P. Class ABC Offensive Player of the Year, Ethan Shaver of Menominee, scored on a five yard run. Calumet's Nick Koskiniemi added the extra point and a 25-yard field goal to give the West a 10-0 lead after the first quarter.

In the second quarter, quarterback Emmett Bjorn of Calumet found Norway's Ryan Peroceschi on an 11-yard scoring pass in the back of the end zone. Koskiniemi's extra point made it 17-0. Late in the first half, Bjorn connected with Shaver for 22 yards and another score, and the West led 24-0 at the half. Bjorn completed 12 of 15 passes for 133 yards and two touchdowns.

The East could not generate any offense in the first half and was still having trouble in the third quarter although quarterback Cody Kangas of Manistique gained 33 yards on a fourth down bootleg.

The scoring resumed in the fourth quarter as Wakefield-Marenisco's Marcus Dunbar scooted three yards up the middle to make it 31-0. Ishpeming's Casey Hares plowed in from a yard to get the East on the board. Kingsford's Josh Droese dashed 68 yards to give the West a 38-7 lead. Droese was the leading rusher in the game with 80 yards on six carries. The East closed out the scoring as Sault Ste. Marie's Pete Formolo burrowed in from a yard out with a minute remaining in the game. Sault Ste. Marie's J.P. Theriault kicked both extra points for the East.

Each team received three awards after the game. Bjorn was the Offensive Most Valuable Player for the West while Kyle Zweifel of Norway was the West's Defensive MVP. Shaver earned the Character Award for the winning team. For the East, Kangas was the Offensive MVP. He gained 53 yards on eight carries. Negaunee's Levi Jezek was the East's Defensive MVP and North Dickinson's Jack Audette was the Character Award winner.

Xcel Sports Training of Madison, Wisconsin organized the game. Many activities took place during the week, including a food drive for the Beacon House in Marquette, a youth football clinic and a combine for incoming freshmen through incoming senior football players. U.P. Sports Hall of Famer Steve Mariucci was the keynote speaker at Thursday's All-Star Reception. The former Detroit Lions and San Francisco 49ers head coach is a native of Iron Mountain. Proceeds from this year's game went to the Beacon House and the U.P. Sports Hall of Fame. Next year's all-star game already has been scheduled for June 27, 2009.