

Fine start for Phoenix

By **BERNIE PUCHALSKI** Standard Staff

Justin Voelkner didn't wait long before starting to prepare for the 2011 St. Francis football season.

As soon as the Phoenix lost last year's AA championship game to Holy Cross, the 17-year-old hit the weight room and added 15-20 pound of muscle to his six-foot, 185-pound frame.

"He worked all of the off-season and he's built up some mass. You can see he has better balance which is great," St. Francis coach Gord Barber said.

The Grade 12 student's new-found balance and power were on display Friday as the Phoenix opened their AA season with a 31-6 victory over the visiting Beamsville Bucs.

Voelkner, who is in his fourth year of senior football and third as a starter, had one goal in mind when he started his extensive preparations.

"I wanted to get better for this season because I want to win a championship this year. I've seen it happen in the past and I haven't been a part of it," he said.

Barber was pleased the Phoenix opened with a win in the sloppy conditions.

"I'm very happy with the outcome. It was wet so we wanted to stick to the ground and see what we could do."

There weren't a lot of positives in the game for Beamsville other than a solid performance on special teams.

"This week has given us a starting point. We had some rookies come in and play well and with experience, they will progress throughout the year. Once we get the little things out of the way, maybe by week three or four we will have a solid game," Beamsville coach John Pellow said.

Bulldogs 32 Eagles 1

The visiting Sir Winston Churchill Bulldogs opened their AAA season Friday with a 32-1 victory over the Grimsby Eagles.

Scoring for the Bulldogs were: Brett Saxton on a 25-yard field goal; Alex Coutu with a 25-yard TD reception from Andrew Krzeczkowski; Saxton, who ran back a Hy Cho punt block 25 yards for a score; Krzeczkowski on a 12-yard TD run; and, Alex Christie with a 60-yard punt for a TD. Josh Harris had a fumble recovery for the Bulldogs.

"We played well considering the adverse conditions. It's nice to get a game under our belt and we look to continue to improve next week," Churchill coach Peter Partridge said.

Warriors 34 Blue Devils 7

Dylan Howard caught TD passes of 23 and 37 yards from Kevin Beardwood and ran back a punt 83 yards for another major leading the defending A champion West Park Warriors to a 34-7 road victory over the Ridgeway-Crystal Beach Blue Devils Friday.

Beardwood finished with 180 yards passing, including a 17-yard TD pass to Clayton Upson and Jake Gallant added a 19-yard TD run. Wilder Reeds blocked a field goal that was recovered by Jack Katzman.

Scoring for the Blue Devils was Jesse Marcil on a 24-yard pass Matt Levasseur.

Irish 56 Thunder 6

The visiting Notre Dame Fighting Irish improved to 3-0 in AAAA play Friday with a 56-6 win over the Blessed Trinity Thunder (0-3).

Scorers for Notre Dame included: Chris Cote on a 57-yard TD pass reception from Reid Robertson, a 52-yard punt return and a 95-yard kick return; Dylan Martin on a seven-yard pass from Robertson; Curtis Gravelle on a 27-yard interception return.

Also scoring for Notre Dame were Johnny Augustine on a 32-yard run; Zack MacDonald on a nine-yard run; Mike Prytula with a two-point convert; and, Nico Constable with a 17-yard field goal

The Thunder's lone score came on a 10-yard run by Josh Forester.

Eagles 41 Blue Bears 7

Nick Grant scored on three short runs to power the Eastdale Eagles to a 41-1 win over the Port Colborne Blue Bears Friday in A league play.

Also scoring for the Eagles were: Marcel Leblanc on a 40-yard punt return and a 20-yard TD reception from Dan Lazenby; and, Brett Gorrill scored on an eight-yard sweep.

Cougars 14 Spartans 13

The visiting Centennial Cougars opened AA football play Thursday with a 14-13 shading of the Westlane Spartans.

Oliver Hunt caught a 40-yard TD pass from Clayton Anderson and Darion Gilbert had a 15-yard rushing major to lead Centennial.

For Westlane, Jordan Davey-Maxim hit Patrick Dupuis on a 43-yard scoring pass and Jacob Morris ran back an interception for a major.