

Rivalry is reborn

By **BERNIE PUCHALSKI**

Churchill Bulldogs head coach Peter Partridge can't overstate the importance of the football rivalry between the Denis Morris Redmen and the Sir Winston Churchill Bulldogs.

"The two questions the alumni always asked were: 'Did you beat DM?' and 'Did you win a championship?'"

The last time the two Glen Morris Dr. foes met was in 1989 when the Redmen rallied from a 10-point deficit to emerge with a 16-16 tie, thanks to a Dan Giancola field goal.

In Grade 10 at the time, Partridge remembers the day like it was yesterday.

"I was terrified, praying I wouldn't have to get on the field with the big boys," he said with a laugh.

The game between the two schools was more than a game -- it was a happening. If the game was held during the week, the police would close off Glen Morris Dr. and the Churchill football team would lead the entire student body down the street to Denis Morris.

"The guys would walk down the street and all you could hear was their cleats," former Bulldogs football coach Jim Harrison said. "The pressure was on"

Bulldogs defensive co-ordinator Steve Cook still remembers his last game against Denis Morris.

"When we won on this field in 1988, our teachers were so happy. I remember seeing the music teacher dancing on Glen Morris and the next day, the teachers would be congratulating and high-fiving us."

With the Niagara Region High School Athletic Association deciding to group football teams this fall by population, the rivalry was reborn and Saturday, the Churchill players ran down Glen Morris Dr. to Denis Morris for the 1 p.m. start before a large, noisy crowd waving banners and wearing face paint.

"As we came down the street, there was one guy about 80 years old telling our boys: 'You go get them,'"
" Cook said.

Denis Morris physical education head Andy Cecchini never got to play Churchill during his time with the Redmen, but remembers the rivalry.

"It was huge rivalry. Everybody knew about it and it was a lot of fun. It's exciting it's back. This is what high school sports is all about: a big crowd and everybody enjoying themselves."

When the game was over, the Bulldogs (3-1) emerged with a hard-fought 17-0 victory over Denis Morris (2-2).

The game wasn't even over and one man on the sidelines was already putting it in historical perspective.

"That's the second time we shut them out," the Churchill fan crowed. "We beat them 30-0 in 1974."

Saturday's win didn't come easy.

"Obviously, the intensity was very high and I think some of the turnovers were from jitters and high expectations coming in," Partridge said. "The kids put a lot of pressure on themselves."

He was happy to escape with the victory.

"It was 7-0 until the end of the game and it could have gone either way. Both defences played extremely well and it came down to a matter of mistakes."

And the Redmen made the most mistakes, turning the ball over seven times and taking 130 yards in penalties.

"I've never been part of a game where we've done so much and left so much off the scoreboard, Redmen coach Paolo Sirianni said. "We were 0-4 in the red zone today."

He felt most of the mistakes were of the mental variety.

"Physically, I think we pushed them around. We need to be mentally stronger. On offence, we did everything we could to shoot ourselves in our foot.

PATRIOTS 56 THUNDER 35

Saint Paul (4-0) raced out to a 49-14 halftime lead over Blessed Trinity (2-2) Saturday before hanging on for the win.

Scoring for St. Paul were Stefan Oreskovich on runs of five, five and 10 yards; Ryan Nieuwesteeg, 20-yard pass reception from Evan Murdza and a 45-yard interception return for a major, and Murdza with touchdown passes to Harry McMaster (40 yards), Miklos McMaster (35 yards) and Dan Demizio (50 yards).

Replying for Blessed Trinity were: Mike Antonucci on a 35-yard run and a 70-yard kick return; Jason Baum on a 70-yard kick return; Curtis Poos on a five-yard run, and Cody Chemericka with a 18-yard TD reception from Kyle Kewell.

MUSTANGS 36 HORNETS 6

Alex Nazartchyk scored on runs of 50 and one yards and threw a 18-yard TD pass to Steve Negus to power the Saint Mike's Mustangs (1-3) over the visiting Stamford Hornets (1-3).

Curtis Sauve also scored for the Mustangs on a 20-yard run and Chris Groves followed an 80-yard run with a one-yard TD run.

Stamford's lone score came on a 75-yard run by Andrew Douglas.

IRISH 43 SPARTANS 26

Jonathon Mataya threw four touchdowns passes and scored on a one-yard run to lead the Notre Dame Fighting Irish (3-1) to a 43-26 road victory over the Westlane Spartans (0-4).

Catching TD passes for Notre Dame were Johnny Augustine (57 yards), Mike Prytula (40 and 21 yards) and Chris Cote (35 yards). Augustine added a 38-yard run for a major.

GATORS 65 MARAUDERS 0

Jake Fraser scored two majors and Greg Huffman booted three field goals powering the Lakeshore Catholic Gators (4-0) over the A.N. Myer Marauders (0-4).

Adding single touchdowns for the Gators were Trey Gervais, Keaton Spratt, Morgan Lavoie, Nick Boulard, Dustin Toner and Brandon Legault.

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Bulldogs 17 Redmen 0

Standard Star of the Game: Churchill's Alex Coutu with two interceptions in the end zone and three catches for 47 yards.

For the Sir Winston Churchill Bulldogs: Alex Christie, 20 carries for 119 yards, including seven-yard TD run, and a fumble recovery; 15-yard interception for a TD by Jarod Cardas, 32-yard field goal by Max Cameron; Andrew Krzeczowski, 7-14 passing for 81 yards; two sacks by Jurrell Gaddishaw; sack by Matt Finley.

For the Denis Morris Redmen; T.J. Buck, 18 carries for 80 yards; interceptions by Matt Selby and Majdi Hareri; strip and fumble recovery by Kevin Den Hollander; fumble recovery by Matt Dagenais.

Game stats: First downs: SWC 14, DM 7. Net offence (pass-run= total): SWC 81-137=218. DM 16-81=97. Turnovers: SWC 5, DM 7. Penalties: SWC 9-for-70 yards; DM 13-for-130 yards.

Up next: Churchill hosts Saint Paul and Denis Morris is at Lakeshore Catholic, 3 p.m. Thursday.