

Cedar Valley rolls by Harmony, 65-6

Written by Tom Fruehling

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Before each one of his booming kickoffs, Cedar Valley Christian's Mike Scroggs yells, "Huskies, are you ready?"

He ended up hoarse and with a sore right foot before the night was over Thursday as his teammates proved plenty ready by winning their season opener, 65-6, over Harmony of Farmington on the Huskies' home field at LaSalle Middle School.

It was just Cedar Valley's second victory ever (to go with 24 losses) as it begins its fifth season of eight-man football. The other was at Harmony 30-20 a year ago.

"This feels great," said hyped-up senior Colin Heeren, who scored on the kickoff return to open the second half, immediately intercepted a pass and scored again on a 24-yard sweep. (He'd scored the play before, too, but the touchdown was called back for holding.)

"But we're not gonna stop at just one win," he said. "We're gonna win at least four this year, I promise, maybe more."

No longer, he vowed, would the Huskies be doormats who in the past have lost games by 70

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points or more.

Indeed, when Heeren returned the kickoff 65 yards it put his team up by 36 points and started the continuous clock for the rest of the game. It's the first time that's ever happened for Cedar Valley.

"It's nice to be on the other side for a change," said sophomore Kyle Gustafson, a monster on defense who sat out last year with a broken arm.

"For all these years I've been watching other teams score like that against our guys."

This year is different, said coach Ed Betsworth, who has patiently molded a slim roster of mostly inexperienced players into a hard-nosed unit.

"It's all on these kids," he said. "They've really worked hard at it. They hit the weight room over the winter and worked on conditioning all summer.

"They've really gotten serious about it. That's what's needed. And it's paying off. We're better everywhere this year."

Much of the credit, according to Betsworth, goes to strength coach and Baptist minister Darin Ulmer, whose son Kenan was the star quarterback as a senior last year.

"Darin took 10 of our guys down to Des Moines for a powerlifting tournament. They not only won as a team, but one of them won their weight class," said Betsworth.

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