



Vacaville stomps Burbank in home opener at Tom Zunino Stadium

Home sweet home.

Following two tough road losses, Tom Zunino Stadium on a Friday night was a sight for sore eyes for Vacaville High School's football team.

Vacaville gave the home crowd exactly what it wanted for the 2018 opener at Zunino Stadium: a 40-14 shellacking of visiting Burbank of Sacramento.

Vacaville did most of its damage with a 34 point explosion in the second quarter, and cruised from there. The Bulldog defense recovered three fumbles in the quarter — two of them deep in Burbank territory — and converted each turnover into points.

With so much going right for the Bulldogs, what was head coach Mike Papadopoulos most pleased with?

"All facets of it," Papadopoulos said. "Burbank is an extremely athletic team and they play really hard. Our kids did a nice job of responding to the early score they had and we made some good adjustments. The kids put themselves in good positions and played sound assignment football. I was really happy with how everything went."

Interestingly enough, Burbank was the first to score, going 80 yards in eight plays to jump on top. The Titans' first offensive snap of the game was a play-action pass that went for 43 yards. Burbank capped the drive with a Levelle Bailey 25-yard touchdown pass to Quincy Wright.

The Titans went for two and converted to go up 8-0.

Vacaville rebounded with a methodical drive that ended with Clayton Watterson finding the end zone from seven yards out. That run came three plays after a penalty negated a Talon Abramowicz 26-yard touchdown run in which he broke a tackle and found the end zone. Vacaville's two-point conversion try failed as Burbank held an 8-6 lead after one quarter.

The Bulldogs recovered three fumbles in a 34-point second quarter to help break the game wide open.

The first came on a Burbank punt that was fumbled. Vacaville took over at its own 40-yard line and scored in just two plays as Mason Price broke off a 45-yard run and Chris Island finished the job with a 15-yard touchdown burst. The Bulldogs went for two and converted to go up 14-8.

Bailey then fumbled the ball away on the very next Burbank possession, and Vacaville went 43 yards in three plays with Island again capping the drive with a 9-yard touchdown run to put Vacaville up 20-8.

The Titans were sloppy with the ball again on their next possession as Nash Clegg scooped up a fumble and returned it to the Burbank two-yard line. This time Dylan Warfield got in on the touchdown festivities with a 2-yard run as the Bulldogs took a 27-8 lead midway through the second quarter.

Vacaville added to its lead with a Nick Smith 35-yard punt return touchdown as the game completely got away from Burbank. The Titans went on to fumble again on their next drive with Mike Brown recovering this one inside the Burbank 20-yard line.

Warfield did the rest with a 4-yard touchdown run, his second of the night. That put the Bulldogs ahead 40-8 at the half.

"I thought we did a really nice job defensively," Papadopoulos said. "They were significantly bigger than us from a size standpoint, but the kids made the necessary adjustments."

That would be it for the Vacaville scoring as the Bulldogs ran the clock and punted on most of their second half possessions. Trevion Darden provided a big play for the Bulldogs when he broke free for a 52-yard run along the home sideline.

Burbank added a late score with help from two spectacular catches by Edward Asi, one of which he caught 50 yards down field laying on his back after the ball was tipped in the air four times.

Papadopoulos admitted the home crowd played a role in the blowout win.

"There's nowhere better to play in Northern California," Papadopoulos said. "I might be a little biased, but our kids appreciate the support from the home crowd and I definitely appreciate it. It's never something that we take for granted here. We're very grateful for the support and we try to put something special on the field in return."

Price finished with 50 yards rushing on four carries before leaving with an injury in the first half. Island had 47 yards on seven totes, while Warfield collected 50 yards on 10 carries. Watterson finished with 45 yards on six attempts.

Quarterback Jeremy Villalobos was 1-of-4 passing for 18 yards to Smith at receiver.

Vacaville (1-2) plays at Granite Bay (1-2) next week.

