



Oak Ridge flexes offensive muscle in 42-0 win over Bulldogs

When is a home game like homecoming, even when you went to high school 60 miles away? The answer: When you're Eric Cavaliere, a 1987 graduate of Vacaville High School, who now coaches the Oak Ridge Trojans in El Dorado Hills.

Cavaliere greeted several Vacaville fans and coaches on his way into the stadium at Oak Ridge Friday night, all smiles as he shook hands with folks dressed in orange and black. A few minutes later, his No. 3 Trojans began their domination of his alma mater, 42-0, to move to 2-0 on the season.

"I grew up in Vacaville, played in their youth program and started at 10 years old," Cavaliere said. "I went through middle school and high school there and had a great high school football experience. Vacaville High School football did a ton for me and I have a ton of pride about being an alumnus of Vacaville High School."

Cavaliere was a junior tight end and linebacker for late coach Tom Zunino when the Bulldogs played the Cordova Lancers for the 1985 Sac-Joaquin Section title. The Lancers were led by Troy Taylor, who later went to Cal and the NFL, and beat the Bulldogs 17-7. The teams also played in the second week of the season with Cordova thrashing Vacaville 30-7. The Lancers finished 14-0 that season, the first section team to ever accomplish that feat.

"Coach (Zunino) is a legend, obviously, and he's the guy I'm trying to pattern our program off of," Cavaliere said. "He created a family atmosphere there at Vacaville and I'm just trying to do what he was able to at Vacaville."

Zunino, who died in 2008, coached the Bulldogs from 1961 to 1997 and was the athletic director for 35 years. His legacy is so strong that the field the Bulldogs play on was named after "Coach Z" a couple of years before his death. After the field dedication, Zunino quipped to The Bee, "I thought you had to be great to get that kind of honor."

Zunino was indeed great. He led the Bulldogs to 26 winning seasons, 14 league titles and 215 wins.

Cavaliere said he'd like to keep playing the Bulldogs (0-2). The teams are usually even matched, with Oak Ridge winning last year 24-23.

“I have a great relationship with those guys, with their current coaching staff and a lot of those are the same guys (who have been there for decades),” Cavaliere said. “They’re a heck of a football team. They push us to the limits and they make us better.”

The Trojans were better in all facets of the game Friday. They held the Bulldogs to just 80 yards of total offense in the first half, including blanket coverage in the defensive backfield and pressure from the defensive line to limit Bulldogs quarterback Hunter Dorraugh to minus-1 yard.

Trojans senior running back Nathan Addleman scored from 4, 10 and 2 yards to put his team in control, and the rout was on midway through the second quarter.

Avant Jacobs shook four tacklers then picked up some great blocks downfield to scoot along left sideline for a 58-yard punt return in the game’s most electrifying moment. He later hooked up with sophomore quarterback Justin Lamson for a 65-yard scoring strike late in the third quarter.

Lamson replaced Trojans starting quarterback senior Matt Jenner midway through the third quarter. Jenner threw for just 135 yard and motored to a nifty 26-yard score to close out the first half.

Vacaville will host Burbank (0-2) next Friday night.

