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Bombers' blitz takes down Grizzlies



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An official tries to keep up with the Grizzlies' T.J. Chiabotti as he sprints down the sideline for a 79-yard touchdown against Barnum.
D. COLBURN



Posted Thursday, November 4, 2021 11:49 am

David Colburn

FIELD TWP- The Barnum Bombers came to North Woods School on Saturday and unleashed a devastating second-half aerial assault that brought a stunning 48-26 end to the Grizzlies' football season. North Woods led 26-12 midway through the third quarter and looked to have the game well in hand with the offense clicking and a defense that hadn't allowed more than 14 points in a game since mid-September. But a rare T.J. Chiabotti fumble recovered by Barnum at their own 30 appeared to pump up the Bombers and deflate the Grizzlies all in one moment. Taking advantage of a Grizzlies secondary hampered by an injury to starter Davis Kleppe, Bomber quarterback

Hayden Charboneau brought Barnum charging back with five touchdown drives in less than 15 minutes, four of them ending with touchdown passes. J.J. Stevens was on the receiving end of 16, 21, and 35-yard scoring passes, and Joe Peterson hauled down a 25-yarder. Max Moors scored the game's final touchdown on a one-yard dive, and Charboneau capped the 36-point avalanche with a toss to Peterson for the conversion.

The Grizzlies never mounted a serious scoring threat in the second half after their opening drive ended with a one-yard T.J. Chiabotti touchdown run.

"It was just like the wind took a turn for the worse there in the middle of that third quarter and we just couldn't dig ourselves back out, couldn't muster the might to win the football game," Grizzlies Head Coach Joel Anderson said. "They found the open guys and they made us pay for it."

Overall, Charboneau, only a sophomore, threw for six touchdowns on 18-of-28 passing for 237 total yards.

Anderson noted that even though his defensive linemen got into the Barnum backfield, they couldn't get pressure on Charboneau because he took snaps from the shotgun and got rid of the ball quickly.

The Bombers also kept the Grizzlies off balance with their running game, with Moors, Richardson, and Charboneau combining for 240 yards on the ground.

Barnum's turnaround took the shine off what had been an impressive comeback by the Grizzlies after trailing 12-0 in the first quarter.

Starting at their own 21 after Barnum's second score and with less than a minute left in the quarter, Grizzlies senior running back T.J. Chiabotti did what he's done all season, taking the ball around the right side of the line and cutting between defenders for a 79-yard touchdown. The Grizzlies then recovered an onside kick, but officials nullified the play after determining North Woods had touched the ball before it had traveled the required ten yards.

Undaunted, the Grizzlies forced a punt and took over on offense at the North Woods 27. Their march down the field to the Barnum 23 included two successful fourth-down conversions. Then quarterback Ty Fabish found Jared Chiabotti open on a sideline pass at the 20, and Chiabotti did the rest, shaking off a tackler and eluding two more on his way to the end zone. T.J. Chiabotti's conversion run put North Woods ahead 14-12.

Five plays later, the Grizzlies were in business again after T.J. Chiabotti recovered a Barnum fumble at the North Woods 49. Facing third-and-10 at the Barnum 27, Fabish dropped back and lofted a pass downfield to T.J. Chiabotti, who pulled it down and ran for the score that gave North Woods a 20-12 halftime lead.

"Our guys were a little flat there in the first quarter, but none of them panicked," Anderson said. "We really started to relax and just play our football there in the second quarter, and we started it off again in the third quarter. The frustrating part as a coach was that the momentum shifted when we were still up 14 and we couldn't seem to recover."

The devastating loss overshadowed another huge rushing day for T.J. Chiabotti, the state's regular season rushing leader, who had his fourth game going over 300 yards. He gained 312 yards and scored two touchdowns in 37 attempts, in addition to catching three passes for 54 yards and a touchdown.

Fabish completed just six of his 13 passes, but two of those completions went for touchdowns.

The effectiveness of Barnum's offense could be seen in the Grizzlies' tackling statistics, where the vast majority of takedowns were by linebackers and defensive backs. T.J. Chiabotti had seven unassisted tackles, and Olin Nelson, Jake Panichi, and Jonah Burnett each had three.

There's little tougher for a coach than saying goodbye to his seniors on such a sour note, and while Anderson is only in his second season as head coach, he's been working with this particular group for a long time.

"They're part of the reason I wanted to become a head coach," Anderson said. "I knew what I was getting into. I knew the group I had. They're a great group of individuals who are destined to do great things, not only in our building the rest of this year, but in every endeavor they choose to go into beyond this. They're just a lot of fun to be around and nothing but a joy to coach."

The Grizzlies ended their season with a record of 7-3, and the departing seniors will leave some holes to fill, a task Anderson is looking forward to.

"We've got a lot of guys coming back with playing experience, and we're super excited about that," he said. "We'll see some familiar faces, possibly in some new roles, next year. It's about making sure we put our top 11 guys out there to compete and try to win a football game every week."

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CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

COVID-19 vaccination a 'go' for kids

By DAVE COBURN
 LookOnEditor

REGIONAL - COVID vaccinations for children ages 5-11 with the Pfizer vaccine is ready to commence immediately. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Rochelle Walensky gave final approval to the recommendation.

Keep it up, Minnesota

state-run community clinics already experienced in delivering

vaccinations. Walz proclaimed the state's readiness to deliver in a press release.

"The state is prepared for this critical moment in the battle against COVID-19," Walz said.

See...COVID pg. 10



Gawyer Suthorn, of Tower, dressed up as Minnie Mouse for Halloween and sang the "Mickey Mouse" song for anyone who would listen.

Ely native takes the legal reins at U.S. Interior Department

Ties to community remain strong for Robert Anderson

By DAVE COBURN
 LookOnEditor

EL Y-MA's been on the job at the U.S. Department of the Interior since day one of the Biden administration, working remotely from his home in Ely, Minn., D.C., about a month ago. Yet recently confirmed Solicitor Robert Anderson has already proved he can take a man out of Ely, but you can't take Ely out of the man.

"We're going to really push for the Ely connection," Anderson said during a Tuesday interview with the Timberjay.

Anderson's job as the top legal expert in the Interior Department involves working for the department in Washington, D.C., and in 16 regional offices across the country. The Ely connection is a story that begins in Ely and along the shores of Bemidji Lake.

"When we moved out at the end of the year, we sold out of our house in Ely and would go out to our resort, called Echo Trail Lodge, that my Indian grandparents, John and Mary, built in 1936," Anderson said. "They had been working at Bemidji Lodge and saved up some money, and my grandfather had gotten

See...ANDERSON pg. 9

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MENTAL HEALTH

Suicide rates in region exceptionally high

Stigma makes it a tough issue to address, say county officials

By MARSHALL HUMMEL
 LookOnEditor

REGIONAL - Suicide is a topic to talk about – and that has complicated the work of public health officials in northern St. Louis County who are trying to address the

problem as it relates

The deaths of two men to suicide just this year in Tower has highlighted a fact that is driving concern across the region: the rate of suicide in the U.S. particularly for men over the past year.

See...SUICIDE pg. 11



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