

Cathedral stunned in quarterfinals

By Jeremy Behnke — Journal Sports Editor

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ROCHESTER - After going through the regular season with a perfect record and being ranked No. 1 in the state Class A polls for most of the season, the New Ulm Cathedral Greyhounds met their match at Rochester Community and Technical College.

On Saturday, the Greyhounds saw their season come to an end with a 21-8 loss at the hands of the Blooming Prairie Awesome Blossoms in the quarterfinals of the Class A State Football Tournament.

The Greyhounds end their season at 11-1 and for the second straight year, they entered the state tournament unbeaten before being knocked out in the first round.

All season long, the Greyhounds have relied on the running game to get them to where they were at. But on Saturday, the Blossoms did a good job of stopping that attack and didn't let any of the Cathedral runners find the end zone.

"They just have a very good football team," Cathedral coach Denny Lux said. "They have very good speed and they get out to the perimeter. Their strength up front really was a tough mix for us to handle in our running game."

Cooper Nelson put the Blossoms on the board first when he caught a 25-yard pass from Luc Zellmer to make it 7-0. Later, Blooming Prairie's Justin Ingvalson caught a screen pass from Zellmer from eight yards out and suddenly the Awesome Blossoms were ahead 14-0 with 48 seconds to play in the first quarter.

"We knew that they were a really good football team as far as mixing the run and the pass," Lux said. "They got some good receivers with some of that height, and we knew that coming into the game that it might have been a few mismatches. They just really played a solid game and hats off to Blooming Prairie."

The Blossoms added to the lead when they returned a punt 75 yards for the touchdown. Ingvalson's return came with 11:30 left in the second quarter, and suddenly the Greyhounds found themselves down by three scores.

Cathedral had a chance to answer on it's first drive of the second quarter, but after getting the ball down to the Blooming Prairie 13, the Greyhounds were unable to capitalize and had a turnover on downs.

Although the Greyhounds were down most of the game, Lux thought that his team played well defensively, especially in the second half as the Greyhounds kept Blooming Prairie off the board.

"Defensively I felt that we played pretty well after the first quarter, but we just couldn't finish a few drives on offense," Lux said. "We got down in that red zone and we just couldn't find a play that could get us in the end zone. It just made for a long day that way."

Cathedral's only touchdown of the game came on the defensive end. With less than a minute to go, Brandon Berg picked up a loose ball and ran it back 85 yards for the Greyhounds only touchdown.

Kevin Larson found Ross Grathwohl for the two-point conversion to make it 21-8.

Then the Greyhounds recovered the onside kick, and on their first play, they completed a pass down to Colin Wendinger to the Blooming Prairie 17.

But the drive ended on an interception by Dudley Smith with 22 seconds left, ending the game.



Staff photo by Steve Muscatello
Cathedral defensive back Kyle Fischer (20) makes a one-handed interception as teammate Nick Simon (42) looks on during the second quarter of the Greyhounds' loss to Blooming Prairie in the opening round of the Class A State Tournament Saturday at Rochester Community College.
For more photos of this event, go to <http://cu.nujournal.com>