

## Junior Bulldogs Drop to Burks Middle 16-22

Written by BJ West  
Friday, September 28, 2012

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The Bulldogs suffered a very disappointing loss last Thursday night to the Panthers of Burks Middle School.

What is the most disappointing aspect of the loss is the manner in which the game was lost. Red Boiling Springs held on to a 16 - 0 lead going in the fourth quarter and wasn't able to secure the victory.

Their offense received the ball first and kept it the entire 1st quarter and about 2 minutes into the 2nd quarter. We took the ball and quickly marched to the score in the only 3 plays. Josh Tirjan powered his way off tackle in route to a long touchdown run. The 2 point conversion was added by Elijah Byfield. As the 1st half wound down, we made a 3-play goal line stand inside the 5 yard line. Justin Bergdorff stopped the runner on the 1 yard line as time expired. That was huge for us--to go into halftime up by 8 points, despite the manner in which the game was playing itself out.

The second half pretty much followed the same scenario. We rarely had possession of the ball. We began the 4th quarter with a 7 play drive straight down the field to score again. Michael Tirjan took an inside reverse and tiptoed up the visitor sideline for the score. The 2 point conversion by Elijah Byfield was successful making the game 16 - 0 with 5 minutes to go. We stopped Burks 2 plays in a row in the backfield. It was 3rd and long and we knew from watching film they would try a half-back pass. We informed our team and instructed the secondary to stay deep no matter what. Sure enough, the quarterback tossed to #27 and he was able to break contain outside. Two point conversion was good. The score was now 16 to 8 and their side was going crazy. It breathed new life into them.

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With 3 ½ minutes to play, they attempted an onside kick unsuccessfully. We now had the ball with the opportunity to run out the remainder of the clock. Burks took the long punt from Michael Tirjan and broke our outside contain racing up their sideline and back across midfield. This further electrified their crowd. In just a few plays, #27 took the ball into the endzone on a toss play to their side. The two point play was unsuccessful making the score 16 to 14. With another on-side kick looming. If we recover the kick, the game would be over.

Burks recovered the on-side kick with a minute and a half, giving them even more life. We made two good stops inside the 5 yard line, but it wouldn't be enough. Their offensive line powered the runner into the end zone on the next play. The conversion was good and Burks now led 22 to 16 with 18 seconds to play. Our last possession ended with a deflected pass in the endzone.

I'm very proud of the effort, heart, and determination our young men showed Thursday night--despite the loss. We play our last regular season game on Thursday, October 4th here in Red Boiling Springs at 7 PM.