



Tacoma Athletic Commission

Serving All Schools in Pierce County Since 1942

Dedicated to Sports and Civic Betterment

P.O. Box 11304, Tacoma, WA 98411

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Founded in December 1942

Greetings from President Jim

Welcome to March and the coming of Spring!

It is exciting that the High Schools are now in the "Fall Sports Season" with games every week. It looks like the various sports will be happening between now and July. We are monitoring the schools, leagues, and WIAA for the current status of the programs.



We have a number of challenges to address:

1. Bill White, our Executive Director, will be retiring in June, so a Search Committee is mobilizing to select the next Executive Director. Please let us know if you would like to help. Bill will be tough to replace, just as Doug McArthur was when Bill started. Thank you Bill and Doug!
2. The Executive Committee is inviting members to consider joining the committee to lead the TAC. Sandy Snider, Past President, is leading this effort. Thank you Sandy!
3. The TAC committee structure is being refined with the start of the School Connector Committee (Aaron Roetcisoender) and the Membership Committee (Pat Garlock). Thank you Aaron and Pat.
4. Integrated Data Base: The Executive Committee is studying the possibility to install an integrated data base program to coordinate the TAC roster, committees, newsletter, website, and payments in a user friendly system. We hope to have this fully in place by Fall when the new TAC year starts.

Please join the ZOOM meetings coming up to connect with fellow TAC members and enjoy the programs.

Cheers!

Upcoming Meetings

March 11, 2021 @ noon

Speaker: Eric Nusbaum

March 18, 2021 @ 5:30 PM

April 8, 2021 @ noon

Speaker: TBD

May, 13, 2021

College Athlete Celebration



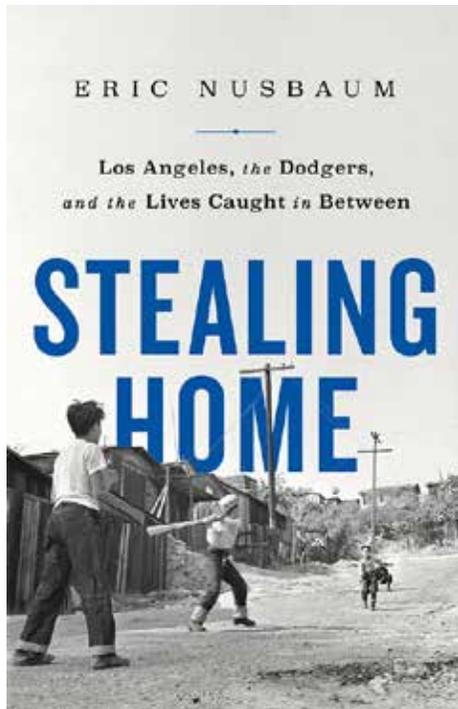
Executive Committee

Jim Merritt, President
Sandy Snider, Past President
Terry Ziegler, Finance
Willie Stewart, AOY
Jay Stricherz, Past President

THE STORY

A story about baseball, family, the American Dream, and the fight to turn Los Angeles into a big league city.

Dodger Stadium is an American icon. But the story of how it came to be goes far beyond baseball. The hills that cradle the stadium were once home to three vibrant Mexican American communities. In the early 1950s, those communities were condemned to make way for a utopian public housing project. Then, in a remarkable turn, public housing in the city was defeated amidst a Red Scare conspiracy.



Instead of getting their homes back, the remaining residents saw the city sell their land to Walter O'Malley, the owner of the Brooklyn Dodgers. Now LA would be getting a different sort of utopian fantasy — a glittering, ultra-modern stadium.

But before Dodger Stadium could be built, the city would have to face down the neighborhood's families — including one, the Aréchigas, who refused to yield their home. The ensuing confrontation captivated the nation — and the divisive outcome still echoes through Los Angeles today.

Eric Nusbaum is a writer and former editor at VICE. His work has appeared in Sports Illustrated, ESPN the Magazine, The Daily Beast, Deadspin, and the Best American Sports Writing anthology. Born and raised in Los Angeles, he has also lived and worked in Mexico City, New York, and

Seattle. He now lives in Tacoma, Washington and is married to Jenelle Franco, the granddaughter of Clay Huntington and the daughter of Cheryl and Mike Franco. Eric will speak about his sports writing career including his new book: Stealing Home: Los Angeles, the Dodgers, and the Lives Caught in Between.

Please Volunteer to Support the TAC. The organization needs a first and second vice-president. Thank you for considering volunteering for these important positions.



Obituary



Gerald D. "Spud" Hansen

August 31, 1934 — February 7, 2021

Tacoma, Washington — Spud Hansen, age 86, passed away peacefully in his home on February 7, 2021, two minutes after his Super Bowl numbers hit.

A second-generation Norwegian-American, Spud was raised by Nic and Asta (Sagen) Hansen in Chinook, Washington. Spud attended Chinook Grade School and Ilwaco High, where he served as president and salutatorian of his 1952 graduating class of three. Spud's next stop was Pullman, Washington, where he became the first in his family to graduate from college; and where his lifelong passion for the Washington State University "Cougs" began.

At WSU, Spud's funds soon ran dry, but his drive to earn his degree did not. His journey took him from Pullman, Washington to Bitburg, Germany, where he served two years in SCARWAF (Special Category Army with Air Force). With support from the G.I. Bill, Spud returned to WSU, was elected student body president; and met his future wife, Deanna. Spud graduated in 1959, but a big piece of his heart remained in Pullman throughout his long life. He was especially proud of his WSU license plate: WSU0001.

After college and a few years in HR for Continental Can Company, Spud's next chapter began in Tacoma, where he started the business that became Spud's Pizza Parlor and Trophy Room on the east side of town. While owning the Pizza Parlor, Spud and his best friend Harley Otis, bought and briefly owned the Old St. Louis Tavern and the Cage Tavern. At the Cage, they took the first women's slo-pitch team west of the Rockies to Omaha, Nebraska to play in the Nationals. In 1995, Spud received the Dill Howell Award for his support of baseball and slo-pitch in Tacoma/Pierce County.

Over time, "Spud's" sponsored countless Eastside Boys and Girls Club youth teams; and Spud served as president of their board for two years. The "Trophy Room" remains a testament to decades of his team sponsorships. Spud's friends and Trophy Room patrons enjoyed his stories and generous spirit. The charismatic host encouraged his fellow WSU football fans to come by to watch the games: he'd buy a round for the bar every time his beloved Cougars scored a touchdown. In 2001, Spud sold the business and retired; but his legacy at "Spud's" lives on.

On his last day, Spud's family enjoyed following his Super Bowl squares, wondering if he was holding on to see if his numbers hit. True to Spud's penchant for gambling and a good story — he won the half and the 3rd quarter; and then passed peacefully two minutes after the game.

Spud Hansen was preceded in death by his parents and the mother of his children, Deanna Hansen. He is survived by his son Mark Hansen/WSU '84 (Laura/WSU '85), grandchildren Chelsea, Allie and Rachel; Daughter Lynn Bisset/WSU '85 (Jim), grandchildren Jessie and Jack; Daughter Karen Wilson (John), grandchildren Bryce and Nic/WSU 2021. Spud is also survived by his companion and best friend Charlene Haneline; a special woman who deserves a medal for putting up with him for 27 years.

Obituary



Tacoma icon Kris Brannon, the Sonics Guy, dies at age 47

Kristopher Brannon was known around Puget Sound as the Sonics Guy. To his friends and family, he was just Kris.

Brannon died Thursday from heart failure at a Tacoma hospital, according to sister, Zaraya Skea. He was 47.

Brannon was already a popular fixture in Tacoma comedy clubs before the 2008 departure of his beloved Seattle SuperSonics. The team's move to Oklahoma City sent Brannon on a mission that would propel him into the consciousness of thousands of Puget Sounders.

"Bring back our Sonics" was the rallying cry for Brannon when he would appear at sporting events, farmers markets and festivals holding a sign aloft that pleaded for an NBA team to return to Puget Sound. He said he [had been to more than 1,500 events](#) to "remind people of what we lost."

"You've got to look at the long view," Brannon told The News Tribune in 2016. "People ask me all the time, 'Are we ever going to get a team back?' I say 'yes' because 'ever' is a long time."

Brannon would cut a striking figure with or without his signs. He was a tall man with a salt-and-pepper afro, often holding a comb. He was seldom without a grin. He and his likeness became the subject of memes, artwork and a [short documentary](#).

In 2016, [he rode in a convertible](#) in the Daffodil Parade. "Come on kids, smile," Brannon urged a group of children in downtown Tacoma. "It's a parade." But Brannon wasn't just a Tacoma icon.

"For his family and friends, he was more than just the Sonics Guy," Skea said. "I know that's how people will see him, but he was more than that."



Brannon was born Dec. 24, 1973 in Pierce County to Jill Skea and William Brannon, according to Zaraya Skea.

Growing up, Brannon suffered from a congenital heart defect which prevented him from playing sports at Wilson High School. In recent years, he had been dealing with heart issues, Skea said.

Obituary — Kris Brannon continued

“He had a larger-than-life personality,” Skea said. “He was the guy in the room that would make any party worth it. He always had to have jokes. That’s why he became a comedian.”

Brannon performed stand-up and managed Tacoma’s Comedy Underground from 2004–2013, according to his Facebook timeline.

Skea, eight years younger than her brother, recalled Brannon’s pristine comic book and other collections when they were growing up.

“He was the type of person that collected action figures, but would keep them in the box, because they were more valuable that way,” she said.

He was active with Pierce County Young Democrats. In 1996, he served as a delegate to the Democratic National Convention in Chicago, according to Skea. He dressed as basketball star Dennis Rodman during the convention, she said.

News of his death both saddened and shocked his legion of friends. Tributes to Brannon poured into his Facebook account and Twitter. Many described him as their best friend.

“He was like a gentle giant. Like a big teddy bear,” said friend and barber, Mike Kutz. “You don’t have many friends in life but Kris was a friend.”

For the last four years, Brannon worked as a cashier at Tacoma cannabis store Mary Mart.

“He was really loved by the community,” said manager Billy White. Positive online reviews of the store often mentioned Brannon.

Brannon is survived by his mother, sister, brother-in-law Jeff Weickum and nephew George Weickum.

A memorial has not yet been announced.

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Five takeaways: Spanaway Lake's stunning win over defending 3A PCL champion Lincoln

Spanaway Lake High School football pulled off what may well be the biggest stunner in the South Sound this season — and it's only Week 1.

A season after snagging the Class 3A Pierce County League's final seed into the district playoffs, the Sentinels strolled into Lincoln Bowl on Friday night in Tacoma and shocked the defending league champion Abes with a 34–7 upset win.

"It felt good," sophomore Jasiah Wagoner said. "This was our year to really have our best shot at them, and it feels good to execute and capitalize on it."

When the final buzzer sounded, the Sentinels cheered and collectively sprinted toward the north end zone in celebration.

Cameron Robak, who has been Spanaway Lake's head coach since 2018, but was an assistant in the system for years prior, said this was the "biggest win" he could remember in his time with the program.

"It means everything," he said. "This is what we've been dreaming about since August when football was supposed to start."

"I'm tearing up right now because that's how incredible this is. They did amazing."

Here are five takeaways from Spanaway Lake's thrilling victory:

1. THE SENTINELS GRABBED THE LEAD EARLY — AND NEVER LOST IT

Both sides were slow to start offensively playing in a season opener about six months after they were originally scheduled to.

Spanaway Lake's first two drives ended in quick punts, as did Lincoln's first possession. But, the Abes made the first meaningful mistake, and the Sentinels capitalized.

Backed up at their own 20-yard line midway through the first quarter, the Abes looked to throw on the first play of their second drive. Sophomore quarterback Gabarri Johnson tossed a short screen pass to his right, but it ricocheted off the helmet of a Lincoln receiver.

Sentinels senior linebacker Daeviante Alexander corralled the loose ball and barreled in 17 yards for the touchdown to give the Sentinels the early advantage.

"I thought I was running fast in my head," Alexander said with a smile recalling the play. "Everybody said I was running slow, but it didn't matter. Got in the end zone."

That play set the tone for the Sentinels, who scored twice more within the next two minutes. Lincoln lost the ensuing kickoff, and Spanaway Lake needed only four plays to punch

in their second score on a 2-yard scamper by Josh Collie.

The Abes again fumbled the ensuing kickoff, and Sentinels quarterback Dempsey James connected with Deonte Hayes on a 27-yard score three plays later.

That gave the Sentinels a 2–0 advantage at the quarter break.

2. SPANAWAY LAKE HELD LINCOLN'S USUALLY HIGH-SCORING OFFENSE IN CHECK

The last time the Abes were held to seven points?

That would be back in 2018, when they were bounced from the state playoffs by Rainier Beach in a 14–7 loss.

"We just wanted to make a statement in this game," Wagoner said.

Spanaway Lake limited the Abes to less than 250 yards of total offense, forced three turnovers — two interceptions and a fumble — three turnovers on downs and three punts.

Lincoln missed on a few scoring opportunities — four drives ended in Sentinels territory, and three inside Spanaway Lake's 25 — but Spanaway Lake's defense was relentless in pressuring Johnson and holding him to 9-of-29 passing for 137 yards.

Lincoln's lone touchdown came

Five takeaways: Spanaway continued

in the second quarter, when Johnson hit LaRon Monroe for a 20-yard score to make it 21–7.

3. WAGONER MAKES IMPACT ON BOTH SIDES OF BALL

Wagoner, a four-star recruit, is considered among the top 100 recruits nationally in the 2023 class by 247Sports.com as a cornerback, and [already holds offers from five FBS schools](#).

But, he was plenty impactful for the Sentinels on offense Friday night, too.

He hauled in four passes for 70 yards and a pair of touchdowns in the second half. His 10-yard grab late in the third quarter gave the Sentinels a three-touchdown cushion, and his 28-yard score midway through the fourth closed the door on the Abes.

James finished 16-of-29 passing for 213 yards and the three touchdowns for Spanaway Lake.

4. ABES REIGN OVER 3A PCL ENDS

Lincoln made an undefeated run through the league last season on its way to the best finish in school history.

The Abes shut out their first three opponents — including Spanaway Lake — by a combined score of 149–0.

Stadium scored one touchdown the following week before the Abes then shut out Mount Tahoma.

Lakes was more competitive, but still lost by three touchdowns. Bethel was Lincoln's closest margin of victory, but the Abes still breezed to a 35–21 win.

In fact, before this loss to Spanaway Lake, the Abes' most recent league loss was in 2018, when Lakes came to Lincoln Bowl and [upended the third-ranked Abes with a 42–24 win](#).

But, Lincoln's dominant streak came to an end Friday.

"We've got to get better," Abes coach Masaki Matsumoto said. "A lot of missed opportunities. ... A lot of youth. I told them, 'We've got to grow up fast.'"

"That team from last year is gone. We've got to do a lot better, and it starts with me."

5. THE BOWL WAS QUIET

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, Lincoln Bowl was without its usual crowd, and

much quieter than a typical Friday night under the lights.

There were no fans cheering in the stands. There was no band playing. The two programs had to take it upon themselves to keep the energy up on the sidelines.

But, even in a different atmosphere, the consensus seemed to be it was good to be back playing football.

"We've been waiting for it forever," Robak said. "We were supposed to have a scrimmage last week and it got canceled because of the snow. I'm so upset that our fans couldn't be here because we travel so well and they've loved us through the years. But I hope they all watched the live stream. They're definitely going to hear about it."

"We're just happy to be back on the field playing football."



Puyallup and Ziere Ford run over Bethel for first 4A SPSL victory

Ziere Ford and the Puyallup Vikings gave the Bethel Braves an unfriendly welcome back into the South Puget Sound League on Friday night at Art Crate Field.

Ford ran wild and the Vikings ran away for a 46–18 victory over the Braves as the teams opened their long-delayed and shortened football season in the rain. Bethel played its first SPSL contest in five years after four seasons in the 3A PCL.

“We finally got to play,” Puyallup coach Greg Jeffers said. “I don’t know that it was all that pretty, but we got to play.”

Ford, the stocky 5-foot-8 junior running back, outgained Bethel by himself in the first half, accumulating 118 yards on the ground and scoring two touchdowns on 10 carries while adding a 30-yard scoring reception from quarterback Luke Holcomb. He finished with 186 yards on 21 carries, with four scores to go with the TD catch.

“I mean, I was expecting it because I had trust in my line and we’d been working on it all year,” Ford said. “In the practices we had, everybody was trying to get on the same page. Today, we had some minor mistakes. But we’ll get there.”

Bethel had 115 total offensive yards in the first half. Of those, 72 came on a five-play scoring drive late in the second quarter.

Bethel quarterback Kekoa Visperas paid off that drive with an 18-yard scramble into the front left corner

of the end zone with just 35 seconds left in the first half. That cut the Vikings lead at the break to 25–6.

Puyallup had an opportunity on the final play of the half to extend the lead again, but Hayden Lovett’s 34-yard field goal attempt sailed wide left as the buzzer sounded.

Less than 2½ minutes earlier, Lovett had made a 37-yarder that gave the Vikings a 25–0 advantage.

Ford started the scoring on Puyallup’s second possession of the game.

Bethel turned the ball over at its own 15-yard line on its first possession, but the defense held and Puyallup came away with no points. After another quick possession from Bethel, though, the Vikings got on the board.

Holcomb hit Jordan Dwyer down the right side for 40 yards, to the Bethel 1. Ford then plunged in for the game’s first touchdown and a 7–0 lead with 7:32 to go in the first quarter.

On Bethel’s ensuing drive, faced with a fourth-and-long, the punt snap sailed over the punter’s head and out of the end zone for a Puyallup safety. On the second play after the free kick, Ford went 57 yards for another touchdown and a 16–0 Puyallup advantage with 4:47 left in the first quarter.

“Since we thought he had a dislocated thumb on Tuesday, we’re real happy with his performance to-

day,” Jeffers said of Ford. “He held onto the ball and did a great job.”

Ford scored for the third time with just seven seconds left in the first, finding himself alone on a wheel route where Holcomb found him for a 30-yard TD reception. It was his only catch of the game.

“I think that play was so funny,” Ford said. “Because the middle linebacker was telling his guys, ‘Watch the wheel.’ The outside ‘backer went in with the slant route and I was just wide open. Nothing but grass. Just so open.”

Ford finished with those 216 total yards of offense. Meanwhile, Holcomb enjoyed his season debut by completing 10 of 17 passes for 179 yards and two scores. The second scoring pass didn’t come until the 10-minute mark of the fourth quarter, when the Vikings faked the hard run up the middle that had been working so well.

Holcomb came off the play fake, rose, and found Sermon Wilson down the left hash for 54 yards and a 46–12 lead.

No state playoffs will follow the shortened five-week season. Does that make the games less meaningful?

“We wish that was happening,” Jeffers said. “But these kids haven’t played in a year and a half. They just want to play football.”

Five takeaways: Peninsula's 36-12 Fish Bowl win over Gig Harbor

Peninsula beat Gig Harbor in the annual Fish Bowl cross-town rivalry game between the schools, 36-12 on Friday night at Roy Anderson Field. It was Peninsula's fifth consecutive win in the series. Here are five takeaways from the Seahawks' win in the season opener.

IT WAS QUIET

The Fish Bowl normally packs thousands of fans into Roy Anderson Field, lined all the way around the track of the field. Fans arrive hours before kickoff to pregame in parking lots. The past few years have even drawn multiple food trucks. But like everything this year, it looked a lot different because of the coronavirus pandemic. No fans sat in the stands. The silence total was strange.

"Fish Bowl, it's such a big tradition in this town," said senior running back Landon Sims. "Rival versus rival. The noise, it's definitely weird. Usually, we have fans storming the field. Our senior class, it sucks that they can't be there. I think we stepped up to the challenge."

Longtime Peninsula coach Ross Filkins has coached plenty of Fish Bowls. He'll never forget this one.

"It was so strange," Filkins said. "We're used to five or six thousand people here. We're used to communication issues and practicing with hand signals.

It was just so strange. We had momentum going but it doesn't quite feel like it because it's just kind of like we're in a vacuum. But I think we adapted and the players did a good job making their own momentum."

PENINSULA'S RUNNING BACK DUO IS TOUGH

Eastern Washington signee Sean Skladany and senior Landon Sims form one of the area's best running back tandems this year. They're both fast, physical and run hard. To have two players of that caliber is a luxury for Filkins.

"To have two 6-foot-3 running backs is definitely uncommon, especially in high school football," Sims said. "But I love to have him there on my right side. I'm thankful to have him and I know he's thankful to have me. We work in unison."

Sims rushed for 88 yards and three touchdowns in the win, while Skladany rushed for 87 yards and a touchdown.

"They're tough," Filkins said. "Running downhill, strong, physical. And both of them can run by you, too, if you give them a crease. So we're really blessed to have two backs like that right now."

SEAHAWKS DEFENSE IS AS STRONG AS THEIR OFFENSE

For most of the game, Peninsula

completely shut down anything Gig Harbor tried to do. Peninsula held Gig Harbor under 100 yards passing and under 50 yards rushing for the contest.

"When they tried to pass it, they didn't really have anything there," said corner Bryce Cleave, who also ran back a 99-yard kickoff return for a touchdown to open the second half. "Our defensive backs just kept everything locked down. Then in the trenches, we're going to win in the trenches. We're going to win every game in the trenches and our big guys just did that."

Filkins said he was pleased with the defensive effort.

"I thought we played very good defense throughout," Filkins said. "We had a couple breakdowns. I feel really good about the goal line stands and big plays."

FIVE IN A ROW

That's five consecutive Fish Bowl wins for the Seahawks, who have dominated the rivalry of late.

"It's a mouthful: Back-to-back-to-back-to-back-to-back," Sims said. "It's definitely good to hold that trophy another time, close out a perfect four-year win streak, freshman to senior year. It feels great just beating those guys over and over again."

Cleave said the Seahawks take

Five takeaways: Peninsula continued

a lot of pride in winning the rivalry game.

"I wouldn't know what it'd be like to lose," he said. "It feels great."

WORK TO DO FOR GIG HARBOR

It wasn't Gig Harbor's best show-

ing, with Peninsula stifling the Gig Harbor offense and running for chunks of yardage on the Gig Harbor defense. But Peninsula is one of the league's top teams, and this Gig Harbor team still figures to have a solid season.

New quarterback Payton Knowles showed some promise, flashing an elusiveness that

should lead to some big plays this season for the Tides. If he connected with receivers on a couple deep passes, it could have been a bigger night for Gig Harbor. The Tides will need to win the battle up front to have more success against other opponents in the Class 4A SPSL.



The TAC Executive Committee thanks all members for their great support of the organization during the pandemic.



Thank you!!!!

Five takeaways: Puyallup wears Lakes down in 44–16 win on Saturday

BY THE TACOMA
NEWS TRIBUNE

The Vikings started slow, but Puyallup flipped a switch in the second half, going on to beat visiting Lakes on Saturday afternoon at Sparks Stadium, 44–16. Here's what we learned from Puyallup's win.

THIS SEASON, IT PAYS TO BE FLEXIBLE WITH SCHEDULING

Puyallup was originally supposed to play rival Rogers in a 4A SPSL matchup, and Lakes was supposed to play Stadium in the 3A PCL. But Rogers and Stadium's COVID-19 issues forced cancellation of both games. Once there was an opening with the programs, both Puyallup and Lakes athletic directors jumped on the chance to play each other.

It came together on Tuesday, leaving both programs with a short window to scout and gameplan. But no one seemed to mind.

"It was actually pretty calm," Puyallup coach Gary Jeffers said of the week of practice. "They adjusted well. I think they were so excited just to get a game. Our kids are just so happy to play."

Jeffers, who coached previously at Washington High School, faced Lakes and Dave Miller from 1997 to 2003. Saturday's game marked the first time he beat Miller head-

to-head, he said.

Being flexible with scheduling will be a must for high school athletics programs across all sports for the remainder of the school year. One positive test result can be enough to shut a program down for two weeks, so programs will have to adjust on the fly.

PUYALLUP WEARS YOU DOWN

Lakes came out swinging. With under three minutes to go in the first half, the Lancers held a 10–7 lead, and were moving the ball effectively, for the most part. On defense, Lakes was limiting Puyallup's balanced attack.

After that? Puyallup scored 37 points to close out the game, only answered by a late fourth-quarter score by Lakes.

"They're really good up front and they wore us down," Miller said. "They're a really good football team. They have a really good team, good quarterback."

On both sides of the ball, Puyallup's line play is some of the best in the state. And on offense, the Vikings keep things moving with a quick-tempo game. Lakes drew numerous penalties trying to sub players on and off the field while Puyallup was on the move.

"This year, it's a combination of just the physicalness of our

offensive line and our tempo," Jeffers said. "I think tempo is a huge advantage. We're very fortunate that we have quite a bit of depth on our offensive and defensive lines. So we can give our kids a break. A lot of other teams don't necessarily have that luxury. Eventually, tempo takes its effect."

On Puyallup's opening drive in the third quarter, the Vikings strung together an 11-play, 77-yard drive, capped off by a Ziere Ford 9-yard touchdown run. It gave Puyallup a 24–10 lead and set the tone for the second half.

"It definitely did — that was our plan," said Puyallup quarterback Luke Holcomb, who completed 15 of 21 passes for 213 yards, four touchdowns and an interception. "We were coming out, we just wanted to keep our foots on their necks and really establish what we were going to do in the second half. We did that perfectly, I thought."

SERMON WILSON IS A FORCE IN THE PASS RUSH

The 6-foot-3, 225-pound Central Washington signee and defensive end was just relentless for Puyallup in the pass rush, blowing through Lakes' line, sacking Lakes QB Justin Brennan on multiple occasions. Even when he wasn't recording sacks, he was making life uncomfortable for Brennan, chasing him out of the pocket, diving for shoestring tackles and forcing him to throw

Five takeaways: Puyallup wears Lakes continued

the ball away.

"I've been doing this for a long time," Wilson said. "It's kind of just second nature now. I got that motor, got that hunger. I love this game, this is all I do. ... Our line starts it off for both sides. We have a big, strong offensive line and big, strong defensive line. That's where this game is won, down in the trenches."

Jeffers is used to seeing these types of performances from his senior.

"He's a pretty high IQ football player," Jeffers said. "He watches film, he knows what's going on. He knows what's happening down and distance, knows what he's facing in his opponent. And he's particularly quick for a guy on the defensive line. He's 225 pounds but he's lean, fast. That combination of preparation, having a strong football IQ and then just being quick. You see it at all levels. If you can get a quick, powerful guy against a tackle, a lot of times, they'll give them some trouble."

PUYALLUP BALANCED ON OFFENSE

High school coaches and defensive coordinators like to try to make teams one dimensional. Good luck doing that against the Vikings. Last week, Ziere Ford ran for four touchdowns and caught one touchdown pass. He was still plenty productive on Saturday, rushing for 172 yards and a touchdown.

But this week, it was Holcomb's time to shine at quarterback and the receivers who had a big day. Holcomb, who threw for 213 yards, tossed four touchdown passes to his receivers. Jordan Dwyer caught seven passes for 87 yards and two touchdowns. Angel Sanchez caught three passes for 75 yards and a touchdown. And Jaylan King caught a 32-yard touchdown pass.

"All glory goes to the coaches, to the o-linemen," Holcomb said. "They're doing a great job. They're making great plays and we're just executing all around. When we're executing and on point, balance happens."

Puyallup scored 46 points against Bethel last week and 44 this week against Lakes, while holding opponents to 18 and 16 points in those wins, respectively. That margin of victory might be surprising to some, but not to Holcomb.

"People tend to continue to underestimate us sometimes," Holcomb said. "We love proving people wrong. That's all I can say."

Puyallup's defense adjusted well in the second half and Lakes was playing from behind, making life more difficult for quarterback Justin Brennan. But it was an impressive outing, nonetheless. Particularly in the first half, when he completed 14 of 19 passes for 178 yards and a touchdown, on a perfectly thrown deep ball to David Wells.

Brennan finished the game completing 19 of 28 passes for 215 yards, two touchdowns and an interception.

"The last few weeks in practice, he's been as good as we've had," Miller said. "He's got a good arm, he can throw it a long way, he's accurate, he's smart, he's tough. You can see his competitiveness. I think today, for the first time, he had guys rushing him that he couldn't just run away from. So you gotta learn a little more to maybe throw it out when you have (Sermon Wilson) chasing you. He's not the normal guys we see in our league every week."



Five takeaways: Steilacoom's season-opening win over Enumclaw

BY THE TACOMA NEWS TRIBUNE

This season will be a bit different for Steilacoom High School.

Like the rest of the football programs around the state, the Sentinels will play a shortened season schedule, primarily against their league opponents, in February and March.

They will also be without star wide receiver Emeka Egbuka, who opted to enroll early at Ohio State while the possibility of this winter season was still in question.

But, even with the changes, this was clear in Steilacoom's season-opening win Saturday afternoon against a physical Enumclaw program — the Sentinels still very much look like the program that rolled to the Class 2A state championship game in 2019.

Here are five takeaways from Steilacoom's 14-7 win over the Hornets:

1. IT'S EARLY, BUT THIS FELT LIKE A PLAYOFF GAME

Steilacoom is returning much of the roster that won an undefeated 2A SPSL championship and stomped three opponents in the playoffs before eventually losing to state powerhouse Tumwater in the 2019 title game.

They play like a program that's won big games — and this ear-

ly-season meeting with the Hornets might be the biggest test the Sentinels will face before their scheduled rematch with Tumwater to end the season.

"They're as good as anybody we played last year," Enumclaw coach Mark Gunderson said. "That was a lot of fun to have such a good opponent to face out of the gates. They've got all kinds of firepower over there."

Enumclaw joined the 2A SPSL after playing and contending for the past four seasons in the 4A SPSL. Steilacoom coach Colby Davies said this early-season matchup felt like a playoff game.

"I would say this game felt a lot like a quarterfinal or semifinal game," Davies said. "I think they're the type of team that would advance deep into the playoffs, and I feel like we're the type of team that would advance deep."

Both sides were consistently tough on defense, and neither broke through offensively until Chance McDonald hit Tre Horner on a 5-yard pass with four minutes, 48 seconds remaining in the first half.

Enumclaw took its only lead on the ensuing drive, when Royal Snyder dove across the goal line for a 4-yard score.

The decisive touchdown came on the opening drive of the second half, when McDonald

found Logan Brady for 28 yards.

Otherwise, both programs played shut down defense.

Enumclaw forced two Steilacoom turnovers on downs and two punts, and defensive back Drew Kuzaro scooped up a fumble and intercepted a McDonald pass over the middle in the fourth quarter.

But, the Sentinels never let the Hornets capitalize, forcing four punts, three turnovers on downs and an interception hauled in by Demari Ross.

2. STEILACOOM STILL HAS OFFENSIVE WEAPONS

Egbuka was on track to break multiple state records after tallying 3,890 receiving yards and 61 touchdowns in his three seasons at Steilacoom, but will miss his senior season after enrolling early at Ohio State last month.

Perhaps the most dynamic playmaker in the state last season — Egbuka is the reigning Associated Press state player of the year, Washington's 2019 Gatorade Player of the Year and reigning TNT All-Area player of the year — his absence is notable in all three phases for Steilacoom.

But, the Sentinels do still have plenty of firepower on offense.

Western Kentucky signee McDonald is still slinging the football downfield, and finished

Five takeaways: Steilacoom's season continued

Saturday's win 22-of-38 passing for 329 yards, and tossed two touchdowns of 5 and 28 yards to Horner and Brady while throwing one interception and losing a fumble.

Eighteen of McDonald's completions were for more than 10 yards, and he connected with five different receivers.

"We've got a couple new plays, formations that are really helping us out to spread the ball around," McDonald said. "It's a hard adjustment to lose a guy like (Egbuka), but we've got talent around us."

Brady, a Central Washington signee, finished with a game-high 172 receiving yards on 10 catches, while Horner, an Air Force signee, hauled in seven passes for 120 yards.

Davies said while it's different calling plays without Egbuka on the field, his receivers have stepped up and played well.

"We're confident in these guys and their abilities," Davies said. "I love how much Logan and Tre and DJ (Fryar) have stepped up as leaders."

3. ENUMCLAW LOOKS LIKE AN IMMEDIATE CONTENDER IN 2A

The Hornets spent the past four seasons playing — and contending — in the 4A NPSL, and though Steilacoom held the Hornets to less than 200 yards of total offense, the Hornets have a rushing attack that will

surely give opponents fits in the weeks to come. Paced by Snyder, who finished with a game-high 59 yards on 12 carries, Enumclaw gave the Sentinels plenty of looks, using seven different running backs.

The Hornets also held one of the top-scoring teams in the state — Steilacoom averaged 43.4 points per game in 2019 — to only a pair of touchdowns.

McDonald acknowledged the importance of closing out a win against an established, tough program like Enumclaw.

"It just gives us confidence going into next week and the weeks forward," McDonald said. "They're a really good, physical team. Great game. Really hard-fought win for us."

4. ARIZONA SIGNEE DJ FRYAR INJURED

Fryar, an Arizona signee, who is expected to be a prominent player for the Sentinels on offense and defense this season, injured his left shoulder late in the second quarter near the sideline while making a tackle.

He did not return to the game, and stood on the sideline with his shoulder wrapped in the second half.

Davies said the Sentinels are optimistic, but will evaluate Fryar ahead of practices next week.

"Hopefully we get him back sooner than later," Davies said.

5. PLAYERS, COACHES EXCITED TO GET BACK ON FIELD

Saturday afternoon's meeting at Steilacoom was the season opener for both teams after a long break due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Both sides agreed it was refreshing to be back out on the football field.

"It was amazing," Brady said. "All of these guys since the state championship last year have been working and working every single day, so to finally get out there and test ourselves against an opponent was fun."

"It was really nice to be back out, get out again and play with my guys," McDonald said. "We've got a lot of stuff to work on, but we'll do that as the weeks go by and we'll get better for sure, but it felt really good."

And to open the season with a battle like this one? That made the return even more exciting.

"That's just the way we like it," Gunderson said. "We like the stakes high. There should be some good battles throughout the years between us here."



WHERE ARE THEY NOW



Jay Stricherz – A Man for All Seasons

Jay Stricherz involvement in the Pierce County educational and interscholastic athletics scene is extraordinary. He is Tacoma's "Man for All Seasons," who is ready to cope with any contingency and whose behavior is always appropriate to every occasion. Whether it's calling the first BCS National Championship game, teaching math, or celebrating and honoring kids, Jay has always done it with all his heart. Passion and joy for teaching are the first words that come to mind when thinking of Jay. One only needs to attend an event sponsored by the TAC to see Jay emcee to understand his care and love for what he does. Kids are always first and his planning to prepare to present each Athlete of the Year is meticulous. Jay is a star whether he is working with kids, honoring members of the community or blowing his whistle while wearing black and white stripes to ensure a fair and exciting game.

Jay wrote, "The TAC. My first recollection of the TAC was when I was in high school at Franklin Pierce and my dad was a TAC member and simply loved his relationship with coaches and referees, a group that was a large part of the TAC in the mid 60's. Also, two Parkland heroes from that era were Tom Cross and Marv Tommervik, both of whom were presidents of the TAC in that time frame, and I was a tremendous fan of each and their accomplishments as Pacific Coast Conference football officials: the precursor the PAC-8. Love of the TAC is relative to; 1). Recognizing and honoring our high school student athletes in all sports. We at the TAC greatly value the impact that participation in sports has for our youth: leadership, peer respect, teamwork and team building, the lessons learned from competition: win or lose and do so with character. 2). Camaraderie of members, 3). Recognizing and honoring persons within our Tacoma Pierce County Community for their leadership, success and support of athletics; coaches, athletic directors, promoters and supporters."

Jay's accomplishments and life are remarkable.

- PAC-12 affiliation.
- 35 years as on field official, 15 as a crew chief referee.
- Officiated over 20 bowl games; two Sugar Bowls, two Cotton Bowls and two Fiesta Bowls, including the first BCS National Championship Game: Tennessee beating Florida State.
- Currently: PAC-12 Conference Referee and Center Judge Position Supervisor; coaching, mentoring, and evaluating the PAC-12 referees and center judges. Rules Testing Coordinator. Providing rules study, quizzes and tests during the preseason, in season and at the PAC-12 Clinic Test for all PAC-12 football officials. Attend PAC-12 games as an onsite conference representative gratefully sitting in the pressbox.
- Hobbies: Family; wife Wendy, daughters Jodi and Amy, all teach-

WHERE ARE THEY NOW *continued*

ers, and four grandkids and all the JOY that family brings to us. Wendy taught school in the Tacoma Public Schools for 40 years. Music: Oldies — The Beatles, Elvis, Buddy Holly, etc. Golf: and still very humbled by the game. Hiking: especially day hikes on

Mt. Rainier. Reading; favorite genres — history, inspiration/religion, attempting the classics, and of course sports. I'm a person of Faith, so commitment to such is imperative.

As humans we all strive to make a difference in the communities

where we live. Having a positive influence on students and supporting their growth and development has been Jay's life work. Albert Einstein once wrote, "A life of giving, is a life worth living." Jay epitomizes that in body and soul. He is a Man For All Seasons.



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**Please Volunteer to Support the TAC.
The organization needs a first and
second vice-president. Thank you for considering
volunteering for these important positions.**

Spotlight on TAC Members

Ken Stortini and his wife, Josie For Better or Worse Until...

Ken joined the TAC in 2010 after retiring from the Pierce County Roads Department. He always wanted to join and volunteer at various non-profits but work and life always got in the way. Once retired, Ken became actively involved in the Athlete of the Year Program, Sports Museum, and the Stadium High School Wall of Fame. Ken served on the Athlete of the Year Committee for several years, but he had to drop off the committee to take care of Josie. He is the youngest sibling of five, and his best friend, his brother Joe, talks every day. During my interview, Ken spoke about his three sisters, two of who have passed. His surviving sister, 94, still lives independently. Ken and Joe visit Vickie for dinner and outings.

Ken's love for his wife, Josie, whom he met in 2003 and exchanged vows in 2006, is a fairytale. Many people aspire to live up to the marriage vow of "for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish,"



but very few live it as deeply and caring as Ken. Josie was an accomplished dancer who was full of energy and life. She and Ken had plans to travel the world and to have shared experiences once Ken retired. About nine years ago, Josie became sick. As her condition deteriorated, Ken became a full-time caretaker for eight years. While heroic, Ken's health began to decline with 24-hour care for Josie. His love was so deep, and he was determined to provide her the care, for better or worse, that he could. Not eating and getting little sleep, his doctor told him that he would not allow him to leave his office until he agreed to find 24-hour care for Josie. Ken's intuition told him a group home with human interaction would be best for Josie, whose mind is as sharp as it has ever been. He realized the first place didn't meet Josie's needs and moved her to Heron's Key Retirement Center in Gig Harbor. Last year, he threw a birthday party for Josie a few weeks before things were closed because of the pandemic. Ken said, "Josie never complains. Despite losing her ability to walk or to see and dealing with constant tremors, her attitude is great. At the party, Joe got up to speak. Ken said Joe had worn a pin on his collar every day that reads "Attitude." Joe said, "Josie,



you have the best attitude of anyone I know and took off the pin and gave it to Josie. "Joe said, "You deserve and need this more than I do. Big brother comes through again.

Recently, the staff realized that Josie loved ballroom music and dance. They wheel her chair into a room and began playing dance music. They instructed her to dance with her arms and hands. Oh boy, does she dance? The treatment has helped ease the tremors and her remaining vision allowed her to pick up the paintbrush once again. Another benefit of Josie's painting is that she can once again express the beauty she sees. Ken's excitement to get to see her daily excites him. He went almost a year without being able to see her in person other than looking through a window.

Regarding travel, Josie and Ken had a trip of a lifetime to Italy before her getting sick. Ken's family is from Porto Sant'Elpi-

TAC Members continued

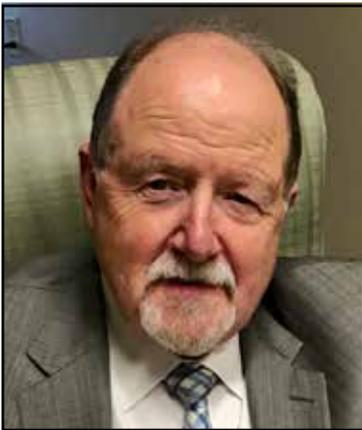
dio, a small village overlooking the Adriatic Sea in southern Italy. Josie's visited her ancestors' home in Positano on the Amalfi Coast. They both got to see where their families lived in Italy, and Ken met some members of his family he never knew. Brother Joe posted a sign in his restaurant asking



if anyone wanted to travel to

Italy. Ken and Josie signed up for the trip. Altogether forty-seven people signed up, so they had a large bus that traveled all over Italy for 17 days. Ken said it was one of the highlights of his life.

Ken's love and devotion to Josie truly fulfill the marriage vow he took in 2006. Way to go, Ken, A life well-lived.



Frank Dacca

Frank Dacca, 73 years of age, grew up in Fife, Washington, where he worked in his youth on his parents' vegetable farm. Frank graduated from Fife High School in 1965 where he was active in student government and athletics. He is very proud to have played on the 1964 State Tournament Basketball Team at the UPS Fieldhouse where Fife High School took 7th place.

After high school, Frank attended the University of Washington where he graduated with honors in 1969. From 1969–1975, Frank served as a medic in the U.S. Army Reserves. He went on to receive his Law Degree in 1973 from the University of California at Davis. At UC Davis, Frank met his future spouse Terry to whom he was married until her passing in 2011. They raised two sons, Ryan and Joe, who currently live in the Puget Sound area. Frank was also active in coaching youth basketball and soccer.

From 1973 to 2003, Frank engaged in the practice of law in Pierce County, Washington, during which time he served as a Law Clerk to the Washington State Supreme Court, as a Federal Prosecutor and as an Attorney in private practice in both civil and criminal cases. In 2003, Frank was appointed as a Pierce County District Court Judge and was elected to four terms in office through January 2019 when he retired from the bench. Frank is enjoying his retirement in Gig Harbor and spending time with community affairs and with his two grandchildren.

TAC Members continued



Jen Doehne

Jen joined the TAC in late 2019. She grew up in Kingston (North Kitsap), have played all types of sports during her life. Jen played softball and basketball for DIII school in southern Virginia and currently play volleyball, flag football, snowboarding, and any other sport anyone asks me to play. She coached swimming and softball in her younger years. Active in the community, she volunteers for Big Brother Big Sister Program, which is one of her favorite things to do! Beyond sports, dogs are integral to her; we love hiking, snowshoeing, camping, and backpacking

Jen practices law in estate planning, probate, and trust administration at Eisenhower. Carlson, PLLC in Tacoma. She's currently working on obtaining her certification as a Chartered Advisor in Philanthropy ("CAP").

Jen sits on the Athlete of the Year Committee and the Tribute to Champions Committee.



Play ball. Tune in to watch some games.

Hope you are well. I wanted to let your folks know that TPS has finally started in-person athletics again! We have a ton of changes that are in place, including new websites for our schools. We are also live streaming our games on the NFHS network (www.nfhsnetwork.com)

Below are some of the websites that I know:

- Clover Park High School cloverparkathletics.com
- Enumclaw High School enumclawhornets.com
- Fife High School getetrojans.com
- Foss High School fossathletics.com
- Franklin Pierce High School..... fpcards.com
- Orting High School..... ortingcardinals.com
- Steilacoom High School steillyathletics.com
- Washington High School..... whspatriotsathletics.com
- White River High School..... wrhornets.com
- Eatonville High School cruiserathletics.com
- Wilson High School goramstacoma.com
- Mt. Tahoma High School mounttahomaathletics.com
- Lincoln High School lhsabes.com
- Stadium High School..... shstigers.com
- Bonney Lake High School..... blhsphanthersathletics.com
- Spanaway Lake High School..... spanawaylakesentinels.com
- Lakes High School..... Golakeslancers.com

Vote now for The News Tribune's Athletes of the Week (Feb. 22 to Feb. 27)

FOOTBALL

Sermon Wilson, Puyallup:

Senior defensive end had two sacks and lived in the Lakes backfield in Saturday's 44-16 non-league win over Lakes at Sparks Stadium.

Justin Brennan, Lakes: Lancers QB completed 19 of 28 passes for 215 yards, two touchdowns and one interception in Lakes' loss to Puyallup.

Logan Brady, Steilacoom:

Caught 10 passes for 172 yards and a touchdown in Steilacoom's 14-7 win over Enumclaw. Also had a 2-point conversion.

Peyton Wing, Sumner:

Running back rushed for 96 yards and scored four touchdowns in Sumner's 46-0 win over Emerald Ridge.

Bryce Cleave, Peninsula: Caught two passes for 16 yards in a 33-20 win over Bethel and had an 87-yard kickoff return for a touchdown.

Dempsey James, Spanaway Lake:

Sentinels QB completed 16 of 22 passes for 230 yards and four touchdowns, while also rushing once for a 25-yard touchdown in 48-0 win over Clover Park.

Rahshawn Clark, Life Christian:

Had nine catches for 178 yards and a touchdown and also had a 75-yard kickoff return touchdown in a 31-21 loss to Kings on Tuesday. In a 39-0 win over

Bellevue Christian, he had a 52-yard touchdown run and a 65-yard punt return touchdown.

GIRLS SOCCER

Lily Paulson, Gig Harbor: Junior scored a goal and had two assists against Peninsula on Tuesday. On Thursday, had a goal and assist against Sumner.

Sarah Todaro, Steilacoom: Forward had a goal and an assist against Eatonville on Thursday night.

Bailey Ferguson, Orting: Senior forward had two goals in 2-1 win over Franklin Pierce on Tuesday. On Thursday, she had three goals and two assists in 7-0 win over Clover Park.

Grace Edvalds, Bellarmine:

Scored a hat trick (three goals) in 5-0 win against Bethel.

Halle Noel, Puyallup: Scored two goals in Puyallup's 2-1 win over rival Rogers to keep the Vikings' undefeated streak alive.

Trinity Boland, Spanaway Lake:

Senior midfielder had two goals, including a goal on a penalty kick, in 4-2 win over Mount Tahoma.

VOLLEYBALL

Shaleese Nuckols, Wilson:

Senior captain and libero had one kill, three aces, 13 digs and 23 serve receptions in a five-set win over Spanaway Lake on Monday.

Nai Kaleopa, Steilacoom:

Against Washington on Tuesday, had 12 kills, four blocks in 3-2 win. In a 3-0 win against Eatonville on Thursday, she had 10 kills and one block.

Avaree DuMars, Cascade Christian:

Senior outside hitter had 12 kills, eight assists and a block against Charles Wright on Tuesday. Against Annie Wright on Saturday, she had 15 kills, eight assists and a block.

Ivy Vindivich, Puyallup:

Sophomore had 13 kills and three digs in 3-0 win over Sumner on Wednesday.

Sirena Peredo, Washington:

Had 10 kills, four aces and 16 digs in 3-0 win over Fife on Thursday.

Laney Lovrovich, Peninsula:

Senior had 15 kills, five aces and 16 digs in five-set win over Curis on Saturday. In 3-1 win over Rogers, she had 10 kills.

Alexa Caufield, Rogers:

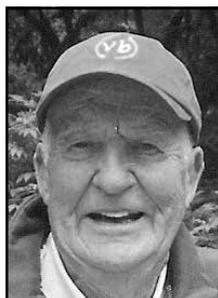
Junior had 17 kills, three aces and nine digs in 3-1 loss to Peninsula on Friday. In a 3-0 win over Emerald Ridge on Wednesday, she had nine kills and six digs.

Bailey Johnson, Emerald Ridge:

Sophomore had 12 kills and three digs in 3-0 loss to Rogers on Wednesday. In 3-0 win over Bethel on Monday, she had 10 kills and five aces.

A GAME TO REMEMBER

Instant Replay: Names of the Game



BY DOUG
McARTHUR

These old eyes may not have seen more state tournament basketball games than some

other fans out there but I'll never forget one of the most exciting "one-man shows" ever staged during the high school championships of 1957 at Hec Ed.

The Stadium Tigers were playing the state's #1 ranked Richland Bombers in a survivor's game and the Bombers were determined to turn back a Tacoma team after their perfect season had been spoiled the day before by a one-point Lincoln victory.

Center John Meyers, who later played football as a Washington Husky, and heralded Norris Brown were the stars of the Richland five. Stadium featured Clint Names, a silky-smooth shooter who also was one of the best amateur golfers in the state.

Partway through the first quarter, after a couple of baskets by the Bomber's Bill Johnson and four points from Stadium center Gene Bronk, the Tigers held a 7-6 advantage. It was time for Clint Names to seize the moment.

With 4:59 remaining in the stanza, Names hit a jump-shot from 20 feet along the right sideline. Stadium 9-6. Meyers hit two

quick baskets and Brown tipped one in but Names connected on a 15-footer, made two free throws, hit a short jumper, and then launched another 20-footer which hit nothing but net. A couple of lay-ins by Meyers made it 18-17 at the quarter. Names had scored the final 10 points for Stadium.

After an acrobatic steal by Brown and a full-court dash for two, Richland took a second-quarter lead of 22-17. That lead would hold-up through halftime despite a Names flurry that would go into the record books.

His jumper inside the key made it 22-19. He followed with two successive short jumpers from the right side, a one-hander from the right sideline, a short leftside jumper and a hooking one-hander driving the right baseline. Twelve straight points. Twenty-two in a row going back to the first quarter. No other Tiger scored during that stretch but there wasn't even a hint of "ball hogging."

The halftime "buzz" was something to hear. Fans started asking, "can one guy beat a team as good as Richland?" The answer was "no" but Stadium won a 64-63 thriller anyway. Overlooked guard Rich Sample made two free throws in the final minute for Stadium's upset victory. His 11 points included 5-for-6 at the free throw line and nine of those points in the final quarter.

Did Names stop scoring? Not on your life. He finished with 39 points on 18-for-28 shooting and he made four of Stadium's first five baskets in the third-quarter and four jumping one-handers in the fourth.

Down the stretch it was a Names jumper which made it 59-58 and another Names drive to maintain at 61-60. Frankly it might have been one of the most "perfect" games I ever have watched. Meyers and Brown were outstanding. Meyers made two tip-ins in the final two minutes. Brown had a rebound shot and a full-court driving lay-up in that same stretch.

There was no lead bigger than one-point by either team throughout the entire fourth quarter. Every basket regained the lead for the trailing team. Were they perfect? Almost, but Names missed a free throw with 1:33 left. Meyers missed a charity toss with 1:11 remaining. Brown fouled Sample with 57 ticks showing and he clinched it with a pair.

Sample was the hero. Meyers and Brown were equally heroic. Names and those 22 consecutive points put him in a class by himself. Awesome stuff.

2020–21 TAC Membership

TAC Membership The Executive Committee Thanks All Current Members for their Great Support!

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