

This Week in Football – Week 3

By Tom Downs, Essex Chargers 7/8 Offensive Coordinator

I am sorry I missed everyone last week. I could not find the inspiration to write an article for the week of the Jamboree. Now that we have one real football game under our belts, I hope to get an article out each week going forward.

Needless-to-say, this week's game was a disappointment. After a very good week of practice, we basically laid an egg at Saturday's game. On top of that, we dealt with a couple of injuries just before and after halftime that pretty much put the nail in the coffin. It really felt like we never got started and were left not even getting a chance to see what we could do.

St. Albans had a good game plan that included eating up as much clock as possible. They were able to continue to get first downs and keep the ball out of our hands. To demonstrate how effective their clock management was, we only ran one offensive play in the first quarter. While that one play turned out to be a touchdown, it was still only one play. The rest of the first half we only ran seven more offensive plays. So overall I do not think our starting cast really had the opportunity to show what they could do. They will get another chance against a tough Chittenden South team this Saturday.

Defensively we struggled on Saturday. We saw a lot of tackling up high, which is certainly not something we teach. Rest assured, we will be working on the proper technique this week. It also became apparent that we need to do a better job keeping the opposing team from getting to the outside. We will be making some defensive personnel changes to cope with that this week.

We are trying a new defense this year that we are not that familiar with. It is a defense that more closely aligns ourselves with the high school defense. We as coaches are still trying to understand to nuances of the defense and will continue to make

adjustments as necessary. It is our hope that the defense we saw in week one is completely different from the defense we will see going into the playoffs.

I have full confidence that our starting group will bounce back and we will put this game in our rear view mirror. Having said that, our second and third string groups should use this past game as a stepping stone moving forward. The second group blue starters and the gold starters put on a show both in the second half of the regular game and in the bonus time we had after the game. During regulation with Dallas at the helm at QB, the second group blue starters had an impressive drive that ended with a touch down that closed the gap to 24-12. During the bonus time, the gold offense scored on at least 3 separate occasions. The future looks very bright indeed for next year's team. This seventh-grade group shows a lot of moxie and continues to deliver.

The coaching staff took this game pretty hard, but rest assured we will continue to do everything we can to make our kids as successful as possible both in football and in life. We always tell the kids that you learn much more from losing and facing challenges than you do from always winning. That applies to football and in life. It's how you react to adversity that is important, and how you try to recognize the opportunities when we face challenges. While this game was a disappointment, we have the opportunity to learn from it and make our team better. The glass is always half full!

This week's Charger Highlights

Zavier – I do not think Zavier had one bad snap this week. He also did not have one bad snap in the Jamboree. Oh, and he did not have one bad snap long snapping with the punt team. Pretty impressive!

Coach Travis – Taking over the Gold team offensive play calling duties. He has discovered his new favorite play. 4 verticals!

Dallas – Stepped up when Tobey was injured just before the end of the first half. Led the team in regulation to a score and several scores in bonus time.

Nathan – Had two huge back to back plays in the second half that setup the Chargers second score. On both occasions would-be tacklers fell off of him like his uniform was covered in Vaseline.

Michael – Honorary captain for game one. Michael has worked hard and deserves the honor. His positive energy is a huge shot in the arm for the whole team.

That is it for now. I hoped you all enjoyed a little peak into the week that was. See you all next week!