

## This Week in Football – Week 8

By Tom Downs, Essex Chargers 7/8 Offensive Coordinator

For the fourth straight week, the Chargers competed for all four quarters against Winooski/Burlington. Winooski/Burlington is a big, physical and fast team. Yet somehow our kids looked faster. They dominated in all phases of the game. Something has gotten into our kids, and whatever it is, I want to see more of it.

Everyone contributed to this week's win. Where in prior weeks a few players stood out, this week multiple players were all over the field making plays. We continue to improve every week. This has really become a special and rewarding year watching this group grow from week to week. The consistency in their improvement is remarkable.

While we the coaching staff are making adjustments and trying to find ways to make our kids successful, it still comes down to the kids believing in themselves to make true improvement come to fruition. Do not forget this is a very young team, and yet this team is playing like they have been doing this for a while. Despite only having one walk through practice to ourselves on Friday, our kids did not look like they missed a beat. In fact, we will probably start to dial back practice time going into the playoffs to keep everyone fresh.

We had a unique practice this past Thursday where we joined Winooski/Burlington on their field. The idea was to reach out and promote a football community. All the kids and coaches had fun and this may have sparked a new tradition between Winooski/Burlington and Essex. There are loose plans to do this again next year. During the game, Winooski/Burlington wore purple uniforms to bring awareness to cystic fibrosis, which is the color that represents it. Winooski/Burlington wore purple to honor one of their 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade players who suffers from cystic fibrosis.

To give respect to Winooski/Burlington, the Chargers wore purple tape on their helmets and also wore an onion decal that the Winooski/Burlington coaches provided. For those that do not know, the Winooski/Burlington team name is Onions. It was a rewarding week overall and brought the two teams closer together. There is talk of reaching out to other programs for similar future experiences.

Our next opponent, Lyndon, is a bit of a mystery to us just like Winooski/Burlington. One thing I can guarantee is their linemen will be BIG. I have never seen a small line from

Lyndon. As usual we will try to wear them out in the first half and then we will see what we will see in the second half.

As always, we have nothing to lose which will allow us to play like we have everything to lose. Let's leave it all on the field Chargers and play loose. Let's bring it to Lyndon.

This week's Charger Highlights

### **Charger Highlights:**

**The Gold Team** – Had a game against Chittenden South and lost by less than a touchdown. That is remarkable when you think back to when the Gold team last played Chittenden South and lost forty something to six. The Gold team should be proud of how far they have come.

**Michael** – Like a man possessed, he dominated the Winooski/Burlington offensive line and gave pressure to their QB all night.

**Max** – Another man possessed, he contained the outside perfectly from his defensive end position and often ran down the Winooski/Burlington QB. Max showed us he has wheels for a big man!

**Tobey and Hazen Connection** – We have been struggling to throw the ball deep, and I am hopeful the long ball connection between Hazen and Tobey is a sign of things to come.

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