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Football

Rockford defense blanks Traverse City West in Division 1 playoff opener

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11/01 - 7:00 PM Football	Final
Traverse City West	0
Rockford	19

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Randy Garvin, left, and Brent Showers take part in the first practice for the Rockford football team in August. The seniors helped the Rams to a 19-0 first-round play off win on Friday, Nov. 1 (Cory Morse | [Mlive.com](#))

ROCKFORD – Rockford needed another stellar defensive effort Friday night when the offense sputtered in an annoying rain.

And the Rams, led by senior linebackers Brent Showers and Randy Garvin, got it, allowing Traverse City West just 130 total yards of offense in blanking the Titans 19-0 in the opening round of the Division 1 playoffs.

Rockford (9-1), which produced only 200 total yards of offense Friday night, scored 12 of its points as a direct result of defensive takeaways.

A Spencer Andrus interception led to a 39-yard Quinn Nordin field goal in the first quarter, giving Rockford a 3-0 lead that would hold up through halftime.

In the third quarter, with the Rams up 10-0, a Tyler Bradfield fumble recovery led to a 29-yard Nordin field goal. An interception by senior defensive back Josh Olson set up the Rams' final touchdown with 5:55 left to play.

“Our coaches get us prepared every week and we're excited to play every week,” Showers said. “This was one of our better games this year. We had a good game against Grandville, too, but we're playing solid ball right now. Tonight, we stopped the run, and the pass, and we came up with some big plays.”

Bradfield, a sophomore, bolted 24 yards up the middle for Rockford's first touchdown with 37 seconds remaining in the third quarter. Following Nordin's second field goal, senior Darian Vaughn scampered seven yards to give the Rams their 19-point margin of victory. A 2-point attempt after Vaughn's score failed.

“Our defense looked outstanding,” Rockford coach Ralph Munger said. “The defense was very impressive tonight.”

A wry grin crossed his face and his head tilted a bit when Munger addressed the Rams offense.

“At halftime we reviewed what's what,” he said. “We reviewed what needs to happen, and we told them to go out there and do their best and see if they can do it”

Traverse City West (5-5) crossed into Rockford territory just once in the first half and three times in the game. A fumble recovery on a punt return gave the Titans the ball on the Rams' 33 early in the second half, but a holding penalty, a rush for no gain and two incomplete passes followed. The only other time Traverse City West invaded Rockford territory was on the game's final drive, when the game already was decided.

Rockford now is scheduled to face OK Red foe Hudsonville next Friday, as the Eagles defeated East Kentwood 40-20 on Friday. The **Rams beat the Eagles 28-19** in October.

“They are extremely physical,” Munger said of Hudsonville's Eagles. “You are going to have the two best teams in our conference (the OK Red) matching up.”

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