

Dragons come up short in first home game

Written by Chris Lee

For the second week in a row, the Holyoke Dragons fell behind quickly but fought hard to win the second half of play. Unfortunately, the margin to make up was too much as the Dragons opened up home field play with a 16-36 loss to St. Francis, Kan. Friday, Sept. 17.

Holyoke coach Rod Trumper said the coaches were again proud of how the young Dragon team fought back and didn't die after falling behind in the first half of play.

For the second time, Holyoke fell behind by double digits quickly but didn't roll over and die. After settling down and hitting their assignments, the Dragons took control of the game beginning midway through the second quarter when they drove down the field to get on the board.

At the half, the home team trailed 8-36. They would go on to hold St. Francis to under 100 yards of offense in the second half and tack on another score to close the gap 16-36.

The loss moves Holyoke's record to 0-3 as they look for their first win Friday, Sept. 24 when Resurrection Christian comes to town for the second of three consecutive home games for the Dragons.



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Running back Brett Cumming looks up the field as he gets around the end. Cumming carried the ball 17 times for 67 yards in Holyoke's home opener. □ □
—Enterprise photo

Indians pour it on early

Holyoke won the toss but went three and out on their first drive. On the Indians' first play from scrimmage, running back Ty Zwegardt broke free for a 67-yard touchdown scamper. He would go on to score two more times for St. Francis on his way to a 167-yard rushing effort.

St. Francis scored on their second possession taking the early 16-0 lead. A turnover stalled the Dragons' third drive, giving the ball back to the red hot Indians as the first quarter ran out.

Holyoke held St. Francis on downs to gain some momentum but went three and out on their next drive.

It didn't take long for the Indians to hit pay dirt in the second quarter as they scored on the second play from scrimmage.

Less than 13 seconds later they scored on an awkward play. Holyoke quarterback Reid Baumgartner dropped back to pass and the Indian defense broke through to jar the ball loose just as he was passing. The ball was caught behind the play and returned for a St. Francis touchdown.

Another Dragon turnover led to the Indians' final score of the game with 3:12 left in the half.

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Austin Killin took the poor kickoff to the 39-yard line. As St. Francis went to tackle him they were flagged for a 15-yard face mask penalty giving Holyoke great field position inside Indian territory.

Six plays later, Baumgartner connected with Parker Redfern for a 30-yard touchdown strike with under a minute left in the half. Broc Pelle added the two points as Holyoke closed the gap 8-36.

With momentum on their side, the Holyoke coaches dug into their bag of tricks and fooled St. Francis with an on-side kick. After recovering the ball they attempted a reverse which the Indians sniffed out. Time ran out on the half before Holyoke could get the ball into the end zone again.

The Dragon defense bent but didn't break on the opening drive of the second half as they forced the turnover on downs.

For the second week in a row, the Dragon offense constructed a long drive going 19 plays, one play longer than last week's 18-play scoring drive, chewing up half of the third period and the first part of the fourth on their way to the second score of the game. Running back Brett Cumming punched the ball into the end zone from three yards out with 10 minutes left in the game. Pelle again added the two points as Holyoke closed the score 16-36.

St. Francis looked to score again as Zwegardt broke free for another long touchdown run. An illegal block penalty negated the score and Holyoke's defense ultimately forced the Indians to punt.

Holyoke would see the ball two more times but was unable to punch it into the end zone.

Trumper said the team is getting better and continues to improve. "We were really pleased with the way the kids battled," the coach said. He noted it would've been easy for St. Francis to tack on a few more scores and cause a running clock but Holyoke stood tough and fought hard.

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The coach said if the players continue to fight and play hard they will build themselves into a good football team.

Holyoke will face Resurrection Christian Friday night at 7 p.m. on Max Bernard Field. The Cougars come to Holyoke after picking up their first win of the season against Front Range Christian last week.

Trumper believes the Dragons will match up well with the visiting team Friday night under the lights.

Stats recorded

Holyoke finished with 188 yards of total offense.

Baumgartner finished the game three for eight for 44 yards.

Pelle led all rushers with 82 yards on 23 attempts. Cumming carried the ball 17 times for 67 yards.

Carlos Diaz led the way with 10 tackles. Jesus Hermosillo had eight, Cumming and Seth Baker each finished with seven.

Diaz punted the ball three times with a long of 63 yards.

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Other North Central action reported

Other North Central Conference teams played Friday, Sept. 17. Wiggins beat Denver Lutheran 24-6, Yuma got by Lyons 14-7, Wray beat Brush 42-31, Highland was blown out by Eaton 0-48 and Akron lost to Burlington 14-26.

JV falls to Grant

The Holyoke junior varsity team traveled to Grant, Neb. Monday, Sept. 20 to face the Plainsmen.

In what Trumper called a hard fought contest, the Dragons fell in a close 6-8 game. Saul Ramos put the only points on the board for the Dragons on a 35-yard touchdown run.

The JV team will travel to Resurrection Christian Saturday, Sept. 25 for an 11 a.m. kickoff.