It was a rainy and chilly day in Holyoke as the town prepared for a quarterfinal Class 1A playoff football game Saturday, Nov. 10.

Smoke filled the air from grills and burning trash barrels as fans gathered hours before the game for some tailgating fun.

The Dragons were prepared to face the Wray Eagles, a team they had lost to just two weeks earlier. A first-round win over previously undefeated Platte Canyon had the Dragons riding high and hungry for more.

The previous night, Holyoke players gathered with parents, classmates and community members at coach John Zilla's home for a "We Believe" football rally. Some strong speeches had everybody geared up and ready for some playoff football to return to Holyoke and Max Bernard Field.

As the big day came, cold temperatures were coupled with a rainy drizzle. However, the weather didn't put a damper on the Dragon spirits and the team hit the field ready for play. The stands were also loaded with Holyoke faithful ready to cheer on the boys in green and gold.

Brett Cumming lays out to haul in a 19-yard touchdown pass from TJ Gertner towards the end of the third quarter of Holyoke's 20-28 quarterfinal playoff loss to the Wray Eagles Saturday, Nov. 10. Cumming accounted for all of Holyoke's points last Saturday. The Dragons end the season with a 5-6 overall record. They beat Platte Canyon a week earlier to advance to the round of eight.

—Enterprise photo

Zilla said he was amazed with the turnout Saturday morning and afternoon. He said the spirit shown Saturday was something the town probably hasn't seen in quite some time.

All of the cheering and spirit came up just short as Wray escaped Holyoke with a 28-20 victory and a spot in the Class 1A state playoff semifinals.

"It was a heck of a game," the coach said of the Dragons' loss to Wray.

Zilla said the support last Saturday definitely gave the Dragons a home field advantage.

Even though the Dragons suffered a loss, the coach was very proud of how the team played.

"We went out and did our very best and I can't complain," Zilla said.

Wray got on the board first with 44 seconds left in the opening quarter when Cade Reinick ran in a three-yard touchdown. Wray lined up for a two-point conversion but Holyoke's Marques Harvey spoiled the attempt when he intercepted the pass in the end zone.

Wray added another score with 7:18 left in the first half. This time, Reinick connected with Austin Reed on a 48-yard touchdown pass. Alec Ellis added the two-point conversion.

Holyoke's Brett Cumming set the Dragons up with nice field possession on the ensuing kickoff after returning it to the 40 yard line. On the very next play, on first and 10, Cumming broke through the line and scampered 60 yards to pay dirt. The two-point conversion was no good.

The first half ran out with neither team scoring again and Wray holding a 14-6 advantage.

The Dragons received the ball to begin the second half but couldn't get anything going and were forced to punt the ball back to Wray.

With a little under seven minutes remaining in the third quarter, Reinick plowed through the line for a one-yard touchdown run. The Dragons managed to stop the two-point attempt as Wray held a 20-6 lead.

It looked as if Wray was going to run away with the victory. But a determined Dragon offense took the field and never quit.

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