

FOOTBALL



Esko's Kade Gonsorowski (6), Braden Lowe (11), Carter Zzulka (12) and Keone Anderson (back) combine to tackle Duluth Denfeld's punter in the end zone for a safety during Thursday's high school football opener at Esko Schools Stadium. Photos by Dan Harwig/ Pine Knot News

Esko swarms, blanks Denfeld

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The Esko football team rolled to an impressive 37-0 win over Duluth Denfeld Sept. 2 to open the season.

The Eskomos put up impressive offensive and defensive numbers. "I still think we made too many mistakes," said Esko coach Scott Arntson. "We had three turnovers and six penalties and we need to clean that up if we want to beat the better teams, or they will take advantage of that."

Last season the Eskomos had 70 players in grades 9-12, but this year have 54 after graduating a large senior class. Despite lower numbers, the Eskomos have some impressive athletes who will be a cause of consternation for most every team they play.

"We have some good speed and we have some pretty good athletes," Arntson said.

Those athletes showed up quite often on the stat sheet on Thursday. First it was junior running back Nolan Witt scoring on a 44-yard touchdown romp in the first quarter to make it 7-0 after Wyatt Stankiewicz kicked the extra point.

"Nolan had a great night for us and was the hammer in our option offense," Arntson said. "He got into the weight room and got stronger and faster, and it

shows."

The Eskomos added another couple of points when they picked up a safety courtesy of a big play by Kade Gonsorowski, making it 9-0 after one quarter.

Esko's lone score in the second quarter came when junior quarterback Ty Christensen hit Mason Perich for a 10-yard scoring strike.

"Our quarterback has a tough job in our offense," Arntson said. "He has a lot of checks at the line and needs to be patient and learn to take what the defense gives him. He did a good job of that on Thursday night."

Leading 16-0 entering the second half, the Eskomos opened things up in the third quarter when Koi Perich returned the opening kickoff 70 yards for a touchdown and a 23-0 lead.

"Wyatt (Stankiewicz) did a nice job on extra-point kicks for us and had five of them for us," Arntson said.

Joey Antonutti got into the act a few minutes later when he found Mason Perich open for a 10-yard scoring pass and Christensen ended the scoring when he scored on a 13-yard touchdown scamper.

While the offense racked up nearly 300 yards, the Eskomo defense was perhaps even more impressive as they held the Hunters off the scoreboard. Koi Perich led the effort with six tack-



Esko's Mason Perich catches a touchdown pass from quarterback Ty Christensen for a second-quarter touchdown during Thursday's 37-0 win over Duluth Denfeld.

les while Antonutti, Carter Zzulka, Brett Lillo and Dan DeMuth all finished with four tackles.

"I was impressed with our defense and the way they swarmed to the ball," Arntson said. "I thought up front that Rusty Anderson really had a good game. He handled double teams all night long, which allowed our linebackers to be freed up to run to the ball."

The opening night win

was important to setting the stage for the rest of the season, Arntson said.

"It's good for confidence and gives the team high hopes. You always have expectations, but until the lights come on and you play you just never know how guys will react. Our goal is to get better in every half we play and every game we play."

On Friday the Eskomos will travel to Mora.

The ticker...

Continued from Page 11

FRIDAY, SEPT. 3 FOOTBALL

Bigfork- 30
South Ridge- 20
The Panthers opened the season with a tough loss to

Bigfork. Big plays, turnovers and penalties proved to be too much to overcome in the season opener for both clubs.

Ely- 26
Carlton/Wrenshall- 6
The Raptors struggled to find offense

against the Timberwolves in Ely on Friday night. Carlton/Wrenshall will return home to host McGregor this Friday in hopes of finding their first win of the season.

TUESDAY,

SEPT. 7 VOLLEYBALL
Cloquet- 3
Carlton- 0

Wrenshall- 3
ML- WR- 1

Barnum-3
Floodwood-1
Esko- 3

Virginia- 0

GIRLS SOCCER
Esko- 4
Hibbing/Chisholm- 0

GIRLS TENNIS
CEC- 4
Duluth East-3

SPORTS SCHEDULE

FRIDAY, SEPT. 10 FOOTBALL

- Games at 7 p.m. unless noted
- Barnum at East Central
- Carlton/Wrenshall hosts McGregor
- Cloquet at Denfeld, 6 p.m.
- Cromwell• Wright/ Floodwood at Ogilvie
- Esko at Mora
- Moose Lake/Willow River hosts Int. Falls
- South Ridge at Hill City

SAT., SEPT. 11

- GIRLS SOCCER**
- Cloquet vs Hermantown (at Public Schools Stadium), 4 p.m.
- Esko hosts Spectrum, 1 p.m.

BOYS SOCCER

- CEC at Rosemount, 4 p.m.

GIRLS SWIMMING

- CEC at Superior 10 a.m.

VOLLEYBALL

- Esko at North Branch tournament, 9 a.m.
- Moose Lake at Greenway tournament, 9 a.m.
- South Ridge at Virginia tournament, 9 a.m.
- Wrenshall at Marshall, 2 p.m.

MONDAY, SEPT. 13

GIRLS TENNIS

- CEC hosts Superior 4:15 p.m.

VOLLEYBALL

- Carlton at Duluth East, 7 p.m.

TUESDAY, SEPT. 14

GIRLS SOCCER

- Cloquet at Hibbing, 4:30 p.m.
- Esko hosts Grand Rapids, 7

BOYS SOCCER

- CEC hosts Hibbing, 4:45 p.m.

GIRLS SWIMMING

- CEC hosts Proctor, Hermantown, 5 p.m.

GIRLS TENNIS

- CEC at Laura MacArthur Elementary School (vs. Denfeld), 4:15 p.m.

VOLLEYBALL

- Barnum hosts Crosby• Ironton, 7p.m.
- Cloquet at Moose Lake, 7 p.m.
- Cromwell• Wright hosts Cook County, 6:30 p.m.
- South Ridge hosts Silver Bay, 6:30 p.m.
- Wrenshall hosts Marshall, 7 p.m.

CROSS COUNTRY

- Esko at Hermantown, 4 p.m.

THURS., SEPT. 16

GIRLS SOCCER

- Cloquet hosts Two Harbors, 4:45 p.m.
- Esko at Two Harbors, 7 p.m.

BOYS SOCCER

- CEC at Duluth East, 7 p.m.

GIRLS TENNIS

- CEC hosts Eveleth• Gilbert, 4 p.m.

VOLLEYBALL

- Esko at South Ridge, 7 p.m.
- Moose Lake hosts Two Harbors, 7 p.m.
- Wrenshall hosts Carlton, 7 p.m.
- Cromwell• Wright hosts Silver Bay, 6:30 p.m.

CROSS COUNTRY

- Carlton/Wrenshall, Cloquet, Cromwell• Wright at Eveleth Municipal Golf course, 3:30 p.m.

Annual adult-child golf tourney is tee-rific

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Over the last weekend of August, the Cloquet Country Club hosted its annual Dan Sheff Memorial golf tournament, an adult-child event that has become the second-largest tournament of the summer.

"It is very gratifying seeing families coming together to enjoy the game of golf at our facility," said CCC golf pro Bill Manahan. "We're happy to host the event."

More than 170 golfers teed it up for this year's festivities. Typically, teams are parents and grandparents partnering with children or grandchildren.

A thunderstorm interrupted play on Saturday, but with such a shortage of rain in the summer of 2021, nobody complained. Laughter, cheers and jeers could be heard around the course as play resumed. Sunday turned out to be a pleasant day.

Flight winners were:

- First: John and Tony Marchio
- Second: Mike and Lauren McNulty
- Third: John and Arica Sheff
- Fourth: Rick and Adam Stowell, and Tom and Maxx Brenner
- Fifth: Greg and Derek Schrenengost
- Sixth: Pat and Cooper Ellena
- Seventh: Stu and Bryce Plante
- Eighth: Rob Nelson and Heidi Reimer, and Mike and Loren Van

Dylan Heehn played with his dad, Mark, on Saturday. In the first round, in the best ball format, Dylan pushed his drive along the tree line on No. 8, making for a difficult second shot. With shot 2, he got an unlucky bounce off a tree and a root and stopped about 100 yards from the pin on the green. On shot 3, Dylan hit a low screamer that perfectly picked up some moisture, slowed down, and gently rolled into the cup for a birdie 3