

SCHETELICH HAD 3 TD RUNS, PASSES FOR ANOTHER; CHRISTIANO TD RUN, TD RECEPTION

Cranford Wobbles West Essex in Section Grid Semis, 35-7

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Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

If you are a fan of close, competitive high school football then attending a Cranford Cougars game would probably not have been your best choice. The Cougars have mauled the competition this entire season in building a perfect 11-0 record. Their latest victim was West Essex, which fell 35-7, in the semifinal round of the North Jersey, Section 2, Group 3 playoffs held on November 21 in Cranford.

Standout junior quarterback Jack Schetelich accounted for 336 yards of total offense and four touchdowns as the Cougars advanced to the championship game where they will play Parsippany Hills on December 7 at Met Life Stadium in East Rutherford. at 1 p.m.

"I've got no complaints about our performance tonight," said Cranford Head Coach Erik Rosenmeier. "We played a strong all-around game. I thought we got off to a fast start and controlled the game, which is always what you want to do."

This one was over quickly. The Cougars raced out to a 21-0 lead by the end of the first quarter. The Cougars got on the board on their first offensive series of the game with a 20-yard touchdown run from senior Luke Christiano for a 7-0 lead. Christiano scored again moments later when he hauled in a Schetelich pass and raced into the end zone on an 85-yard scoring strike. Schetelich would score on a two-yard run of his own shortly before the end of the opening quarter to give Cranford a 21-0 advantage even

as fans were still settling into their seats.

Schetelich was just getting started on a performance that was nothing short of sensational. In the second quarter, he would score twice more on a two-yard run and again on an 80-yard burst through the middle that gave Cranford a 35-0 lead before the half and effectively ended any competitive aspects of the game.

"I told him early in the year that he has the keys to the car," said Rosenmeier. "He's got to make it run. Most QBs have to read the defense when they throw the ball, but with the style of offense we play, we ask him to read the defense in the run game as well. On his long touchdown run he made a great read. That is what impresses me the most about his development as a player."

Schetelich's 80-yard scoring burst electrified the home crowd and broke the spirit of the visiting Knights.

"The play was a Jet read," said Schetelich. "I faked the ball to Luke Christiano, who sold the fake really, really well. I think his selling job was the single most important factor on the play. Their entire front chased him leaving

me with a huge gap up the middle. Once I cleared that first level of defense, there was nothing between me and the end zone."

Speaking of Christiano, his numbers were not too shabby either. Aside from rushing the ball five times for 34 yards and a touchdown, Christiano also had four receptions for 154 yards and the 85-yard score. Christiano hauled in a pair of interceptions as well, including an incredible, leaping, one-handed theft in the third quarter that drew ooohs and ahhs from the assembled Cougar faithful.

"They ran a double reverse flea flicker type of play," said Christiano of the interception. "I just dropped back deep trying to protect the middle of the field and I saw the receiver crossing over into my area. He actually

got behind me but I managed to go up and get the ball at its highest point. That is what you are taught to do."

West Essex (6-5) avoided the shutout when quarterback Luke Magliaro connected with John Agolia on a 41-yard scoring strike late in the final quarter. By that point though, many starters were already done for the night.

Schetelich rushed the ball 20 times for 175 yards and scored three touchdowns. As a passer, he completed five of seven for 161 yards and had the 85-yard touchdown pass to Christiano. The Parsippany Hills Vikings, possessors of a 9-2 record, defeated Summit, 14-0, in order to earn their spot in the championship game.

West Essex	0	0	0	7	7
Cranford	21	14	0	0	35



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