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Tuesday 11 September, 2007

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**Rams roll in 3A debut**

Staff Reports, Casa Grande Dispatch

August 25, 2007

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**Goal-line stand on final play preserves win**

MARICOPA - What a thriller of a debut it was for the Maricopa Rams in their inaugural Class 3A football game Friday night.

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The Rams stopped a quarterback sneak from the 1-yard line on the last play of the game to preserve a 20-13 victory over Goodyear Estrella Foothills.

Matt Fierros rushed for 207 yards on 31 carries, and Will Clemans ran for two touchdowns and passed for one for Maricopa, which led 20-0 at halftime.



Estrella Foothills' David Ford returned the second-half kickoff for an 80-yard touchdown, and the Wolves pulled within seven with 7:08 left in the third quarter on a 30-yard TD pass from Michael Macko to Dalton Miller.

The Wolves began their final series at their 10-yard line with 3:49 remaining after recovering a Maricopa fumble. The Rams' lone turnover of the game halted a drive that began at their 14 and consisted of nine consecutive runs by Fierros, who gained 96 yards in the first half and 111 in the second.

On the ensuing drive, Estrella Foothills twice converted on fourth down, the second time with a 12-yard pass from Macko to Brett Hickman on fourth and 4 from the Maricopa 25 with 16 seconds left.



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Another 12-yard pass put the ball at the 1, and it appeared the clock had run out. But the officials put two seconds back up, and Macko was stopped short of the goal line as he tried to sneak across.

Blake Schwanbeck's interception and 18-yard return to the Estrella Foothills 45 led to Maricopa's first touchdown, a 3-yard run by Clemans with 5:36 left in the first quarter to cap a four-play drive.

The Rams also reached the end zone of their next possession, marching 55 yards in five plays. The key play was a 38-yard run by Fierros, and the touchdown came on a 2-yard pass from Clemans to Davon Snell with 1:02 remaining in the first. Carlos Leon converted his second extra-point kick to make it 14-0.

Schwanbeck made another interception with 4:59 left in the second quarter and returned it 54 yards to the Estrella Foothills 11. After Fierros was stopped for no gain, Clemans scored on the next play to give the Rams a 20-0 lead with 3:59 left in the half.

Macko completed 27 of 45 passes for 218 yards, going 17 of 24 for 166 yards in the second half.

Clemans was 5 of 11 for 27 yards.

Tony Jones had two sacks for the Rams, and Schwanbeck and Fierros each had one.

Estrella Foothills finished with 264 yards total offense, while Maricopa had 243. Each team had 15 first downs.

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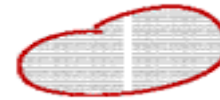
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