Last Friday, we had the chance to play Clackamas at their home stadium. Everything about this game was special; the beginning, the crowd and the end of the game. The start of this game was something I will never forget. The Navy Seals flew over the stadium and jumped out of the plane, holding the game ball.

The entire stadium waited with anticipation for their arrival. As the plane came into sight, all that I was able to see were sparks flying into the sky. Not one, but three jumpers came out of the plane. All of them had sparks flying out of the back of one of their boots. As they pulled their parachutes, I could see a huge American flag hanging from one of the Navy Seals. The national anthem started playing as the Seals were making their descent toward the field. Everyone watched in amazement at how they glided through the air. When they landed, the entire stadium went crazy. It was a true moment where it makes you appreciate America. The National Anthem played while the Navy Seals parachuted in with an American flag at a high school football game. It does not get much more American than that.

After an amazing introduction from the Navy Seals, it was time to get our focus back to playing the game. Clackamas had digital camouflage uniforms, provided by the Navy Seals. Clackamas started off with the ball and it was time for our defense to go to work. We held them on a close third down and they were forced to punt on fourth down. On our first drive on offense, we were shut out on a close third down much like Clackamas’ first drive. On Clackamas’ second drive, Jordan Stevens intercepted one of the passes. This time on offense, we scored on our very first play. It was a 43-yard touchdown run. When I got the ball on this play, our linemen had the gap set up perfectly and I ran right through it with only one person to beat. There is no better feeling than crossing the goal line and hearing the crowd roar. It is an indescribable feeling.

On the very next play on defense, I went to make the tackle on the running back. As I was bringing him to the ground, someone's helmet smashed into my calf and instantly gave me a dead leg. I stayed on the field for one more play, trying to tough it out but it was just too much pain. I limped off the field and instantly went to the trainer to have her massage it. Within ten minutes of being on the sidelines, my calf was swollen and so tight I could barely walk. It was pretty frustrating knowing there was nothing I could do to fix my calf but walk along the sidelines. It was hard to sit on the sidelines and watch our team play, knowing there was not much I could do to help them out. During half time, I did whatever I could to get my calf ready to go so I could play in the second half. Even by the third quarter, it still was too tight to play.

By the fourth quarter, my calf was finally loose enough to run. The only bad thing was my coaches told me I was not allowed to play because they did not want me to further injure my calf. I convinced them to let me play because I was not about to watch our team lose. We were tied at 14-14 in the fourth quarter until Owen White kicked a field goal to give us the lead.

When Clackamas was on their last drive to have a chance to beat us, our defensive line put constant pressure on the Clackamas quarterback. Our defensive line and linebackers, including La’Mar Winston and Ronnie Rust, were doing an amazing job all night. On fourth down and 25, it was Clackamas’ last chance to get a first down to continue their fourth quarter drive. The quarterback rolled out to his right and was about to get tackled by one of the defensive linemen. Before he got hit, he threw the ball high in the air, in hope of an amazing play by his receivers. When I saw the ball thrown, I sprinted over and jumped as high as I could to grab it. I lost the ball in the light and could not even see the ball until it was about a foot away from my hands. I somehow caught the ball and held the ball as tight as I could in case one of the Clackamas players tried to strip it. Our Central Catholic section went crazy and so did the sideline. It was an amazing feeling.

After the game, both teams got together and said a prayer. This was probably one of my favorite parts of the entire night because we got to come together as one. Getting together with the opposing team after a hard fought game and giving God all the glory showed true sportsmanship by both teams. This Friday night was an amazing night that I will never forget. Both teams showed great sportsmanship and gave all the glory to God. I cannot wait to see what next week holds for our homecoming game against David Douglas. Go Rams, Go Ducks and God Bless.