

# Bulldogs rout Newport for first win

By JAYSON JACOBY

jjacoby@bakercityherald.com  
The Baker football team broke out of its early season doldrums, and the Bulldogs only had to drive halfway across Oregon, arriving home a few hours before dawn, to do it.

Baker's 41-0 romp over Newport on Saturday evening, Sept. 25 at Sisters High School more than doubled the Bulldogs' offensive output in its three losses to open the season.

But neither the opponent, nor the neutral field venue, was what Baker had been expecting.

The Bulldogs (1-3) were supposed to open Greater Oregon League play on Friday, Sept. 24 by traveling to Milton-Freewater to take on Mac-Hi.

But the Pioneers, due to a positive COVID-19 case on their roster, had to cancel the game.

Baker coach Jason Ramos said that after learning about the cancellation,

Buell Gonzales Jr., athletic director for the Baker School District, scrambled to find an opponent.

Gonzales found a willing team in Newport, which had its own scheduling travails when its Sept. 24 game at Marshfield was canceled.

Ramos said Gonzales set up the game against Newport — at Sisters, so that neither Baker nor Newport had to make a cross-state trip — last weekend. That made it possible for the two teams to exchange film of their previous games, the customary practice that allows coaches to get a sense for their upcoming opponent and design practices accordingly.

Ramos said that although he had hoped for a Friday night game rather than a Saturday evening kickoff, he was gratified that Gonzales made the arrangements.

"We're ready to go if it means the chance to play a game," Ramos said.

The Saturday kickoff gave Baker an extra day of practice, and the Bulldogs took advantage.

After leaving Baker City about 10 a.m. on Saturday and driving the 240 miles or so to Sisters, the Bulldogs moved the ball down the field almost as rapidly as their bus had traveled.

"We want to establish a running game, and we did that right from the start," Ramos said.

Senior running back Gauge Bloomer had a breakout game, rushing 14 times for 195 yards and four touchdowns.

Ramos said Baker's young offensive line blocked well, creating gaps in the Cubs' defense that Bloomer exploited.

"Gauge was getting big chunks of yardage," Ramos said. "We're getting better, week by week, as expected. It's a process."

After forcing Newport (0-4) to punt on the game's first series, Baker scored in just

three plays, the last being Bloomer's first touchdown, to lead 7-0.

On the ensuing possession Baker forced a turnover, then scored in just one play.

"We were up 14-0 after just four offensive plays," Ramos said.

Baker extended the lead to 21-0 after one quarter, scoring a third touchdown on its third possession.

Baker capped its dominating first half by driving 97 yards in about two minutes to score a final touchdown and lead 34-0 at halftime.

Ramos said he was pleased to see sophomore quarterback Paul Hobson execute the hurry up offense during that final drive.

With Bloomer and Dylan Freeman (nine carries for 72 yards) controlling the game on the ground, Ramos said Hobson didn't have to force passes. During Baker's losses to Cascade, Homedale and Weiser, the Bulldogs trailed the entire

game, and Hobson was put in difficult positions, having to scramble against aggressive defenses and throw on the run.

But it was a much different scenario against Newport.

With Baker's offensive line controlling the line of scrimmage, and the running game established, Ramos was able to mix in passing plays.

Hobson completed 10 of 14 passes — to six different receivers — for 137 yards and one touchdown. He threw one interception.

"It was a good, solid performance for Paul," Ramos said. "He was able to relax and settle in, he was poised and made some good throws from the pocket."

Malaki Myer caught three passes for 35 yards and a touchdown, and Hudson Spike had three catches for 52 yards.

With the game in hand at halftime, Ramos said he was able to substitute younger

players frequently in the second half. Freshman quarterback Jaxon Logsdon ran the offense for a couple of possessions and gained valuable experience.

After the challenging start to the season, Ramos said he was pleased to see Baker not only get its first win, but also gain some momentum for the league schedule to come.

Baker's first three opponents have a combined record of 14-0.

"We do have significant potential," Ramos said. "Against Newport we got a sense of what we're capable of doing."

The Bulldogs, who returned to Baker City about 3 a.m. on Sunday, Sept. 26, now have a short week to prepare for their league opener Friday at 7 p.m. against Nyssa/Harper Charter at Baker Bulldog Memorial Stadium.

Nyssa/Harper Charter is 1-2, its one win a 38-6 rout of Ontario on Sept. 17.

# Chara brothers both score in 6-1 Timbers' victory over RSL

PORTLAND (AP) — Yimmi Chara and his brother Diego Chara scored in the Portland Timbers' 6-1 victory over Real Salt Lake on Saturday night, Sept. 25.

Felipe Mora, Dairon Asprilla, Jaroslaw Niezgoda and Cristhian Paredes also scored for Portland, which is undefeated in its last six games.

The Timbers (12-10-4) started the game in fifth place in the Western Conference, just a point in front of sixth-place RSL, but the win vaulted Portland into fourth. Salt Lake dropped to seventh behind Minnesota.

Salt Lake (10-10-6) had won two straight and three of its last four, playing under interim coach Pablo Mastroeni, who took over when Freddy Juarez joined the Sounders' staff.

The Timbers won the last meeting between

the teams 3-2 on Aug. 7 at Providence Park.

Mora scored his 11th goal of the season in the 11th minute to give the Timbers the lead. Sebastian Blanco's pass found Mora on the run in front of the goal.

Dairon Asprilla made it 2-0 with a goal off a header in the 36th minute.

RSL narrowed the margin before halftime with Damir Kreilach's goal from close range in the 41st. It was Kreilach's team-leading 11th goal of the season.

Yimmi Chara extended Portland's lead to 3-1 in the 49th, with another Blanco assist. Older brother Diego Chara scored in the 68th. Niezgoda scored in the 85th and Paredes added another some three minutes later.

Salt Lake has 42 goals this season, second-most in the conference.



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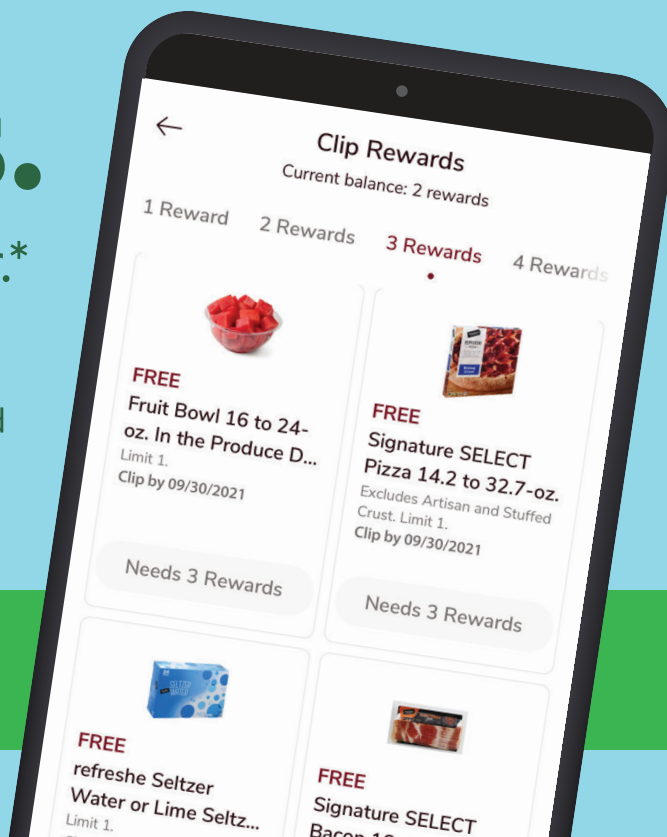
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