

Baker's season ends at Marist

■ Bulldogs can't keep up with senior-laden Spartans

By **JAYSON JACOBY**

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Baker's football season ended much as it began — with a loss to an experienced and talented team.

The Bulldogs' 42-7 loss to Marist in a Class 4A first-round playoff game on Saturday, Nov. 6 was decidedly similar to Baker's season-opening 35-0 loss to Cascade at Baker Bulldog Memorial Stadium on Sept. 4.

In both cases the inexperienced Bulldogs, with just seven seniors on the roster, struggled against a team that relies primarily on seniors and juniors.

"As a young team, these are eye-openers that educate us as to where we're at and what it takes to get to the next level of football," Baker coach Jason Ramos said.

Between those losses the Bulldogs in one stretch won four of five games, finished second in the Greater Oregon League and advanced to the playoffs.

"We always have a goal to make the playoffs, and to achieve that goal was obviously a positive," Ramos said. "If you had told me before the season started that we be playing Marist for a spot in the quarterfinals I would have said sign me up."

On Saturday at Marist, a private Catholic school in Eugene, the Spartans dominated from the start.

Marist scored five touchdowns in the first quarter and led 35-0.

The Spartans extended their lead to 42-0 in the second quarter before Baker sophomore quarterback Paul Hobson got the Bulldogs on the scoreboard with a touchdown run.

The score was 42-7 at halftime.

With a running clock in the second half, neither team scored.

"We did make some plays late in the first quarter and in the second quarter," Ramos said. "We would have liked to get another score in the second half, and we probably should have."

Senior running back Gauge Bloomer, in his final game as a Bulldog, had 48

yards on 15 carries.

Hobson completed 14 of 35 passes for 172 yards. Fellow sophomore Hudson Spike had six catches for 72 yards, sophomore Dash Bloomer had two receptions for 58 yards, and freshman Jaron Long caught three passes for 33 yards.

Sophomore Malaki Myer and freshman Jaxon Logsdon each had an interception.

Although Marist was ranked seventh in the state, Ramos thinks the Spartans are one of the top three or four squads in the Class 4A ranks.

Marist has an 8-2 record, and its two losses are to top-ranked Marshfield (48-41) and to second-ranked Cascade (38-33).

"We knew they were as good as the first three teams we played, if not better," Ramos said.

He said the coaching staff tried to keep the players positive during Saturday's loss, and to use the game as a teaching opportunity for a team that will return most of its roster in 2022.

"I'm hoping they take some positives away from that, and use it as fuel for next year," Ramos said.

He said he was pleased with Baker's resilience during a season that felt more normal than the spring 2021 season was canceled due to the pandemic, but was still challenging.

Ramos said Baker had a few players miss time during the season due to COVID-19 quarantining, but overall they fared well.

"We played every game on our schedule, which a lot of teams didn't get to do," he said.

The Bulldogs' season also ended with an unusual twist.

The team bus was heading back to Baker Saturday evening when Interstate 84 was closed over the Blue Mountains due to crashes. The Bulldogs spent the night in a motel near Hermiston and resumed their trip home Sunday morning, Ramos said.



Dan Morrison/Contributed Photo

Marist linebacker Kaden Starr, No. 29, drags down Baker wide receiver Hudson Spike, No. 8 during Marist's 42-7 win in a Class 4A playoff game Saturday, Nov. 6 in Eugene.



Andrea Winters/Contributed Photo

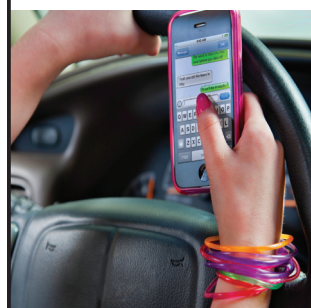
Baker wide receiver Jaron Long, No. 2, sprints for yards against Marist in a Class 4A playoff game Saturday, Nov. 6 in Eugene.



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Baker wide receiver Malaki Myer, No. 15, pulls in a pass Saturday, Nov. 6 against Marist in a Class 4A playoff game in Eugene.

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