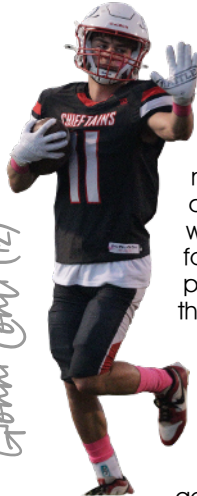


Rushing back with SUCCESS

FOOTBALL TEAM REACHES STATE QUARTERFINALS

Gianni Conti (12)



Sometimes teams are motivated to repeat past success. Other times, teams are motivated to avoid past disappointment. The latter was the case for Yutan's football team, who missed playoffs last year but used their motivation to make it to the state quarterfinals this season.

"I think it was pretty expected that we were gonna make the playoffs. But it felt really good after not making it last year. Last year was the first time in like six years that we hadn't made the playoffs. So it felt really good to get back," senior Maddox Wentworth said.

As the tenth seed, Yutan had a first-round match against Norfolk Catholic, the three-time defending state champion, but the team approached the game like any other.

"We knew that the only team that could beat us was us. The only reason we wouldn't execute is our own doing. So I think us knowing that we can do it and that nobody else is gonna stop us besides us was a very helpful mindset," senior Owen Sutter said.

The Chieftains' mindset worked as they beat Norfolk Catholic 36-8. Not only did the team have big offensive plays throughout the game, but their defense also kept them in the game.

"We had some long runs on the pitch play, but those don't happen without good blocks, and the entire O-line just blocked, really, really well," Sutter said.

One player who contributed to the win in a big way was sophomore Kaleb Fenner, who

broke the school record with 332 rushing yards.

"I had a really big run at the end. I think that kind of sealed it up a little bit and got us down the field more. So I think that really helped us out and helped the momentum keep going," Fenner said.

This strong performance brought the Chieftains to the quarterfinals, where they would get a chance for a rematch with the second seed, Bishop Neumann, who beat them during the regular season. While the team was short of a victory with a score of 26-30, they still recognized the positives of the loss.

"We played Neumann week two, and we just got destroyed, and then we came back for round two and almost beat them in our final game. I thought that showed a lot of growth throughout the season," Wentworth said.

Despite the tough loss, the team was still proud of how their season ended.

"Even though we lost, I think the boys played very well in both games. Also, Yutan has only had 10 teams in school history make it past the first round of playoffs, so it's important to appreciate it when it happens," head coach Dan Krajicek said.

After all the positives that came from the post-season, the team is excited for what next year has in store for them.

"I think next year we can win a state championship. This loss is going to hurt, but we are going to use it to push us to be better next year," Fenner said.



EYES ON THE PRIZE: With his eyes on the end zone, **Kaleb Fenner (10)** rushes past a South Sioux City defender. Fenner rushed for 1,490 yards and received recognition in the "Omaha World Herald" as an All-State First Team player. "Being part of a quarterfinal team and getting state recognition was nice, but being able to have fun with my teammates made the season even more priceless," Fenner said.

SCOREBOARD			
South Sioux City	Arlington	+	
28-0	28-8		
Bishop Neumann	Aquinas		
6-28	46-7		
Malcolm	North Bend		
33-32	64-20		
Conestoga	Norfolk Catholic		
54-6	36-8		
Archbishop Bergan	Bishop Neumann		
7-35	26-30		
Tekamah Herman	JV record: 3-2		
56-8			



GOING UP: Maddox Wentworth (12) jumps into the air to catch a deep pass. Wentworth had three receiving touchdowns and one pick-six this season. "It was nice being able to make key plays like having six interceptions and contributing as an all-around player on the field," Wentworth said.

Defining MOMENTS



"I think making the first defensive play in the first round of playoffs for a tackle of loss set the tone."

-Otto Henkel (11)



"The excitement of beating Norfolk Catholic, the three time state champions, was unforgettable."

-Owen Sutter (12)



"When we overcame all odds and beat the seventh seed as the tenth, we saw the things we were capable of."

-Peyton Reed (11)
with Kaleb Fenner (10)



DOWN TO THE GROUND: With the help of his teammates, **Kale Hoffer (10)**, sacks Aquinas's quarterback. Hoffer had a total of 30 solo tackles this season. "It was special to play such a key role and do all the hard work on the defensive side of things," Hoffer said.



NOT TODAY: Nathan Daniell (11) goes low for a tackle to take down a Bishop Neumann fullback. Although Daniell was a key part of offense as the quarterback with six touchdown passes, he also contributed on defense with 15 total tackles. "I liked being the quarterback but also getting to play defense a lot," Daniell said.

PUSHING THROUGH: While pushing his way through Tekamah Herman's defense, **Tyler Keiser (12)** dodges a defensive tackle. Keiser finished the season with a total of 187 rushing yards. "I had a lot of fun whenever I would get the ball. I would always try to get the most yards I could," Keiser said.

"BEING ABLE TO
BE ON THE FIELD
ONE LAST TIME
WITH MY
TEAMMATES IS
SOMETHING I'LL
CHERISH
FOREVER."

-Carson Jurey (12)

