

The Twenty-Fourth Game — 1936

BACK AGAIN as a Thanksgiving Day attraction, the Rayen-South classic for 1936 was played at Rayen Stadium before a crowd of about 8000 half-frozen fans. Rayen was the winner in a mild upset, 13-0, the fifth victory in a row over South that evened the count at eleven wins each with two tie games in the twenty-four played. The crowd was held down by the cold weather, but once the game started the fans seemed to forget it until the biting wind blew with stinging force.

Rayen entered this game a decided underdog, but a disastrous season seemed to generate enough determination in the team to score twice and win the game going away. South didn't have a good season either and its performance was disappointing to South adherents.

South started out like the proverbial "house afire" in the first quarter and got as far as the Rayen 21-yard line, mostly on straight football. Here a basketball pass by Sontag was intercepted by Bucci of Rayen who made his way to the Rayen 35-yard line. After an exchange of punts Rayen came up with the ball on its 33-yard line. On the first play from scrimmage Rayen fullback Fortunato passed to end Naples on the 45; he lateraled to Charles Robinson, who went all the way to pay dirt unmolested. In this 67-yard play South was caught flatfooted by the tricky maneuver. The extra point was good when Kohan's lateral to Bucci was grounded but picked up by Bucci, who continued over the goal to give Rayen the lead, 7-0. South went to pieces after this sensational play and could not match its drive in the early moments of the game.

In the second quarter South got as far as the Rayen 10-yard line, but a series of erratic passes thrown in reckless

abandon saw Rayen taking over on the 13-yard line. This was the only threat by either team in this period and the first half ended with Rayen on the long end of a 7-0 score. Incidentally, Rayen did not make a first down until the second quarter was about over.

After the usual interval show of music and cheering, the teams came on the field for the second half with the South High Warriors showing signs of snapping out of their lethargy—but not for long. South did not seem to have the desire to even the score, while Rayen was satisfied to hold its lead by playing it safe. The play in this period was mostly in midfield.

The teams went into the fourth quarter with the fans sure the game would end with the 7-0 score. But Rayen thought differently, starting a drive from its 36-yard line that never stopped until Kohan was safely behind the South goal with the ball after taking a lateral from Fortunato and going ten yards for the touchdown. The try for point failed and Rayen led 13-0. In the final moments of the game South made another bid for a score but the whistle nipped it as Domhoff went to the Rayen 25-yard line.

This was a great victory for Rayen Coach Harold Lansing and his boys and a disappointment for the South lads under "Busty" Ashbaugh. South just did not have the incentive this day, its showing the poorest of any South team in years.

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The only thing the Red and Blue won was the statistics, leading in first downs 10-6 and gaining 185 yards rushing to Rayen's 87. In the air Rayen dominated play with three completions out of five for 96 yards. South had only four successful attempts out of fourteen for 71 yards. Rayen had the edge in punting, averaging 38 yards on eight kicks to South's 29 yards on seven attempts.

For Rayen, Kohan, Bucci, Fortunato and Robinson were the offensive stars, with Patrick, Naples, Goldcamp and

Hartland playing well up front. For South, Herchick, center, was the defensive star, aided by Vernon Ellis and Howard Vinion. Dick Sontag and Wayne Domhoff bore the brunt of the offensive duties.

For the second time in four years the son of a former Rayen star scored the first touchdown of the game—Charles Robinson, second son of Clarence Robinson, who captained the Rayen team in the first Rayen-South game in 1911. Charles duplicated the feat of his brother Tom in the 1933 game, and won a turkey for scoring the first touchdown.

The Twenty-Fifth Game — 1937

ON SATURDAY afternoon, November 20, 1937, the Rayen-South game was played at South Field before the smallest crowd since the first game in 1911. About 4000 saw Rayen win 3-0 on a field goal by Jim Nard in the final minutes of the game. It was a 19-yard kick and just cleared the crossbar, but it spelled victory. Though this was the third successful field goal in the long Rayen-South history, it was the first one to decide the outcome of a game. In 1912 Tony Butchy of Rayen kicked a field goal but Rayen also scored a safety to win that game 5-0. In 1917 Ray Fesler of South booted one to score the first points but South went on to win 48-0.

The weather conditions were anything but favorable—the field was sticky and covered with light snow in some places, while brisk winds added to the general misery in the stands. The game itself was drab. South had the ball within scoring distance three times but tossed away its chances on fumbles or was unable to penetrate the Rayen line. In the first half South worked to the Rayen 10-yard line twice, but Rayen took over on downs both times.

Andy Palguta kicked off for South to open the second half. Fortunato received and attempted to punt back immediately, but Palguta blocked and Dave Hughes of South recovered on the Rayen 10-yard line. This certainly looked like the break that would change the scoreless draw. However, South's hopes were short-lived. After three assaults at the line, Lobinger's fourth-down pass fell harmlessly and Rayen took over on its 20-yard line.

After this drive failed, most of the fans who remained would have settled for a tie ball game. But though Rayen's offensive power did not indicate success, its defense was good and the team seemed to be just waiting for a break. It came in the final minutes of the game. Michael, Rayen guard, recovered Kirkwood's fumble on the South 20-yard line, and on straight football the Orange and Black drove to the South 5-yard line. With last down coming up, Glaros dropped back to the 20-yard line and held the ball while Jim Nard sent it between the uprights for the three points.

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Again, as was the case the year before, South won the battle of statistics—eleven first downs to Rayen's three, and net yardage on rushing 176 yards to Rayen's 43. Rayen attempted only one forward pass, which failed; South fifteen, with two completions for thirty-eight yards. Rayen had a slight advantage in punting, an average of 36 yards per kick to South's 33 yards. The season records of both teams were probably the poorest so far. South High had two wins out of nine games while Rayen could boast of only one win out of eight.

This game marked the debut of Joe Horn as the Rayen coach. A graduate of Miami University, he came from Barberton, Ohio, to succeed Harold Lansing as the Rayen mentor. Mr. Lansing, however, remained as a teacher at Rayen.