

The Thirty-Fifth Game — 1947

ON Friday night, October 31, at South Field the South High Warriors edged out Rayen High in the final two minutes, 6-0. An overflow crowd of more than 12,500 watched as a determined band of South gridders, denied almost certain touchdowns on two earlier occasions, struck like a bolt out of a clear sky to win the thirty-fifth classic in this colorful series. With this victory, South High took the series lead in wins, 15-14, with six tie games. In this game Johnny McAfee, South coach, returned to the football wars after five years in the Service, and this win was close to his last victory, 7-6, over Rayen in 1941.

As usual, South started off with a bang. In the first period, Rayen's Bill Horvath punted to Arnold Pinkney of South, who returned to the Rayen 46. On smashing line bucks by Gene Davis, Paul Gatchell and Pinkney, South advanced to the Rayen 18. Here South quarterback Tony Marcovecchio passed to Gene Davis on the 5, but the ball slipped out of his hands. Another pass failed and Rayen took possession.

About halfway through the second quarter South was again on the move. John Penn, replacement for Bill Horvath injured early in the period, got off a poor kick that traveled only fifteen yards to the South 46-yard line. Now the Red and Blue went from the T to the single-wing, and it paid off. Pinkney drove to the Rayen 46 on a reverse, Gatchell added two more and Ernie Costello rammed the center of the Rayen line for eleven yards to the Rayen 33. It was Costello again to the 29, but Marcovecchio's pass to him fell dead on the 5 and on the next play Marcovecchio fumbled and Penn recovered for Rayen on the 24-yard line. Then with only half a minute left in the first half, Costello stole the ball from Penn and headed for the Rayen goal, but

stumbled as he reached it and fell into the end zone. Referee Jack McPhee ruled that Costello's knee touched ground before he scored. South lined up hurriedly and Costello smashed the center of the line, but was short by six inches as the scoreless first half came to an end.

In the third quarter Rayen threatened for the first time in the game. Ira Guilford, who had played for South High the year before, took the second-half kickoff and ran it back twenty-two yards to the 38. On ground plays by Penn and Anderson, Rayen went to the South 37. The next four plays advanced Rayen twenty-nine yards; then Anzivino fumbled and the ball was recovered by South end Dick Hulskin to halt Rayen's threats. Later in the quarter, Pinkney took Penn's kick to the South 43, and Ernie Costello got loose for twenty yards, but a tackle from behind by Anzivino prevented another South touchdown. It was first down on the Rayen 38 and four more plays planted the oval on the 22-yard line. Here Marcovecchio hit Costello with a pass good for nineteen yards to the Rayen 2-yard line. As the period ended, Pinkney drove to the 1. With South followers screaming for a touchdown Rayen won the plaudits of the huge throng with its great goal-line stand—after four thrusts at the line, South wound up two inches from pay dirt and the Orange and Black took over. Instead of kicking out, Rayen elected to run the ball, and reached its 30-yard line, where it finally had to boot. After an exchange of punts Rayen came up with the ball on the 37-yard line. Failing to gain, Penn punted to Pinkney, who fumbled, and Anzivino recovered for Rayen on the South 46-yard line. On a high pass from center, substitute Charles Vaughn lost sixteen yards to Rayen's 30.

With only a little over two minutes remaining in the scoreless battle Rayen decided to gamble, and here lightning struck. Anzivino tossed a pass out in the flat, South halfback Davis intercepted and South scored in two plays: Marcovecchio passed to end John Guerriero, who made an amazing

ball grab, leaping in the air between two Rayen defenders, and going to the 4-yard line; Marcovecchio then tossed to Costello, who stepped into pay dirt for the score. Marcovecchio's drop kick failed but South had a 6-0 lead with only a minute and a quarter left to play. In that short time, Rayen took the kickoff and uncorked an assault that reached the South 31-yard line as the final gun barked the ending of the thriller.

/ /

One factor in the South victory was the line play of the forward wall. It allowed Rayen only two visits to its own territory. Offensively, the whole South backfield played well. Ernie Costello, although a sub, was sensational, and the punting of Paul Gatchell also stood out.

The highlight for Rayen was the goal-line stand in the fourth quarter. The Orange and Black was weakened somewhat when kicker Bill Horvath had to leave the game in the second quarter with a shoulder injury. Ira Guilford was a tower of strength on defense, as was Carmen Anzivino. The statistics were about evenly divided, except in first downs where South led 11-8.

The school bands gave a colorful exhibition between halves, the South High band being given a standing ovation for a great musical show.