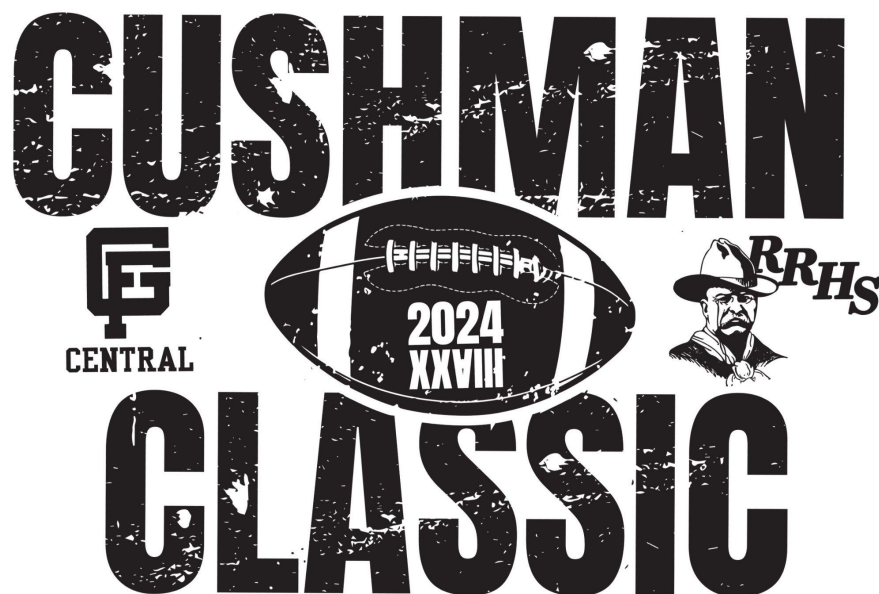




Cushman Classic XXVIII

October 4, 2024

Red River 31 Grand Forks Central 0

Honorary Bell Ringer: Buck Kasowski, representing GFC

Offensive Players of the Game: Naz Fisher (GFC) /Pearce Parks (RRHS)

Defensive Players of the Game: Logan Vorhies (GFC) / JB Walters (RRHS)

No. 1 Red River firing on all cylinders in 37-0 Cushman Classic victory

The Riders remain unbeaten and shutout Central for the first time since 2019.

By [Maxwell Marko](#) October 04, 2024 at 10:56 PM

GRAND FORKS — For a brief moment, through the opening drives of the game, penalty trouble seemed to signal a frustrating night for the Grand Forks Red River offense.

Backed up to the 20-yard line in a goal-to-go situation, Kaeden Maki hauled in a precision throw from Pearce Parks, toe-tapped in the endzone and helped dissuade those doubts with an impressive opening score to the latest installment of the Cushman Classic.

“It was 3rd and 20 and I just thought I had to take a shot,” Parks said after his award-winning performance under center. “We had to get to the endzone so I threw a good outside ball for Kaeden and he made an unbelievable catch.”

Winning offensive player of the game for the No. 1 Roughriders in their 37-0 victory over Central, Parks threw for 216 yards and three touchdowns while adding 40 yards on the ground with a 4-yard rushing touchdown to boot.

The Roughriders have the depth to carry a diversified backfield to success, and Friday night was also a reminder of what they can do through the air. Parks’ 16 completions went to five different receivers, and while budding target Cam Klefstad went for 100 yards and a touchdown, Carter Flom would haul in six balls for 71 yards and Maki would find the endzone again in the third quarter.

“With our line, we gave Pearce time to be able to throw the ball and he did a really good job of working through the progressions. It speaks well to how we’re working on the offensive side the way the offense should work,” Red River head coach Vyrn Muir said.

The penalty trouble caused some hiccups at the very start. False starts and illegal shifts would setback any momentum the offense was considering gaining. The first two drives ended in a missed field goal and a fourth-down sack to turn the ball over.

Turnovers are what would turn the tide. Back-to-back first play from scrimmage fumbles gave Red River the short field it needed to get to work. First, it was Maki on the goal-to-go third and 20, then it was Klefstad from 18 yards out with less than a minute left in the quarter.

“They just wanted that first score so bad, so once we calmed down after that first score we started doing not-stupid things. So, to start the way we started and for the scoreboard to end up the way it did, shows we can do some pretty good things,” Muir said.

Speed started to take over through the next three quarters as some ad-lib plays from Parks got him on the run and into the red zone. Eddy Rogers burned through to the outside on another goal-to-go situation from outside the 10 and sprinted in for a 15-yard score.

Parks, continuing the success from the option plays, even ran in a score of his own to give Red River a 30-0 lead at the half. Through two quarters, the Roughriders had 247 total yards of offense.

Thomas Kraft continued his reliability as the leading rusher. He picked up 72 yards on the ground in the first half.

Time wasn't on their side in the second half, but Naz Fisher and the Central Knights did all they could to punch in a score late. Fisher, a speedster himself, got the ball all the way to the 1-yard line during Central's final possession that started at its own 30. However, the Roughriders would stand strong at the goal line.