

## Glendora football turns back Ayala 40-14 for sole possession of first place

By Michelle Gardner , Inland Valley Daily Bulletin

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Ayala running back Jordan Charles (#5) sheds Glendora defender Tyler Schoenick (#3) during the first half of Thursday's Palomares League game at Citrus College in Glendora, Ca., October 22, 2015, (Photo by John Valenzuela/Inland Valley Daily Bulletin)

GLENDORA >> Ayala emerged as the surprise team over the first two weeks of the Palomares League season, and the Bulldogs upset Claremont last week despite being without nine starters who were out with injuries.

But the depleted Bulldogs were no match for favored Glendora, which cruised to a 40-14 win over Ayala on Thursday at Citrus College.

"It was a good win but we still have two more games and we're not getting too far ahead of ourselves," Glendora coach Jerry Lewallen said. "We beat a good Ayala team, so we're glad to get past this one."

The Bulldogs (3-5, 2-1) got within striking distance on a big play by the defense. Down 19-7 in the third quarter, Glendora quarterback Matt Fink fumbled and the ball was scooped up by Mason Schmidt-Weymans, who ran it back 60 yards to the 6. The Bulldogs cut the deficit to 19-14 moments later when Michael Morales threw to Jonah Hellmond for a score. Suddenly, the Bulldogs had life.

"As a coach I am always worried," Lewallen said. "But they made a great play so I give them credit. We did still have the lead, though, and I felt we were moving the ball."

Glendora (7-1, 3-0) did just that on the next possession. It went 63 yards in seven plays, the drive ending with a 7-yard pass from Fink to Corey Taylor that made it 26-14. It was the second scoring catch of the night for Taylor, for whom the night had added significance. Glendora was having its annual Breast Cancer Awareness night; Taylor lost his mother to the disease nine years ago.

"It felt like she was looked down helping me through it," said Taylor, who had his mother's name written on tape on both of his wrists. "It's always nice to have a good night, but it was definitely even more special tonight."

The Bulldogs failed to get any closer. Ayala coach Randy Reams felt that was the turning point.

"After getting the turnover and scoring we had the momentum and I felt good about where we were. We just needed one mopre stop to keep that momentum and we didn't get it."

Ayala got a bit fortunate early when Glendora got inside the 10 on its first drive and had a first down. But the Bulldogs defense stiffened and the home team settled for a 22-yard field goal by Caleb Watkins.

The Bulldogs moved the ball on the ensuing possession that started at their own 1 and got as far as the Glendora 18, thanks to a couple of long runs by Jordan Charles. They came up empty on a missed field goal, though.

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Glendora added to its lead, scoring on all three of its second-quarter possessions. The first of those scores came on a 42-yard scoring strike from Fink to Taylor with 8:13 left in the half.

The Tartans made it 16-0 with 43 seconds left on a 26-yard strike from Fink to Griffen Herrera, but the PAT kick hit the upright.

An interception by Tyler Schoenick returned the ball to Glendora for another score. The Tartans set up at the Ayala 35 and got as far as the 7 with five seconds left. Watkins then booted a 25-yard field on the final play of the half for a 19-0 lead.

The Bulldogs found the end zone for the first time on their first possession of the third quarter. They went 84 yards in nine plays most of the yardage coming from Jordan Charles who ran for 120 yards on the night. The drive ended with a 1-yard run by quarterback Michael Morales that cut the gap to 19-7.

Fink ran for 130 yards on 10 carries and threw for 125 yards. Herrera added 159 yards on 18 tries while Andrew Montano contributes 80 yards on 10 carries.

“They definitely played better and they deserve to be in first place,” Reams said. “The team that makes the most mistakes in a big game like this usually loses and tonight it was us.”

Glendora is at Claremont next week, while Ayala is home against South Hills.

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