

## COACH'S ASSESSMENT

# Brozy: Pleased with team's effort

The complete text of South Brunswick football coach Kirk Brozy's interview with *The State Port Pilot* following the 69-0 loss to South Columbus on Friday:

### ■ How tough was it coming into this game shorthanded with the player suspensions?

"It was tough coming in shorthanded, but the kids really played with some intensity tonight. All of the substitutes that we had in and everybody that was doing two or three or four jobs versus what they were doing in the previous games played really well. I'm not disappointed in the effort. It would be nice to score. They are a good team. We all knew that coming in. But the kids played hard. You can't take a program of our size and lose the players that we lost and be competitive. The kids learned something. I learned something. I think we all learned something this week with the situation at hand. The administration was supportive, the parents were supportive of what we were doing. The JV parents were supportive. I feel bad because we took an experience away from the JV team that had its first win. But maybe good things will come out of it. We got a lot of experience. The kids didn't back away from them."

### ■ Tell me about South Columbus and having to go up against a Top Ten team in this situation.

"The hardest thing with them is -- it's just like if our offense was churning and you can stop the buck sweep then you can stop us but you can't stop their buck sweep. They have athletes, three or four backs, and we don't have backs capable of doing the things that they do. We have a lot of speed, but they have size, too. And they're going to do pretty well in the playoffs, when that time comes for them. As far as I can tell, they're healthy. That's going to carry a lot of weight this time of the season. You know what Yogi's (Hickman) going through at West. Those things just happen. These guys are pretty healthy."

### ■ You didn't lose anybody tonight, although it was a tough battle in there?

"No injuries tonight. No more than any bumps or bruises. Everybody I talked to through the coaching ranks said that was the one thing they did after South Columbus. Well, we didn't do that. So we should be ready to go next week. We're going to play well against Whiteville. I can promise you that. We're going to play well, and we're going back to full strength."

### ■ What do you know about Whiteville, the kind of team they are and what you will have to do to win the game?

"I know they changed a little bit on their defensive strategy. I know they're going to want to run the ball, that's obvious. Of course we're going to have to stop their run. That's going to be the key. We've looked at it a little bit on the video, but not too much. I'll look a little more on Sunday and see what we can do. Getting our whole offensive package back is going to be healthy. We were limited to six or eight plays tonight. That's all we could run. It's just too much information for the kids too quickly. We'll be back to our basics. We'll do some things that are different that we did at East Columbus that were successful and we'll see if we can work the same thing at Whiteville."

### ■ Talk a little about some of the players that did step up for you tonight that you were pleased with in their performance.

"Mike Bordeaux stepped up. He probably had one of his best games. The stats may not show it, but physically he had one of his best games. Continuing, Mario Tooley. The kid has a heart. Win, lose or draw, he has a heart. Hugo Bryant played really well tonight. Jonathan Williams played really well under the circumstances. Damien Brown is another player that stepped up tonight and played fullback for us. We had a ninth grader, Marks, played fullback for us. He stepped it up and has some positive things happen and we're talking about a true ninth grader. We played a top contender in the state, we knew that, and the boys did the best they could. The offensive line was pretty much intact. The defensive line was pretty much intact. We had Dylan Reed, a first-year football player, playing linebacker for us. We had Paul Cottingham, a first-year football player, playing linebacker for us. You can expect that type of outcome with that level of kids. But those kids gave it everything they've got. They're parents should be happy for their performance, and so should the school. I'm happy for them. The kids mean a lot to me. I've been working with Paul and Dylan for two years now. They came from our wrestling program last year and played football because I asked them to. Look at where they are now. They got an opportunity to play one of the best sports there is and they got an opportunity to play one of the best teams in the state. And they got to start, both ways. We rewarded those seniors."

### The players that were suspended, I know you had them back out tonight on the sidelines and

"The kids that got ejected this week showed a lot of courage in the actions that they took today. We asked a few things out of them, and I demanded a few things out of them. They pretty much came through. We've got a long way to go and it's not just X's and O's and not just in the weight room. It's learning how to win and lose and learning how to do the correct things. Going to dinner has been a learning process for us. How to act. How to act in the locker room has been a learning process for us. These are the things that the kids have to learn, and that comes with time. You can look at South Columbus' program. They had ten or 15 coaches on the sidelines. That just happens with winning. If we get the same situation here, we'll have the same following here and we'll fill the stadium. Then all of the other things will come around."

"I'm pleased with the way the kids are. We ask the kids wear ties to school. We asked the suspended kids to wear ties on the sidelines. I just want them to realize we've got to be a class act -- win, lose or draw we've got to be a class act and that's important. It's important to me. It's what I want the community to perceive. We talked last week and I was a little discouraged. That's what I was discouraged about, because I don't want the wrong message being sent to anybody in this area about how I want to run this program. I want people to know that when you play South, they're going to hit you, but they're going to play within the rules."

"We looked at that incident. We didn't start that incident. Nick Green didn't start the incident and had nothing to do with the incident except he just happened to be the unfortunate person who was carrying the ball during the fumble. That's all that boils down to. I still think to this day that we made the right decision at the game. We'll just wait for the penalty to come out. We survived it. I think our kids are going to be better off in two years down the line because of it. We understand a lot more. The kids understand a lot more. And that's what this is all about. It's a life experience, for them and for me. The staff didn't quit on me. The kids didn't quit on me. At this stage of the game, that's important."

## Apology

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officials following a game-ending fight at East Columbus two weeks ago. Nine East Columbus players were also tossed from the game, and both teams face a possible \$500 fine from the North Carolina High School Athletic Association. The incident occurred with 2:29 left in the third quarter when a South Brunswick turnover resulted in a change of possessions, which also produced an altercation that led to the fighting incident.

With South Brunswick ahead 28-18 at the time, game officials

awarded the Cougars with the win but also took the numbers of seven players who they say took part in the fight. Cougar coaches claim it isn't clear whether players initially left the bench to take over on defense or with intentions of joining in the scuffle.

"We looked at that incident," said coach Brozy. "We didn't start that incident. Nick Green didn't start the incident and had nothing to do with the incident except he just happened to be the unfortunate person who was carrying the ball during the fumble. That's all that boils down to."

For Friday's game, the coaching staff directed the players to dress in

shirts and ties and stay with the team and to offer the apology to fans who attended the game. The signed notes were distributed before the game started. Cooler weather and a powerful opponent may have led more to the drop in attendance.

"I think our kids are going to be better off in two years down the line because of it," said coach Brozy. "We understand a lot more. The kids understand a lot more. And that's what this is all about. It's a life experience, for them and for me. The staff didn't quit on me. The kids didn't quit on me. At this stage of the game, that's important."

"I'm pleased with the way the kids are," said Brozy. "We asked the

suspended kids to wear ties on the sidelines. I just want them to realize we've got to be a class act -- win, lose or draw we've got to be a class act and that's important. It's important to me. It's what I want the community to perceive. We talked last week and I was a little discouraged. That's what I was discouraged about, because I don't want the wrong message being sent to anybody in this area about how I want to run this program. I want people to know that when you play South, they're going to hit you, but they're going to play within the rules."

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