

Character-building

In drama-filled game
Lions' group effort
earns first victory

By Bruce Smith
Matchup

The pressure for Borah to beat Centennial came even before the Lions had left Dona Larsen Park eight days before.

"Character, gentlemen. Who has it?" the coaches asked. Was the 2011 season a fluke?

The players' bus arrived at Centennial High School at 6:15 p.m. In the next 45 minutes, the Lions mentally focused on reclaiming Borah's winning ways. There was complete silence for 10 minutes, followed by a pep talk from coach Darren Corpus.

Then Cole Skinner threw four touchdown passes, including three to Kion Williams, as Borah beat the Patriots 28-21 in a 5A SIC game.

It made for a lot better bus ride home.

"We had some battles ... some drama," said Corpus. "But after the Boise game, our spirits were as high as ever. There were no head downs. I'm happy for these guys."

The game was close throughout. The last of many big plays came in the fourth quarter. With the score tied 21-21, Williams frustrated the Patriots with an endzone interception after a long drive.



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ABOVE: Cole Skinner gets some help from team-mate **Kayleb Pottenger** as he prepares to hand the ball to an official.

A few plays later, Skinner found Justin Coburn on a 58-yard touchdown strike.

"The linebackers bit and I caught it," recalled Coburn. "I had been having a really bad game, but it put us in the lead."

"We had a lot of highlights during the season, but that play made a big difference," Corpus said.

The play was also important to Coburn, who caught just four passes for 29 yards in the opener, but was frustrated with his efforts. He said he had struggled to learn plays and was unsure if the coaches were going to keep him at tight end.

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BORAH FOOTBALL: Lions 28, Centennial 21



A nice win, but who noticed?

AFTER THE SEASON, Borah's players and coaches reflected how important this win was during the season. However, after all the attention the opener received vs. Boise, what went unnoticed was how much Borah did with so little.

Tight end Justin Coburn noted that fans packed the Boise game, but weren't as active here. Look at what they missed:

* - **QB Cole Skinner** completed just nine passes, but four went for touchdowns.

* - **WR Kion Williams** had one of his best games, but wasn't recognized. He did, however, earn *The Statesman's* Player of the Week two weeks later.

* - **Davis Bitton's** blocked PAT was the only special-teams block the Lions had all year. It came after Centennial had taken a 21-14 lead and gave the Lions momentum that later resulted in a pair of scores.

* - **Sean Fry** nailed a pair of PATs before giving the job over to **Jacob Szuch**. In this game, those were important points.

TOP LEFT: Kadeem Torgeson caught just one pass in this game at Centennial, but had at least one reception in every contest during the season.

TOP RIGHT: Trey Dennis, Wilson Kroll, Kristian Evans, Cole Skinner and others listen during a meeting with coaches on the sidelines.

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His catch here was the only one he had all night, but it gave him a huge confidence boost.

Skinner completed just 9 of 22 passes for 231 yards, and did not have an interception. Williams was his favorite target with five receptions for 140 yards. Williams' touchdown catches came from 12, 44 and 55 yards.

Hunter Kenyon anchored Borah's running attack with 108 yards on 21 carries. Centennial had 403 total yards, compared to Borah's 337.

Davis Bitton also had a memorable night for Borah with a blocked extra point. Zak Studebaker and Nick Burt were the top tacklers on defense.

The win improved Borah's record to 1-1. It was Centennial's opener. The Patriots ended up having a tough year. They lost their next two games by three points each. They ended up with a 4-5 record, and helped Borah later in the season by defeating Rocky Mountain 27-24.

GAME SUMMARY

Borah	14	0	7	7	- 28
Centennial	8	7	6	0	- 21

- B** – Kion Williams 12 pass from Cole Skinner (Sean Fry kick)
- C** – Trevion Foster 19 pass from Darian Seifert (Nelson pass from Seifert)
- B** – Williams 44 pass from Skinner (Fry kick)
- C** – Foster 15 pass from Seifert (Coffey kick)
- C** – Jake Gyer 40 pass from Evan Radke (kick blocked)
- B** – Williams 55 pass from Skinner (Jacob Szuch kick)
- B** – Justin Coburn 58 pass from Skinner (Szuch kick)

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING: Borah – Hunter Kenyon 21-108, Karsten Niederer 2-5, Skinner 7-(-7). Centennial – Walker 14-132, Brock 6-31, Murphy 11-28, Seifert 8-20.

PASSING: Borah – Skinner 9-22-0-231 yards. Centennial – Seifert 11-23-1-122 yards, Radke 4-5-0-70 yards.

RECEIVING: Borah – Williams 5-140, Coburn 1-58. Trey Dennis 1-16, Kadeem Torgeson 1-13, Eric Thrift 1-5. Centennial – Gyer 6-91, Foster 4-55, Johnson 2-38.