



**ONLINE:** Relive how the Aquinas and West Salem football teams made it to Camp Randall by pointing your smartphone's camera at the QR code and tapping the link. **NEWSVU**

COMMENTARY

## Panthers disappointed but proud



PETER THOMSON, LA CROSSE TRIBUNE

West Salem's Adam Schams, left, and Aaron Manke congratulate each other on a great season after the conclusion of Friday's WIAA Division 3 state championship game.

As expected, Cheesemakers were a big and physical opponent

**MADISON** — They walked off the field to a loud ovation from the West Salem High School fan section and joined their teammates on the sideline at Camp Randall Stadium.

Seniors Brett McConkey and Chris Calico shared a hug, and the Panthers started to accept what was about to become a 35-



TODD SOMMERFELDT

14 loss to Monroe in the WIAA Division 3 championship football game.

There was disappointment but also what appeared to already be an understanding of what happened against the Cheesemakers on Friday.

Players don't run through West Salem tackles, but 234-pound Alex Hernandez did. Opponents don't push the pile forward against the Panthers, but powerful Tucker

Markham did.

Monroe took West Salem out of its element a bit by being the more physical team and was rewarded with its first state championship since 1994.

That doesn't mean the Panthers (12-2) weren't physical,

Please see **PHYSICAL**, Page B2

**VIEW:** To see more photos from the state championship game between West Salem and Monroe just point your smartphone camera at this QR code and tap on the link. **NEWSVU**

COMMENTARY

## Comeback complete for Suttie

After relearning to walk, lineman recovers key fumble

**MADISON** — The news was something Henry Suttie surely thought was the end of life as he knew it.



TODD SOMMERFELDT

His days moving forward were certainly going to be different, and they weren't going to be easy, but there was no reason to rule out the possibility

of moments like the one he experienced Thursday at Camp Randall Stadium.

His mom, Jean, wouldn't allow it.

"I thought this was the worst thing that could ever happen to me, and there's nothing good that can ever come of this," Suttie said. "She helped me get here."

Suttie was diagnosed with miserable malalignment syndrome as a seventh-grader, and it's understandable that Suttie might not have anticipated playing the role he did when the Aquinas High School football team beat Mayville 22-14 for the WIAA Division 5 state championship on Thursday.

Multiple surgeries required Suttie "to learn to walk all over again," and those days are a far cry from his fumble recovery with 2 minutes, 53 seconds left that set up the Blugolds' winning touchdown drive and gave them a second consecutive state title.

Miserable malalignment syndrome is the abnormal rotation of the femur and/or tibia. After complaining of knee pain in seventh grade, the Sutties found themselves seeking help from the Shriner's Children's Twin Cities in Woodbury, Minnesota.

Once they learned the problem — Suttie's were rotating outward — they had to set out to fix it, and that's where the surgeries came in.

"They had to break two bones in both of my legs," said Suttie,

Please see **SUTTIE**, Page B2

### WIAA DIVISION 5 FOOTBALL | AQUINAS 22, MAYVILLE 14



PETER THOMSON PHOTOS, LA CROSSE TRIBUNE

Aquinas senior wide receiver Collin Conzemius celebrates a touchdown during Thursday's WIAA Division 5 state championship game. The Blugolds beat Mayville 22-14.

## TWO IN A ROW

Aquinas wins back-to-back titles on late Conzemius touchdown

JAMES KRAUSE  
La Crosse Tribune

**MADISON** — With crying junior defensive back Anthony Miller under his arm, Aquinas High School senior quarterback Jackson Flottmeyer shouted to the team's student section at Camp Randall Stadium in Madison.

"Two," Flottmeyer screamed. "That's what I'm talking about. That's two. Two in a row."

The Blugolds won their second straight WIAA Division 5 state football championship with a 22-14 win over Mayville on Thursday, taking the lead with just over two minutes remaining on a touchdown pass from Flottmeyer to senior wide receiver Collin Conzemius, their second scoring connection of the day.

The touchdown pass came a few minutes after Flottmeyer thought he put his team ahead



Mayville running back Blake Schraufnagel is stopped by Aquinas' Brogan Timm, Shane Willenbring and David Malin.

by recovering a fumble of senior Calvin Hargrove's in the end zone, but official review turned the touchdown into a touchback as a Blugolds player touched the ball while out of bounds.

Senior defensive lineman Henry Suttie recovered a fumble on the following Mayville drive to set up the Conzemius touchdown, and Flottmeyer intercepted a pass with 1 minute,

50 seconds left to seal the game.

"I don't know if you can put that into words," Flottmeyer said. "You've got guys all over the field, footballs on the ground, Conzemius is running a track meet out there. Those last four minutes were a blur to me, they happened so fast. It's so unexplainable. Great credit to those Mayville guys."

Coach Tom Lee credited his

defense's toughness against one of the best running backs in the state, Cardinals senior Blake Schraufnagel. Schraufnagel's number was called on 32 carries for 131 yards and a touchdown.

"Defense was tough," Lee said. "I hope you guys realize what a warrior (Schraufnagel) is. That kid, we really put a licking on him. We talked about that all night."

Lee wanted none of the credit for the offensive performance, highlighted by Conzemius' four receptions for 115 yards and two touchdowns and Hargrove's 97 rushing yards. He made sure the person he thought deserved credit got his moment.

"Aquinas, with the athletes

Please see **REPEAT**, Page B2

**VIEW:** To see more photos from the state championship game between Aquinas and Mayville just point your smartphone camera at this QR code and tap on the link. **NEWSVU**

### WIAA DIVISION 3 FOOTBALL | MONROE 35, WEST SALEM 14

## Turnovers prove devastating

Panthers unable to claw out of early deficit

JAMES KRAUSE  
La Crosse Tribune

**MADISON** — The West Salem High School football team made a lot of noise for one of the smallest squads in the WIAA Division 3 playoffs.

After a 35-14 loss to Monroe in the championship game Friday at Camp Randall Stadium, though, one could hear a pin drop as the Panthers entered the locker room. Eventually, the silence lifted

to speeches, chatter and final thanks before the players and coaches left the locker room. After all, West Salem climbed from 0-9 three years ago to its first state title appearance since 2007.

"Obviously I'm sad, but I'm just happy because we came so far and worked our butts off for this," senior running back Luke Noel said. "Coach (Justin) Jehn has this program going in the right direction, and he's built a great foundation with leadership and everything. That's why I think we're here, the coaching

staff and him and the work they put in during the offseason."

Monroe senior running back Tucker Markham had four of the Cheesemakers' five touchdown runs and finished with a game-high 170 rushing yards. Jehn said there's a lot to account for when facing one of the state's best rushing attacks under coach Toby Golembiewski.

"The misdirection is difficult, but the size they've got on their offensive line and the multiple backs they can contribute to is



PETER THOMSON, LA CROSSE TRIBUNE

Monroe's Sean Rufenacht, right, recovers a West Salem fumble during Friday's WIAA Division 3 state title game in Madison.

Please see **TURNOVERS**, Page B2

WHAT'S ON TAP

SATURDAY, NOV. 19

- HIGH SCHOOL**  
**GIRLS BASKETBALL: Nonconference**—Aquinas vs. Kewaskum at Beaver Dam, 1 p.m.
- COLLEGE**  
**FOOTBALL: NCAA Division III Tournament**—UW-La Crosse at Wartburg (Iowa), noon.
- VOLLEYBALL: NAIA Tournament**—Point Parke (Pa.) at Viterbo, 6 p.m.
- CROSS COUNTRY: NCAA Division III National championships** at Lansing, Mich., 10 a.m.
- WOMEN'S SOCCER: NCAA Division III Tournament**—UW-La Crosse at Virginia Wesleyan, 2:30 p.m.
- MEN'S BASKETBALL: Wartburg Tournament**—UW-La Crosse vs. Wartburg (Iowa) or Concordia. Viterbo Invitational—Viterbo vs. Indiana Northwest, 3 p.m.
- WOMEN'S BASKETBALL: Nonconference**—Viterbo at Mount Mercy (Iowa), 2 p.m.; Carroll at UW-La Crosse, 3 p.m.
- MEN'S SWIMMING: Nonconference**—UW-La Crosse at Luther (Iowa) Invitational, 10 a.m.
- WOMEN'S SWIMMING: Nonconference**—UW-La Crosse at Luther (Iowa) Invitational, 10 a.m.
- WRESTLING: Nonconference**—UW-La Crosse at Augsburg Open (Minn.), 9 a.m.; UW-La Crosse at Concordia University Open, 9 a.m.

ON TV

SATURDAY

- AUTO RACING:** Formula 1: Practice, ESPN2, 4:25 a.m.; Formula 1: Qualifying, ESPNEWS, 7:55 a.m.
- MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL:** Cent. Arkansas vs. Rider, ESPN, 5 a.m.; Hall of Fame Tip-Off: Saint Louis vs. Maryland, ESPNEWS, noon; Hall of Fame Tip-Off: Miami vs. Providence, ESPNEWS, 3 p.m.; The Citadel at Butler, FS2, 6 p.m.
- COLLEGE CROSS-COUNTRY:** NCAA Division I Men's and Women's Championships, ESPN, 9 a.m.
- COLLEGE FOOTBALL:** Navy at UCF, ESPN2, 10 a.m.; Illinois at Michigan, ABC, 11 a.m.; Duke at Pittsburgh, ACCN, 11 a.m.; Indiana at Michigan St., BTN, 11 a.m.; UConn at Army, CBSN, 11 a.m.; Wisconsin at Nebraska, ESPN, 11 a.m.; Yale at Harvard, ESPN, 11 a.m.; TCU at Baylor, FOX, 11 a.m.; Northwestern at Purdue, FS1, 11 a.m.; Florida at Vanderbilt, SECN, 11 a.m.; Washington St. at Arizona, PAC12N, 1 p.m.; Oregon St. at Arizona, ESPN2, 1:15 p.m.; Boston College at Notre Dame, NBC, PEACOCK, 1:30 p.m.; Ohio St. at Maryland, ABC, 2:30 p.m.; NC State at Louisville, ACCN, 2:30 p.m.; Georgia at Kentucky, CBS, 2:30 p.m.; Akron at Buffalo, CBSN, 2:30 p.m.; Miami at Clemson, ESPN, 2:30 p.m.; S. Alabama at Southern Miss., NFLN, 2:30 p.m.; Cincinnati at Temple, ESPN, 3 p.m.; Iowa at Minnesota, FOX, 3 p.m.; W. Kentucky at Auburn, SECN, 3 p.m.; Georgia Tech at North Carolina, ESPN2, 4:30 p.m.; Stanford at California, PAC12N, 4:30 p.m.; Boise St. at Wyoming, CBSN, 6 p.m.; Tennessee at South Carolina, ESPN, 6 p.m.; Texas Tech at Iowa St., FS1, 6 p.m.; Oklahoma St. at Oklahoma, ABC, 6:30 p.m.; New Mexico St. at Missouri, ESPN, 6:30 p.m.; Mississippi at Arkansas, SECN, 6:30 p.m.; Syracuse at Wake Forest, ACCN, 7 p.m.; Southern Cal at UCLA, FOX, 7 p.m.; UAB at LSU, ESPN2, 8 p.m.; Colorado St. at Air Force, FS2, 8 p.m.; Colorado at Washington, PAC12N, 8 p.m.; San Jose St. at Utah St., FS1, 8:45 p.m.; Fresno St. at Nevada, CBSN, 9:30 p.m.; Utah at Oregon, ESPN, 9:30 p.m.; Bethune-Cookman vs. Florida A&M (taped), ESPN, 10 p.m.
- WOMEN'S COLLEGE VOLLEYBALL:** Wisconsin at Penn St., BTN, 7 p.m.
- GOLF:** PGA Tour: The RSM Classic, Third Round, GOLF, noon; LPGA Tour: The CME Group Tour Championship, Third Round, GOLF, 3 p.m.; DP World Tour: The DP World Tour Championship, Final Round, GOLF, 12:30 a.m. (Sunday).
- HORSE RACING:** NYRA: America's Day at the Races, FS2, 10:30 a.m.
- NBA:** Minnesota at Philadelphia, BSNO, NBATV, 6:30 p.m.; Utah at Portland, NBATV, 9 p.m.
- NHL:** New Jersey at Ottawa, NHLN, noon; Calgary at Florida, NHLN, 3 p.m.; Chicago at Boston, NHLN, 6 p.m.; Carolina at Minnesota, BSNO+, BSWI+, 7 p.m.
- WOMEN'S SOCCER:** FASL: Manchester City at Everton, CBSN, 8:55 a.m.
- TENNIS:** ATP Finals Doubles Semifinal, TENNIS, 4:30 a.m., 5 a.m., 11:30 a.m.; ATP Finals Singles Semifinal, TENNIS, 7 a.m., 2 p.m.

Repeat

From B1

we've got is a really good team no matter what," Lee said, arm around assistant coach Steve Kramer. "With Steve Kramer calling our offense, we do some real dangerous stuff. This guy is really good, and I love him like a brother."

The Bugolds (13-1) yielded no points on the opening possession, turning the ball over on downs inside the Mayville red zone after a 12-play drive that took 6:46.

The ensuing Mayville drive — taking another 7:43 off the clock and bleeding into the second quarter — ended with a 10-yard touchdown rush by Schraufnagel. Aquinas wasted no time responding. Junior wide

receiver David Malin broke off a 49-yard rush to put the Bugolds back in the red zone and Hargrove scored three plays later. Aquinas led 8-7 after Conzemius scored on the two-point conversion.

Mayville converted 2 of 3 fourth downs in the first half, but the one they didn't proved painful for quarterback Adison Mittelstadt. On fourth-and-9, Mittelstadt was swarmed by junior defensive lineman Brogan Timm and two others for a sack in the final minute of the half.

After forcing another turnover on downs defensively, the Bugolds beat the Cardinals over the top on a 71-yard pass by Flottmeyer to Conzemius for a touchdown.

"Collin is fast and Jackson can throw the ball, simple as

that," Kramer said. "They were playing up on us and stopping the run, so that was our next option, over the top."

A failed two-point conversion meant a 12-yard touchdown run by Cardinals senior running back Damien Hauglie tied the game at 14-14 early in the fourth quarter.

The Bugolds went on a long, grueling drive of 15 plays and nearly six minutes that met a bizarre end.

The ball rolled around for several seconds in the end zone after Hargrove fumbled it just shy of the goal line, eventually picked up for the score but overturned to a touchback.

Lee said he team stayed "even keeled," and three plays later a tackle by junior defensive back Kole Keppel forced a fumble that the

Suttie recovered at Mayville's 38-yard line.

Three plays after that, Conzemius took a touch pass from Flottmeyer 27 yards for the go-ahead score. Hargrove scored the two-point conversion, and Flottmeyer ended his high school career with an interception to seal his second state title.

"To come to where we are is so big for our school's community," Flottmeyer said. "We always talk about the Aquinas family, and it's been well represented the last four years I've been here. Going out on top is picture perfect. Football is romantic and it's hard. We worked our tails off for this man."

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Physical

From B1

but it was important to be able to stop enough Monroe drives to allow their offense to hang in the game. The Cheesemakers (14-0) didn't let that happen, maintaining possession of the ball more than twice as long as West Salem — 33:51 to 14:09 — and finishing with 23 first downs.

"They're just a great offensive line," West Salem senior linebacker and running back Luke Noel said. "They move bodies, they're powerful. They'll just beat you up inside, and that's what I think they just did today."

"They beat us up inside. I don't know, I was just trying my best."

West Salem, which has played in four championship games since 2002, didn't roll over. McConkey

had 15 tackles and Noel 13. Bringing down Hernandez, Markham and anyone else who carried the ball required physicality. But bringing them down with manageable gains was difficult. It didn't help that those blocking up front — including ends, which are blockers in the Wing-T — were an average size of 6-foot-2, 222 pounds.

The 6-5, 288-pound Isaac Bunker was a particular problem at left guard.

The Panthers did what they had to do against the Wing-T on first and second down early, but the Cheesemakers always seemed to take that advantage away on the next play.

Monroe's first three third downs were, in order, third-and-7, third-and-5 and third-and-7 — not ideal for the Wing-T.

Hernandez gained 11 yards on the first one and 6 yards on the second. George Brukwicki then completed

his only pass of the game — a 42-yarder to Charlie Wiegel — on the last.

Wiegel was wide open down the right sideline on the reception, but Hernandez broke a couple of tackles on his third-down conversion.

"We knew coming in that they'd be a real physical team," West Salem defensive back and wide receiver Brennan Kennedy said. "We couldn't match their physicality."

Kennedy, who had five catches for 101 yards, had a 57-yard catch that set up an 8-yard touchdown run by Noel to get West Salem within 14-7 in the second quarter, but Monroe responded with a nine-play drive — all runs — that covered 60 yards and took away some of the momentum gained.

"We did what we could up front," McConkey said. "They were getting yards every play. We just couldn't

match their size. That's pretty much what it came down to."

The most important part of the day was the experience. Players and coaches got to have their final talks of the season in a locker room at Camp Randall Stadium on the biggest day of the season and not some neutral site on a Friday night in October or November.

Senior Aaron Manke reminded each player who crossed his path on the sideline as the clock ran out.

"We got here," he said on repeat to his friends. "We got here."

"We were the smallest team in D3, and we made it to the last game," Calico said. "We're definitely proud about that."

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Suttie

From B1

who had three tackles against Mayville and recovered a fumble that was forced by Kole Keppel after a catch by Damien Hauglie. "It was pretty bad. I have scars on my ankles and hips."

"They break (the bones), return them where they're supposed to be and put plates and screws in there to keep them together."

He had to spend six weeks after each surgery without putting weight on the recovering leg and spent six

additional weeks each time in a boot.

"When you break your leg, you think you can move it a little bit," he said. "When you break the top and bottom, you can't move it at all."

It wasn't easy, but he got through it. He swam a lot for physical activity and started eyeing up his return to football.

That happened as a freshman, but it wasn't a smooth process.

"He looked like he was running with steak knives in his feet when he was a freshman," Aquinas coach Tom Lee said. "But he kept work-

ing and working, and I'm so proud of that kid."

Playing football again, Suttie said, was never much of a question. Football is in his family. His dad played and so did two brothers, so he knew he'd be out there. He just wasn't sure how it would go.

"Eighth grade, ninth grade and 10th grade were pretty much getting my balance back and learning how to do everything," he said. "I went to the weight room, played football and just got through it."

He wasn't lifting as much weight as his peers, and he wasn't as flexible as his peers.

But he made gradual improvements.

Suttie joined the varsity roster as a junior and made 20 tackles. He made three of his most memorable ones on a snowy field with a student section cheering on the field everyone wants to end his career on.

"He's gone through so much," senior teammate Damien Lee said. "For him to make that play, I'm so happy for him."

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Turnovers

From B1

difficult to prepare for," Jehn said. "They were able to wear us down a bit, but we played better in the second half."

The Panthers (12-2) played from behind after uncharacteristically committing four turnovers in the first half. Meanwhile, Monroe rushed for 341 yards and had possession for nearly 34 minutes. Jehn said his team tried to match the physicality of the Cheesemakers, but the early turnovers made that task even harder.

"We thought we had to match their physicality, and I thought we did that OK," Jehn said. "Four turnovers in a playoff football game is

a tremendous thing to overcome. Our kids are a great group of kids. They really fought hard today."

Noel takes blame for getting the Panthers out of rhythm, fumbling on the second play from scrimmage and saying it got the team out of focus. Senior quarterback Brett McConkey threw two interceptions.

"I think the turnovers and not really being focused really got us down," Noel said. "That's on my part, I'm going to blame that on me. I can't turn the ball over right away."

The Cheesemakers (14-0) recovered Noel's fumble, but weren't able to capitalize as they fumbled shy of the goal line. McConkey recovered the fumble but threw an interception two

plays later. This time, Monroe managed to score with a 10-yard touchdown run by senior running back Keatin Sweeney.

The Cheesemakers added to their first quarter lead with a lengthy drive capped by a Markham 3-yard touchdown run, and McConkey threw another interception before the end of the first.

After a Monroe turnover on downs, senior wide receiver Brennan Kennedy caught a pass from McConkey and ran down the sideline for a 56-yard gain with a facemask penalty tacked on.

Noel rushed for an 8-yard touchdown on the following play. Noel finished with 59 rushing yards and 13 tackles, second only to teammate McConkey with 15.

The momentum was short lived as Markham rushed for another Cheesemakers touchdown and then made a play on defense. Senior wide receiver Chris Calico had the ball forced out by Sweeney, and Markham recovered for the fourth West Salem turnover. Monroe botched the snap on a field goal before halftime, leaving the score at 21-7.

The Cheesemakers continued to ride Markham, who broke the 100-yard mark and scored his third touchdown on the opening drive of the second half.

West Salem managed to drive into Monroe territory but turned it over on downs after a deep pass to Kennedy was deflected on fourth-and-8.

Markham recorded his fourth touchdown of the game in the fourth quarter, but West Salem kept fighting from down four scores. McConkey found Andy Johnson on a 13-yard touchdown pass to make it 35-14. Monroe recovered the ensuing inside kick and ran out the rest of the clock.

"The seniors are a special group for us," Jehn said. "I think being the

smallest group in Division 3 to make the playoffs, we were the only ones that every week believed we could win. That was huge for us. You see the character come out of the kids just to play for one another. You see the resolve. I'm proud of how they bounced back after a Week 1 defeat and can't say more about how these guys played and believe and care for one another."

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