

'Awesome' Schuster sparks Chippewa Valley to state football championship

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Chippewa Valley quarterback Tommy Schuster reads the Clarkston defense prior to the snap during the Division 1 championship game at Ford Field on Saturday. Schuster completed 13 of 13 passes, a finals record, in the Big Reds' 31-30 victory.

- [By David Dalton](#)



Tommy Schuster, Chippewa Valley

DETROIT — Chippewa Valley quarterback Tommy Schuster saved his best football performance for last.

Schuster set the MHSAA finals record for passing accuracy Saturday afternoon at Ford Field, completing all 13 of his pass attempts for 205 yards and two touchdowns to lead the Big Reds to a 31-30 win over Clarkston in the Division 1 state championship game.

"I just wanted to come out here and play my game and show everybody what I can do because I knew there would be a lot of people watching," Schuster said after Chippewa Valley won the ninth state championship in county history.

The perfect completion percentage broke the record of .833 in a championship game held by two QBs in 2013.

"He was awesome," Clarkston coach Kurt Richardson said of Schuster's performance. "He did a great job. He snuck out of there a few times and put balls on target."

One play that highlighted just the type of competitor Schuster is occurred midway through the third quarter.

Clarkston's Rocco Spindler had just body slammed the senior QB to the turf on a first down run. On the next play, Schuster connected with David Ellis on a 30-yard toss that set up the Big Reds' final TD.

"He was getting the ball out of there fast," Spindler said. "I have to give him credit. I was trying to put as much pressure as I could and he did one heck of a job."

"That was probably the hardest I have been hit all year," Schuster said. "The next play we had a two-side option screen and I saw David and got rid of it."

Schuster had no idea until after the game that he had not thrown an incomplete pass.

"All the kid does is win," Chippewa Valley coach Scott Merchant said. "We're not a team that throws the ball 40 times a game. When we get up on people we don't throw the ball on people. We don't play for stats. He could have had 3,000 yards passing if we wanted to, but I don't believe in that as a coach."

"We play all our kids," Marchant continued. "We run the ball when you're supposed to run the ball."

On the season, Schuster completed 69.6 percent of his passes (119-of-171) for 1,859 yards and 26 TDs. He also threw just one interception.

Despite those numbers Schuster, a three-year starter at Chippewa Valley, had not received a football scholarship from any college heading into Saturday's championship game.

"In terms of a high school quarterback and a college quarterback, if somebody wants a winner, that doesn't throw the ball to the other team and he's going to run your offense to a T, he's just that," Merchant said. "People don't know what he does in the run game. We're checking run plays based on the three-technique or the one-technique. He's got a pre-snap read, a during-the-play-read and post-snap read.

"He's a special kid," Merchant continued. "He's got great composure. One of those TD passes he's got (Spindler) right in his grill and he still gets it off and makes the play."

Romeo's Brad Tanner turned heads in the 2015 Division 1 state championship game and received a scholarship to Western Michigan University days after.

"I just try and go out there and play my game," said Schuster, who added he has had conversations with Ivy League schools and Lawrence Tech. "I don't let any of that affect how I play on the field. That stuff will take care of itself."

Tanner rushed for 130 yards and three TDs in the Bulldogs' 41-27 win over heavily favored Detroit Cass Tech.

"I understand he's not 6-foot-4 and he doesn't run a 4.4 (40-yard dash), but he's 6-foot, 195 pounds, he runs well and is a good athlete," Merchant said of his signal-caller. "He makes the right reads and right throws so somebody is going to get a great quarterback."