Syracuse, N.Y. -- It was a defensive battle in Saturday’s game between Frankfort-Schuyler and Waterville. Ultimately, Frankfort-Schuyler mustered enough offense to jump out to an early lead and hold on throughout the rest of the game. The Maroon Knights are Section III Class D champions after beating Waterville 22-6.
On both sides of the ball, Frankfort-Schuyler was led by junior Jeff DeSarro and senior Tyler Rosati. Rosati was quick to point out that no one person made the difference and that it took a full team effort to quell a comeback by Waterville.

“We would come together in the huddle after a big play, and be like, ‘Alright, let’s settle down. We’ve got a job to do. Let’s keep going. Let’s not let another big play up,” Rosati said.

The huddle discussions helped Rosati and his teammates keep their composure throughout the game, and that calmness showed through their defensive play. While the duo of DeSarro and Rosati each scored for the Maroon Knights, it was a couple of second-half interceptions that made the biggest difference.

In the first quarter, the teams traded fumbles until Frankfort-Schuyler turned the second fumble into a 7-yard touchdown pass from DeSarro to senior tight end Joseph Parrotta. The Maroon Knights carried a 16-0 lead into the half and came out with the same hard-nosed defensive mindset in the second half. Early in the third quarter, Rosati ran in a 4-yard touchdown to increase the lead to 22.

Waterville did not go away easily, and senior quarterback Cody Spooner continually led the team downfield into Maroon Knight territory. While taking a big hit, Spooner completed a 20-yard touchdown pass to senior running back Darren Johnson to cut the lead to 16. After a turnover on downs, Spooner connected on another long pass with Nathan Johnson, and it seemed like a Waterville comeback was in the works.
That was until DeSarro stepped in front of a pass for an interception and all but sealed the game for the Maroon Knights. DeSarro was named as the team’s MVP, and junior Connor Marriott was named Waterville’s MVP.

After the game, Rosati couldn’t contain his excitement as he beamed with a smile while discussing the importance of his team’s championship victory.

“It means the whole world to us. It’s been a long time coming. We brought it back, finally,” he said.

Frankfort-Schuyler moves on to the regionals at 5 p.m. Friday against Tioga at Vestal High School.

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