



# **Running Back/Linebacker Travis Porter Is Key Part Of Highland's Football Team, Primed For Success**

by Brandon Harris

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BETHALTO – Highland has come alive with a pair of wins in the past two weeks, one over Civic Memorial 35-14 and another over Waterloo 48-14. The Highland-CM game was highly competitive despite a convincing 35-14 final score for a Bulldogs victory. Travis Porter, junior running back for Highland, was a game-breaker in that game as he ran for over 150-yards and scored four out of five Bulldog touchdowns.

“It was a pretty good game for me,” Porter said that night. “Four has been the most touchdowns I have scored in a game.”

Porter doesn’t just contribute offensively to his team; he is also a pillar for the Bulldog’s defense as a linebacker. Porter’s versatility and reliability are something head coach, Jim Warnecke, appreciates.

“Travis comes to work every day,” the coach said. “He understands that he has a job to do and whether that is running the ball, blocking, or whatever, he does it. He’s a guy that I have absolute trust in, and I’d go to war with him because I know he’d be there. I was proud of how hard he ran. He stayed upfield and gave us a great shot to win this game.”

When asked what makes the Bulldog’s run game successful, Porter said: “I think our blocking is good. We have a great offensive line that stays strong and makes good blocks. We also have great coaches that help with everything. I think against Civic Memorial, we did everything well. The defense and offense all around played well. I do think we can improve on special teams.”

Playing the strongest opponents at the start of the season set a standard for Highland, exposed areas for improvement, and showed the Bulldogs how to stay confident in dark times. Taking those lessons learned and turning them into positives is a part of the process and culture. Porter, Warnecke, and the Bulldogs promote year in and year out.

The Bulldogs have “an identity of caring for each other and understanding who they play for,” Coach Warnecke said. “I’ve been a Highland guy all my life. Born and raised, went to the Quarterback Club, and that’s helped me understand that players have a short opportunity to represent our town, our community, and the guys that played before us. We push that hard on the kids so they can understand that who they play for, is bigger than yourself. On top of that, we try to build good people. We believe that better people off the field are better football players. It’s a matter of being patient, doing the daily grind, and trusting in the process.”

The Bulldogs are currently 3-4, with a tough game set at 7-0 overall Mascoutah on Friday night, and are on the road at Effingham on Friday, Oct. 22.

Porter is part of a strong football team. The work ethic and confidence that the junior running back is a signature for Highland High School football. The Bulldogs are primed and ready to finish the season on a winning note after play the past two weeks.

Mascoutah may get all they have bargained for in an opponent in Porter and the Bulldogs on Friday night.