

## Late TD Pass lifts East

Mining Journal ([www.miningjournal.net](http://www.miningjournal.net))  
249 W. Washington, Marquette, MI 49855

By KURT MENSCHING Journal Correspondent

MARQUETTE - Coach Todd Kangas needed a big play late in the fourth quarter. Fortunately, he had a big play maker. Several, actually.

Kangas, of Manistique, had plenty of talent on the sidelines as the head coach of the East team at the U.P. Football All-Star Game on Saturday at the Superior Dome.

Of course, he knew West coach Andy Crouch, of Lake-Linden Hubbell, did, too.

With his team staring down a fourth-and-7 situation on the West team's 42-yard line, Kangas called on Northern Michigan University recruit Gerrit Mortensen (St. Ignace) with a passing play designed to at least pick up the first down.

It did more than that. When Mortensen perfectly led a streaking Kollin Jensen (Gladstone) down the left sidelines, there was little the West could do to prevent it. Touchdown.

The East held on the next 4 minutes, 42 seconds for a 21-14 win in front of a solid turnout by the fans on both sides of the stands.

"It was fun playing with all these guys, the best in the U.P., representing the East side," Mortensen said. "We started out slow, but then we got it going. They couldn't stop our offense, so it was pretty fun."

The game featured approximately 90 of the top graduating seniors from across the peninsula with the stated mission of showcasing U.P. high school football and giving the fans one last opportunity to enjoy a competitive game between them.

Win or lose, the event is a memorable one for the players, coaches and fans alike.

"The game didn't work out the way we wanted it to, but it was still a great game," Crouch said. "The kids are going to remember it for the rest of their lives."

The players and coaches had about a week to practice, as well as to participate in a myriad of activities culminating in a banquet on Friday.

The challenge for the coaching staffs came in getting everyone on the same page, and trying to distribute playing time throughout their team while still keeping in mind it's more fun to win an all-star game than to lose one.

"It was a great week," Kangas said. "We told our kids the game was important and we kept that in mind during the course of the week.

"We tried to make sure (the players) were comfortable and knew what we wanted them to do and we worked on that and got better each and every day."

Westwood's Justin Farley, who won the defensive MVP award for the East squad, said the week was "excellent." "Everybody just bonded, getting to know each other, making new friends," he said. "That's what it's all about."

The game was a back-and-forth affair, the teams trading a pair of touchdowns in the first quarter before quarterback Ivan Niemi (Westwood) burst into the end zone from a yard out to give the East a touchdown cushion at the half.

After a scoreless third, West's Mike Schmaus (Ontonagon) showed off his athleticism by tip-toeing into the end zone along the out-of-bounds line as he reeled in a 25-yard pass from quarterback Nate Sturos (Calumet) with 10:27 remaining in the game.

With the kick by Norway's Brady Grayvold, the game was knotted at 14-14.

With time ticking out and facing a fourth down, the West had one last play up its sleeve. It fell far short of a touchdown, but just short of a first down.

"It was a reverse that went wrong," Crouch said of a play that began to look like a game of keep-away. "Schmaus improvised a little bit. Our guys had their heads looking up and we almost busted it."

Sturos finished with 93 yards passing. West offensive MVP Josh Siler (Forest Park) led his team with 82 yards rushing.

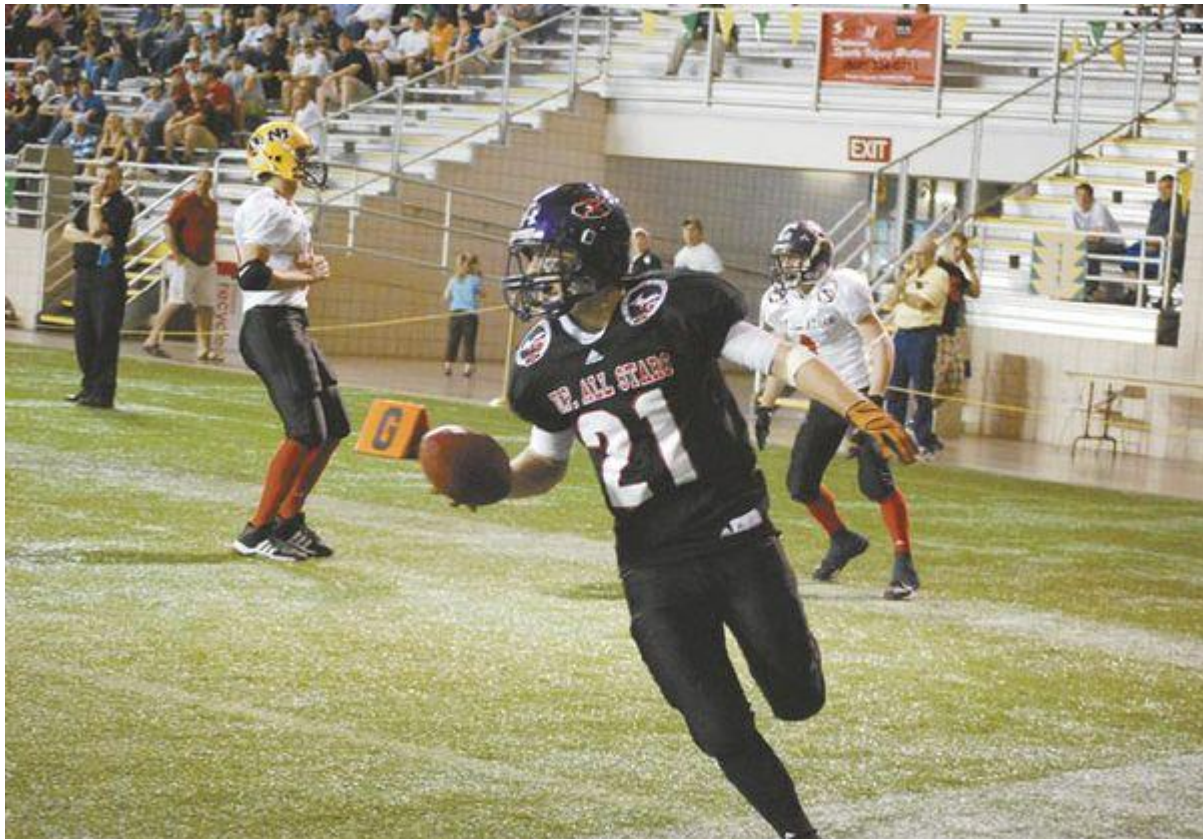
Stephenson's Jake Herres caught three passes for 37 yards, while Kingsford's Dylan Tengesdahl caught three for 35 yards.

Kingsford's Andy Carpenter earned the West's defensive MVP award.

For the East, Motensen finished the day with 73 yards on the ground, while Jensen had 29. Niemi rushed for 24.

Passing statistics were unavailable.

Jensen earned the East's offensive MVP award.



East team player Kollin Jensen (Gladstone) scores a touchdown during the U.P. All-Star game at the Superior Dome in Marquette against the West team on Saturday afternoon. The East won, 21-14. (Journal photo by Danielle Lehto)