## Tapia tosses winning pass to Savage for win at home

***By Jim Knowles***

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The Arroyo High football team came from behind in the fourth quarter to pull out a 20-13 win over Oakland Tech on Saturday afternoon.

The Dons trailed 13-6 as the fourth quarter opened, but Arroyo running back DeJon Savage broke away at midfield and raced 50 yards to the end zone. The extra point kick by Carlos Jiminez tied it up, 13-13.

The deadlock lasted until the final minute of the game when Arroyo quarterback Isaac Tapia threw a perfectly timed pass that Savage hauled in at full speed running down the middle of the field and kept up the speed all the way to the goal line.

“I knew I was going to be open because the coach called a good play,” said Savage after the game. “After I caught it I just ran.”

The Bulldog safeties were playing up too close, so the play was called to send the receive right past them. The Dons had tried the play in the previous possession, but the ball was tipped by an Oakland Tech lineman as Tapia released it.

The next time, the safeties were still playing up, “so we called the same play,” said Arroyo head coach James Barnes.

Arroyo quarterback Tapia completed seven of 17 passes.

Arroyo got possession to set up the winning touchdown by holding the Bulldogs when Jiminez sacked quarterback James Lewis on third down, forcing a punt on the next play.

Arroyo got on the board in the first quarter after recovering a fumble in Oakland Tech territory. Running back Ryan Gordan took the ball on the 20 yard line, cut left, found daylight and high-stepped into the end zone.

But the Bulldogs took the momentum as their big running back Jeremiah Varnedoe got into gear. Varnedoe scored a touchdown on a 30-yard gallop and picked up 117 yards rushing.

Varnedoe isn't one for fancy footwork, he just powers straight ahead and forces defenders to try to stop him.

Asked about his running strategy, Varnedoe smiles and says, "Whatever it takes to make yards."

The Bulldogs also scored on a 17-yard pass play from Lewis to receiver Kenyon Jackson.

The win improved Arroyo's record to 2-2 for the season. Oakland Tech is also 2-2.

Arroyo hosts Bishop O'Dowd this Saturday at 1:30 p.m.

**CAPTION: Arroyo running back DeJon Savage scored the touchdown to tie the game against Oakland Tech on Saturday afternoon, and a few minutes later he caught a touchdown pass to win it.**

*PHOTO BY JIM KNOWLES*