

## Beetdiggers survive to fight another day

By Bruce Smith  
For the Deseret News

Brighton coach **Ryan Bullett** said before the season started that it was going to be difficult for his team to make the playoffs, despite its talent.

It became tougher Friday night.

Jordan quarterback Alex Hart threw for 319 yards and two touchdowns, and the Beetdiggers took advantage of a fumbled punt late in the game to claim a 28-20 win over the Bengals to force a playoff game between the same two schools.

After the game, Brighton won the coin flip and selected the neutral site to be Hillcrest High. Game time is 5 p.m. Tuesday.

The flip was one of the few things to go right for the Bengals.

"We didn't play with any intensity," Bullett said. "We didn't play this way against Alta, against Pleasant Grove ... Davis. The better team won tonight."

The difference was noticeable. Despite it being Brighton's home field, and "senior night," marking the



RB Sosaia TaKai rumbles for big yardage against Jordan.

last home game for the team's senior players, Jordan's sideline was more active.

"I think it was because it was a 'do-or-die' game for us," said Hart. "You always play tougher when you have to deal with that."

Brighton might have also played less inspired because its top player — 6-foot-4, 295-pound senior lineman **Ricky Heimuli** — could not play.

Heimuli recently injured his knee and spent the night watching from the sidelines. His status for any further games is uncertain.

"You still have to play," Bullett said. "We've had a lot of guys get hurt, but they (Jordan) have to deal with it, too."

Bullett was also frustrated at trying to corral Hart, the record-setting

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# BRIGHTON FOOTBALL: Jordan 28, Bengals 20

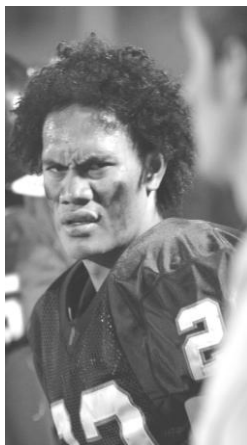
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quarterback who threw his 38th and 39th touchdown passes of the season.

It was a tough night for Hart, who was sacked eight times. Still, he frequently frustrated Brighton with his pinpoint passing. Hart completed 30 of 50 passes, and often found receivers open on third-down plays.

Braden Hammond was once again his favorite target with eight catches for 107 yards. Steve Morgan also had a nice night, with seven receptions for 67 yards.

"I don't think they had faced a team like us before," said Jordan coach Eric Kjar. "We just did what we do best. We just went with high-percentage plays. We wanted to be more controlled."



Sosaia TaKai

Jordan only committed one turnover, an athletic play on a pass interception by Brighton's **Moses Lotulelei**. The defining moment of the game came early in the fourth quarter.

Tyler Loomis' booming punt was fumbled and Jordan's Anitela Malaga recovered at the 10-yard line. Two plays later, Hart scored on a short run to give the Beetdiggers a 28-14 lead.

Brighton rallied, taking advantage of a pair of pass-interference penalties, and scored on a 7-yard run by **Sosaia TaKai**, who came back after a slow start to finish with 96 yards on 18 carries. He also returned a kickoff for a score.

The extra point, however, was blocked by Bill Vavau, and that allowed Jordan to regain the momentum, despite the touchdown.



Stephen Robinson goes up high into the air for a pass while Jordan's Austin Day defends.

## SCORING SUMMARY

<b>Jordan</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>- 28</b>
<b>Brighton</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>- 20</b>

**J** – Bill Vavau recovered fumble in end zone (Cody Rodgers kick)

**B** – Sosaia TaKai 90 kickoff return (Anthony Mares kick)

**J** – Steve Morgan 8 pass from Alex Hart (Rodgers kick)

**J** – Morgan 17 pass from Hart (Rodgers kick)

**B** – Stephen Robinson 77 pass from Derek Newell (Mares kick)

**J** – Alex Hart 1 run (Rodgers kick)

**B** – TaKai 7 run (kick failed)