



Steven Robinson (No. 9) and Matt Chaus (No. 25) lead the celebration after an early Brighton touchdown.

## Jordan beats Brighton — again

By John Coon  
Deseret News

MIDVALE — At first glance, Jordan defensive back Taylor Smith read a Brighton receiver running a deep route. Smith geared up to defend that play when he saw a different play emerging.

He saw Brighton quarterback **Derrick Newell** eyeing a receiver on a post route — and the ball was coming right at him. It offered Smith an opportunity to give the Beetdiggers just the break they needed to prevent a late go-ahead touchdown.

"I read guy going deep, so I played that," Smith said. "And then all the sudden, when I turned on the throw, I read the post route and just jumped in front of it."

Smith intercepted Newell's pass in the end zone with 1:13 remaining to help Jordan escape with a 35-30 victory over the Bengals at Hillcrest High on a cold and snowy Tuesday night. The win earned the Beetdiggers a 5A first-round game against No. 1-ranked Bingham on Saturday afternoon.

That pick — which is the ninth for the senior this season — helped Smith set a new school record for interceptions in a season. It also helped the Beetdiggers stave off a late rally by Brighton.

It was the kind of play Jordan coach Eric Kjar has come to expect from Smith.

"He has great vision back there," Kjar said. "He saw everything in front of him and

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## BRIGHTON FOOTBALL: Jordan 35, Bengals 30

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came up and made a play."

Before Smith's game-saving interception, the biggest story of the night for the Beetdiggers had been the outstanding effort put forth by Braden Hammond. All four touchdown passes thrown by Alex Hart went in Hammond's direction.

The pair first hooked up on Jordan's opening drive when Hart threw an 8 yard strike to Hammond to make it 7-7. Hart then found Hammond for a 41-yard bomb that put the Beetdiggers up 14-7 on the first play of the second quarter.

Hammond broke three tackles on his next score, taking a screen pass 18 yards to make it 21-7 with 8:19 left in the second quarter.

Brighton responded with a pair of touchdowns — tying the game 21-21 on a 68-yard bomb from Newell to **Stephen Robinson**.

Hammond came to the rescue on the next drive, taking a short pass from Hart and sprinted 58 yards to put Jordan back up 28-21.

Jordan looked to be firmly in control after Bryce



Ezra Latu and Brayden El Bakri combine to sack Jordan QB Alex Hart.

Muasau sacked Newell, forcing a fumble, and Grant Gary returned it 16 yards for a score for a 35-24 lead.

Brighton fought back, however, and made the closing minutes. The Bengals cut the lead to 35-30 with 4:58 remaining when **Jace Felix** tossed a halfback pass 65 yards to **Zane Smith**. They forced the Beetdiggers to punt on the next series and Robinson returned the ball to the Jordan 29.

Brighton then drove to the Diggers' 12-yard line and seemingly went ahead when **Chris Finau** took a pitch 12 yards into the end zone. An illegal block wiped out the

### SCORING SUMMARY

Jordan 7 14 14 0 - 35

Brighton 7 7 10 6 - 30

B — Stephen Robinson 90 kickoff return (Anthony Mares kick)

J — Braden Hammond 8 pass from Alex Hart (Cody Rodgers kick)

J — Hammond 41 pass from Hart (Rodgers kick)

J — Hammond 17 pass from Hart (Rodgers kick)

B — Derek Newell 19 run (Mares kick)

J — Hammond 58 pass from Hart (Rodgers kick)

B — FG Mares 28

J — Grant Gary 16 fumble return (Rodgers kick)

B — Zane Smith 65 pass from Jace Felix (kick failed)

touchdown, and Smith made his interception on the next play.