

Fairfield Prep football overwhelms Southington to start season with win for 1st time in 3 years

By [Will Aldam](#), Staff Writer Sep 13, 2024



Fairfield Prep's Finbar Malloy during a football game between Staples and Fairfield Prep at Paul Lane Stadium, Westport on Tuesday, Nov. 28, 2023. Pete Paguaga/Hearst Connecticut

FAIRFIELD — Fairfield Prep [football](#) struggled early in the season the past two years before climbing back into the CIAC Class LL state tournament both seasons.

Fairfield Prep (SCC) turned the page on Friday, however, starting off the 2024 season with an overwhelming 38-8 win over Southington (CCC) at Rafferty Stadium.

"It feels great, this game is a lot about confidence and playing loose," Fairfield Prep senior receiver Finbar Malloy said. "Last couple of years we got in a hole that was hard to dig out, now we are up and hopefully we can keep it going."

Malloy was Fairfield Prep's most prolific weapon, catching three touchdown passes from junior quarterback Robert Manning, who was making his first career start.

"My guy (Manning), he played a hell of a game," Malloy said. "He played his tail off, same with the offensive line giving him time. Robby, he hit all our other great receivers and opened me up. He was just letting it go, I am so proud of him."

Malloy's three touchdown receptions were a career high in a single game, and it was his sixth straight game with a touchdown dating back to last season.

Manning also connected with junior Jeremiah Langston for a second quarter touchdown, and TJ Cirilli also reached the end zone on a one-yard rush.

"(Manning) has done a great job as a first year junior starter," Fairfield Prep coach Keith Hellstern said. "He has a good head on his shoulders, he takes what is given to him, and he is continuing to grow. For his first varsity start, not too bad."

Fairfield Prep junior kicker Ben Conelius showed off his big leg, drilling a 44-yard field goal in the second quarter and just coming up short on a 52-yard attempt in the fourth quarter.

Southington was unable to get anything going on offense until the final five minutes of the game, when Nick Andrews rushed for a 1-yard score. Before that, Fairfield Prep had forced four turnovers on two interceptions and two fumble recoveries.

"It is always good to start with a victory, and I think that is a combination of our guys getting ready for this game and executing, which I think we did well," Hellstern said. "Southington is a proud and terrific program, we respect them highly and we knew we would have to play well. We are going to have to clean some things up like everyone does in Week 1, but it was a good start."

Player of the Game

Finbar Malloy, Fairfield Prep: The senior receiver caught three touchdowns from his new quarterback Robert Manning to help give Fairfield Prep its first Week 1 victory since 2021.

Quotable

"I was a little nervous, but there is just so much preparation that goes into it all summer. I think the team was just ready. I was ready and we looked prepared. It was a great win by the team, and I think we all did a good job on offense and defense. Receivers were catching them, the O-line was blocking and there was great play calling." - Robert Manning, Fairfield Prep