

Gritty Spartans Secure 35-27 Victory at Owasso

By Ron Holt

OWASSO – Typical for a first game, Bixby's No. 1 Spartans and Owasso's No. 3 Rams were both "a little rough around the edges" – as BHS head coach Loren Montgomery noted – during the renewal of the Battle of the Burbs series here last Friday night at Owasso Stadium.

The highly anticipated season opener between the two Class 6A-I powers attracted a standing room only crowd that was entertained until the final 40 seconds when the inexperienced but gritty Spartans secured a hard-fought 35-27 victory.

Both teams turned the ball over twice and were victimized by mistakes, lack of execution at times and penalties. But both teams battled to the end.

"I was proud of the way our guys hung in there ... it wasn't a pretty game," said coach Montgomery, who entered his 17th season at the Spartan helm. "It was a game that was a little rough around the edges for a first game, but I was proud of our guys ... we kept fighting."

Trailing 35-27, Owasso recovered a Spartan fumble at the Rams' three-yard line and behind quarterback Drew Frankenfield they went on an 11-play drive with 4:10 left in the game before facing a fourth-and-14 at Bixby's 44-yard line.

Frankenfield's long final pass was intercepted by Spartan 6-3, 185-pound senior cornerback Cole Seager at Bixby's 13-yard line to thwart the drive and ensure Bixby's eighth win over the Rams in the last nine meetings.

"I just tried to be in position when I saw him throw the ball. Actually, their receiver was looking the other way so all I had to do was make the catch," said Seager, who also recorded two tackles and two passes defended. "It felt great to end that last drive and get the win."

Bixby took an early 14-0 lead when senior quarterback Reece Madden passed 32 yards to junior tight end Connor Arant for a touchdown with 1:01 left in the first quarter followed by senior quarterback Isaiah Butcher IV scoring from three yards out at the 7:07 mark of the second quarter.

Senior kicker Lincoln Aragano, making his first appearance in a Spartan uniform, was successful on both extra-point kicks.

The offensive fireworks continued later in the quarter as Owasso scored on a 15-yard pass from Frankenfield to Kamieon Compton-Nero with 3:18 left before halftime.

Bixby responded with a 10-yard TD run by Butcher with 18 seconds left before the Rams' Jaymain Compton returned the ensuing kickoff 82 yards for a TD with four seconds left, trimming the Spartans lead to 21-14 at intermission.

There were plenty of drama in the second half after a lost fumble by the Spartans led to Frankenfield's four-yard TD pass to Compton-Nero, tying the game at 21-all with 8:36 showing in the third quarter.

After Owasso's defense forced a Spartan punt, the Rams struck quickly as Frankenfield completed a 53-yard TD pass to Compton but the extra-point kick by Juan Razo was blocked, leaving OHS holding a 27-21 lead over BHS with 6:37 left in the game.

Junior offensive/defensive lineman Gavin Wilson was credited with blocking the kick, leaving the Spartans within striking distance.

"On the try before we decided to get a great push and we almost got the block on the kick before," said Wilson, who was credited with two tackles, both sacks, while also being part of a strong effort by the offensive line. "Getting the block was pretty big at the time."

“We had a good game, but we’ve got to work to get better. It’s a challenge (playing both ways) but I want to do whatever I need to do to help the team,” added Wilson with sweat dripping off his face.

Bixby answered by executing an eight-play, 80-yard drive which ended in Butcher’s 10-yard TD run and Aragano’s point-after kick as Bixby regained the lead 28-27 with 3:38 remaining in the third frame.

The Spartans’ defense came up with a clutch play on Owasso’s first play after kickoff. Talented freshman cornerback Maverick Owens leaped high for an interception of Frankenfield, returning the pick 21 yards to the Rams’ 18-yard line.

Two plays later, Butcher connected with Andrew Havens for a 17-yard TD pass with 3:32 left in the third quarter for a 35-27 Spartan lead.

With 2:45 showing in the third frame, Owasso put together a lengthy drive, which was aided by a personal foul and unsportsmanlike penalties on the Spartans, as the Rams’ drive advanced to Bixby’s one-yard line.

The Spartans’ tenacious defense stone-walled the Rams on four rush attempts. Owasso’s Makhylen Collier was stopped short on first down and Frankenfield was denied on three straight runs into the line. Senior linebacker Ben Puckett, senior linebacker Nathan Hobbs, senior free safety Lincoln Fugate and senior linebacker Cain Brackney were credited, along with others in the defensive line, with tackles during the stand.

“That was so big,” coach Montgomery said afterward. “When we talk about defensive player of the game or big plays in the game you could probably name that entire defense ... they dug us out of a hole.”

Bixby’s defense survived the final Ram offensive challenge down the stretch with Seager’s interception.

Brackney, a 6-3, 235-pound move-in from Union, led Bixby’s defensive effort with 10 total tackles, including two tackles for loss while Puckett, a 6-3, 208-pound linebacker, recorded nine tackles while also being credited with two tackles for loss and one sack.

“I felt good about the team going into the game, but we made some mistakes and we know we can play better. I know I didn’t play my best game, so we’ve just got to go back to work and get better,” said Puckett.

“We did have our backs to the goal a lot, but we also had some drives extended that we need to work on.”

Hobbs, a 6-0, 205-pound returning starter, finished with seven total tackles while Wilson was the sack leader with two. Owens also had numerous passes broken up in his debut with the Spartans. Offensively, Bixby’s trio of quarterbacks produced. Madden was 10-of-11 passing for 91 yards and one TD while Butcher was seven-for-eight passing for 65 and senior Preston Carter completed two passes for six yards.

Butcher led the ground attack with 182 yards rushing and three TD runs on 22 carries while Carter rushed for 35 yards and Madden for 13 yards.

Butcher, who transferred from Jenks where he played his last game of the 2025 season in a loss at Owasso in the state playoffs, looked comfortable in his first Bixby appearance.

“It didn’t take long for me to feel comfortable at Bixby, the players and coaches made me feel a part of the program right away,” said Butcher IV. “When I made the move, I felt like with coach (Tyler) Schneider’s great mind and my ability to run was a perfect fit.

“It was a good game, but I thought we started off a little rocky in the first half, but we got better in the second half. I didn’t want to lose to them again.”

Arant's three pass receptions for 44 yards and one TD led the Spartans while sophomore Hilkyah Sampson had four grabs for 27 yards.

"I thought our offensive line did a good job blocking some things and we put good pressure on their quarterback and mixed things up in the back end," coach Montgomery noted. "We've got a bunch of stuff we've got to clean up and fix ... proud of the way we hung on and showed grit."

NEXT GAME – Bixby's home opener on Friday (Sept. 4) is the renewal of the past competitive Class 6A-II rivalry between the Spartans and Stillwater's Pioneers. Kickoff for the annual Military Appreciation game is set for 7 p.m. at Lee Snider Stadium.

Stillwater, the preseason No. 1 team in Class 6A-II by the Tulsa World newspaper, capitalized on six turnovers by Fayetteville (Arkansas) in rolling to a 23-3 home turf victory over the Purple Bulldogs last Friday.

SHS's defense victimized Fayetteville by forcing four pass interceptions while recovering two fumbles in a dominating performance. Pioneer senior David Renollet intercepted two passes while teammate Dian Fix returned a pass theft for a touchdown.

Returning quarterback Satank Taptto was 15-for-29 passing for 170 yards and one touchdown while being intercepted once. Returning star tailback Jaedan Adams was held to 77 yards on 19 carries while senior Peyton Campbell caught six passes for 109 yards and one TD.

Senior linebacker Kyle Stokes led the balanced defensive effort with eight total tackles and two tackles for loss. He also caused a fumble.

Stillwater, under fourth-year head coach Chad Cawood, finished last season with a 9-3 record.

The Pioneers advanced to the Class 6A-11 state semifinals in 2025 before falling to Choctaw.

"Stillwater is always good, so we know we'll be challenged," Spartan head coach Loren Montgomery said. "They return the quarterback and the running back, who is back, is really good. Their offensive line is always good ... Charlie (SHS offensive line coach Johnson) does a good job with them."

Prior to making the move to Class 6A-1 in 2022, the Spartans and Pioneers battled several times in the state playoffs, including twice in state championship games with Bixby winning 34-13 in 2018 at Owasso and 40-36 in 2019.

Bixby prevailed six times in the battles, also defeating SHS 61-28 in the 2014 state quarterfinals; 41-14 in the 2017 state quarterfinals, and twice in 2021 with a regular season 42-14 Spartan win and a 48-6 victory in the state semifinals at Langston University.

Bixby head coach Loren Montgomery is 7-1 against Stillwater in his head coaching tenure, winning (58-28) in 2010 and falling 31-28 at home in 2011 before beginning the state playoff series.

NOTABLES – Bixby has won 99 of its last 102 games also won 17 games in a row. The Spartans were ranked No. 43 nationally by MaxPreps. ... Captains for Bixby's season opener at Owasso were senior linebacker Nathan Hobbs, senior offensive lineman Kaeden Penny, senior linebacker Ben Puckett and sophomore defensive end Colton Treat. ... Bixby ended with 402 yards of total offense while Owasso finished with 275 total yards. The Spartans rushed for 245 yards while the Rams were held to minus-one on the ground. Bixby was victimized by seven penalties for 43 yards, but the Spartans also held the time of possession advantage, 36:05 to 23:39. ... Bixby's 35 points were the fewest in the recent nine games with the Rams since the Spartans scored 21 in a 40-21 loss to open the 2025 season. ... Lincoln Aragona, a 6-0, 169-pound senior, converted five extra point attempts successfully while also handling kickoffs for the Spartans. ... Owasso's offense was led by Frankenfield, who was 17-of-34 passing for 251 yards and three touchdowns while being intercepted twice. He also rushed 12 times for minus 28

yards. Jaymian Compton was the receiving leader with four catches for 120 yards and one TD while Kamien Compton-Nero had four catches for 35 yards and two scores. ... Scores of other future Bixby opponents in 2026 include: Southlake Carroll (Texas) 34, Jenks 33; Broken Arrow 34, Springdale (Arkansas) Har-Ber 7; Edmond Memorial 42, Piedmont 15; Edmond North 48, Edmond Santa Fe 21; Moore 65, Westmoore 0; Norman North 45, Norman 18; Mustang 27, Choctaw 7, and Tulsa Bishop Kelley 51, Southmoore 0.

Bixby 35, Owasso 27

FIRST QUARTER

BHS – Connor Arant 32 pass from Reece Madden (Lincoln Aragona kick), 1:01

SECOND QUARTER

BHS – Isaiah Butcher IV 3 run (Aragona kick), 7:07

OHS – Kamieon Compton-Nero 15 pass from Drew Frankenfield (Juan Razo kick), 3:18

BHS – Butcher 10 run (Aragona kick), :18

OHS – Jaymain Compton 82 kickoff return (Razo kick), :05

THIRD QUARTER

OHS – Compton-Nero 4 pass from Frankenfield (Razo kick), 8:36

OHS – Compton 53 pass from Frankenfield (kick blocked), 6:37

BHS – Butcher 10 run (Aragona kick), 3:38

BHS – Andrew Havens 17 pass from Butcher (Aragona kick), 2:45