

Bixby Turns Over Bulldogs, Hosting Norman North

By Ron Holt

EDMOND – “We’re pleased to go on the road and come out with a win, but we’ve got a lot of stuff we’ve got to fix. I’ve been doing this a long time, and you always enjoy a win.”

Speaking was Bixby’s 17th-year head coach Loren Montgomery after the unbeaten and No. 1 ranked Spartans overcame a slow start, forced five turnovers and captured a 50-14 district win over Edmond Memorial here last Friday night at spacious Bulldog Stadium.

Bixby (6-0, 3-0) returns home to entertain Norman North (5-1, 2-1) in a Class 6A District 1 fall break battle starting at 7 p.m. Thursday at Lee Snider Stadium.

The Spartans ended with 431 total offensive yards and dominated the time of possession but there was a lack of crisp execution early on, which improved throughout the game while reserves played most of the fourth quarter.

Senior running back Tylan Montgomery ended Bixby’s opening drive of the game with a 23-yard touchdown dash through a huge running lane with 9:59 showing in the first quarter. Lincoln Aragona kicked the conversion for a 7-0 visitor lead.

Edmond Memorial’s first drive was highlighted by a 51-yard kickoff return by Bulldog standout Cameron Quarrels, but the drive ended when Bulldog quarterback Talon Wilkerson - pressured by BHS senior linebacker Cain Brackney - was intercepted by Bixby’s senior defensive back Lincoln Fugate at the Spartan 27-yard line.

After forcing a Bixby punt, Edmond started its second drive at its own three-yard line. Five plays later, Bixby’s defense made another key play as Bulldog sophomore Ford Boecking fumbled with the Spartans’ Andrew Havens recovering at the EMHS 14-yard line.

Bixby capitalized on the turnover as junior quarterback Reece Madden passed to senior receiver Landon Theinhardt for an 11-yard TD. A two-point conversion run by Jack Gill was stopped short as the Spartans led 13-0 with 2:48 left in the first quarter.

The Bulldogs put together a scoring drive late in the first quarter and the drive ended in an eight-yard TD pass from Wilkerson to Quarrels. The conversion kick narrowed the deficit to 13-7 at the 11:54 mark of the second stanza.

Bixby’s next drive stalled at the Spartans’ 38-yard line, but senior Jack Gill followed his blockers on fourth down before breaking free for a crucial 34-yard burst and first down at EM’s 31-yard line.

Spartan junior receiver Reed Haack hauled in a 17-yard TD pass from quarterback Preston Carter and Jaxon Rice ran for the two-point conversion as BHS led 21-7 with 8:58 left until halftime.

The Bulldogs later stopped Bixby on fourth down, taking over at their own 18-yard line. Two plays later, Wilkerson passed to Tommalik Benson, who fumbled after being belted by Jack Gill and Kaiden Flowers with Gill recovering at the EMHS 14-yard line for the hosts’ third turnover.

Edmond Memorial standout linebacker Colton McComb intercepted Butcher on the Spartans’ next drive but the Bulldogs next drive ended in a punt after senior linebacker Logan Haddon tackled Buff Simpkins for only one yard on a screen play, forcing a punt.

Converting two fourth-and-two situations, Bixby’s next drive marched to the Bulldogs’ two where Butcher easily scored and he also ran for the two-point conversion for a 29-7 BHS lead with 10 seconds remaining until intermission.

A pass interception by Bixby freshman Maverick Owens stopped the Bulldogs’ opening possession of the third quarter and the Spartans quickly capitalized with a 15-yard TD pass from

Madden to junior Conor Arant with 11:05 left in the third quarter. Aragona's kick gave BHS a 36-7 lead.

Bixby's next drive was also set up by an interception as Fugate came up with an impressive, focused leaping interception just past the leaping intended receiver for his second interception of the game - his first interceptions this season.

"We kinda knew they were going to throw a lot. On the first one, I saw he was coming across and I was playing on his top shoulder. I saw the ball and got it," Fugate said afterward. "I had to jump up to get the second one. I've been playing well ... but it was good to see the hard work pay off tonight with the interceptions.

"We started kinda slow tonight and we've got some things we've got to clean up but we'll just keep building on this one," added Fugate, who has 15 total tackles this season to go with his two pass interceptions and five passes defended.

Montgomery's one-yard TD run, and Aragona's conversion kick helped BHS's lead grow to 43-7 with 8:15 showing in the third frame. The Spartans ended their scoring on a 37-yard touchdown pass from Madden to Haack with 9:40 left in the fourth quarter.

"I think we had opportunities to maybe put the game away early, but we had some mistakes on some trick plays and put the ball on the ground so that's disappointing," coach Montgomery said. "The defense is doing some good stuff. On one of those turnovers, we had a bunch of guys running to the ball to knock the ball out ... that's good when they run to the ball."

Bixby's defense limited the Bulldogs to 199 yards of total offense, including 41 rushing yards while forcing three pass interceptions and two fumbles.

Nineteen Spartans recorded tackles in the game with Ben Puckett's five tackles leading the way. Flowers had four tackles (two tackles for loss) while senior Brackney, senior Nathan Hobbs and sophomore Colton Treat each were credited with three tackles.

"There's a couple of things we need to get fixed, but we'll have fall break practices to get those things corrected," said senior Jaxon Dorsey, who plays on the Spartans' offensive and defensive lines. "It's a little quicker getting ready this week but I think we'll be able to get a lot done.

Norman North will be a good game."

This is the second season on Bixby's roster for Dorsey, who was previously a home school student. "I came in right after they won the state championship two years ago in January," said Dorsey, who has nine total tackles as a noseguard, one tackle for loss and one fumble recovery. "I've definitely gotten leaner this year ... I've put on more muscle. It was definitely a big jump coming here but it's the best thing I could have done."

NEXT GAME – Bixby faces a short work week as it returns home to entertain Norman North in a district matchup scheduled to start at 7 p.m. Thursday at Lee Snider Stadium.

The Timberwolves of head coach Justin Jones routed visiting Southmoore, 49-10, last Friday to raise their overall record to 5-1 and the district record to 2-1.

This season, Norman North also defeated Norman (43-18), toppled Sand Springs (44-21) and Piedmont (49-21) at home, lost to visiting Broken Arrow, 55-21, and held off host Edmond North, 35-28.

Quarterback Henry Nash, a 6-4, 220-pound senior, leads an explosive, veteran Timberwolves' offense with 1,556 passing yards and 22 touchdowns while being intercepted only once. Against Southmoore, the three-star Nash was 15-for-18 passing for 295 yards and six TDs.

Senior running back Byron Mason leads the ground attack with 86 carries for 730 yards and 10 TDs while Stanford commitment Ben Kolar, a 6-4, 240-pound senior tight end, and senior Rylan

Humphrey are the leading receivers. Kolar has 26 receptions this season for 505 yards and 10 TDs while Humphrey has 23 receptions for 324 yards and six TDs.

Kolar is the younger brother of Charlie Kolar, also a tight end who played collegiately at Iowa State and is currently playing for the Los Angeles Chargers.

Defensively, senior linebacker Luke Adams and sophomore defensive end Ethan Rash top NNHS with 59 and 56 total tackles, respectively. Adams also has two sacks and one pass interception while Rash has 31 unassisted stops.

In the loss to BA, Nash passed for 237 yards and three touchdowns while being intercepted once. Humphrey ended with seven receptions for 74 yards and one TD and Kolar had three grabs for 24 yards and one TD.

“We’ve seen them on film against these guys (Edmond Memorial). The quarterback has started for them for three years,” coach Montgomery said. “Everyone on their defense last year were underclassmen so we figured their defense will be better.

“The quarterback is super elusive ... he had a great game against us his sophomore year.” Nash ended with 169 yards passing and two touchdowns while being intercepted twice in a 59-14 state quarterfinal loss at Bixby in 2024. He also rushed for 93 yards.

This will be the fourth meeting between the two programs. Bixby rolled past visiting Norman North (59-14) in the 2024 state quarterfinals with the Spartans winning 60-2 at home in 2023 and thumping the host Timberwolves (63-7) in 2022 – both regular season games.

NOTEBOOK – Bixby has won 22 straight games and won 104 out of its last 107 games. ... The Spartans were ranked No. 37 nationally by MaxPreps entering this week. ... Captains at Edmond Memorial were Kaden Penny, Ben Puckett, Nathan Hobbs and Landon Thienhardt. ... Madden was 15-of-20 passing for 185 yards and three touchdowns in the win while Montgomery and Gill each rushed for 53 yards. Haack was credited with four pass receptions for 67 yards and two TDs. ... Edmond Memorial’s Wilkerson was 23-of 25 passing for 159 yards and two touchdowns while being intercepted three times. Quarrels, a talented senior, caught seven passes for 74 yards and Benson ended with three receptions for 67 yards and one TD. ... Bulldog senior linebacker Colton McComb was credited with 17 total tackles, including nine unassisted stops. ... On Edmond Memorial’s first offensive play of the game, Bixby’s Maverick Owens intercepted a Bulldog pass and returned it for a touchdown, but the play was called back after the Spartans were flagged for pass interference. ... The five forced turnovers were the most for Bixby’s defense this season.

DISTRICT 1 – Bixby (6-0, 3-0) and Broken Arrow (6-0, 3-0) continue leading Class 6A-I District 1 followed by Norman North (5-1, 2-1), Mustang (4-2, 2-1), Edmond North (3-3, 1-2), Westmoore (1-5, 1-2), Edmond Memorial (2-4, 0-3) and Southmoore (0-6, 0-3).

In other district games last week, Mustang defeated Edmond North (59-7) and Broken Arrow defeated Westmoore (61-0).

This week’s district schedule also includes Edmond North visiting Westmoore, Mustang traveling to Broken Arrow and Southmoore hosting Edmond Memorial.

Bixby 50, Edmond Memorial 14

FIRST QUARTER

BHS – Tylan Montgomery 23 run (Lincoln Aragona kick), 9:59

BHS – Landon Thienhardt 11 pass from Reece Madden (run failed), 2:48

SECOND QUARTER

EM – Jacob Queen 8 pass from Talon Wilkerson (Josh Heller kick), 11:54

BHS – Reed Haack 17 pass from Preston Carter (Jaxon Rice run), 8:58

BHS – Isaiah Butcher 2 run (Butcher run), :10

THIRD QUARTER

BHS – Connor Arant 15 pass from Madden (Aragona kick), 11:05

BHS – Montgomery 1 run (Aragona kick), 8:15

FOURTH QUARTER

BHS – Haack 37 pass from Madden (Aragona kick), 9:40

EM – Tommalik Benson 18 pass from Wilkerson (Chase Evans kick), 4:34