

Spartans Blank Jaguars, Visit Edmond Memorial Friday

By Ron Holt

Bixby's three-headed quarterback attack added another wrinkle last Friday night at Lee Snider Stadium as the unbeaten and No. 1-ranked Spartans routed young, outmanned Westmoore, 80-0, while celebrating their annual Football Homecoming.

The Spartans improved to 5-0 overall and 2-0 in Class 6A-I District 1. Westmoore dipped to 1-4 and 1-1. With Bixby ahead 66-0 at halftime, the second half featured a continuous running game clock.

With junior quarterback Isaiah "Q" Butcher IV, the Spartans' leading rusher with 597 yards and nine touchdowns, sitting out the game as a precaution, Bixby relied on its other quarterbacks this season – senior Preston Carter and junior Reece Madden – while sophomore signal-caller Jaxton Rice saw action for the second time this season.

The trio of quarterbacks combined to complete 24-of-27 passes for 272 yards and seven touchdowns Friday. Madden was 11-of-12 passing for 197 yards and five TDs while Rice was nine-for-nine for 44 yards and one TD and Carter passed for 31 yards and one TD on four-of-six completions.

Through five games, the quarterbacks are a combined 101-for-127 passing (.759 average) for 950 yards and 11 touchdowns

This is a unique situation but one that longtime Bixby offensive coordinator Tyler Schneider experienced in past seasons.

"We had three in 2023 when Carson (Kirby) was a sophomore with Clay Peters and Cooper Parker, who was the jumbo package guy," Schneider said afterward. "We try to play to each one of their strengths, we think they do different things well.

"It's a work in progress we're still learning about what each one can do. They're doing a good job ... we got better tonight. This is Reece's first varsity season so we're learning what he can do."

"I'm happy ... first and foremost all glory goes to God," Madden said. "Preparation going into this week had to be on point and I think we approached it like that ... it was important to keep up our high standards.

"We were ready to take some shots tonight and make them cover the bubbles. I'm glad we were able to do as well as we did tonight. I do think the more and more you learn the more confidence you build up.

"My accuracy numbers shot up a little because of the bubbles, but I do think being accurate is an asset of mine. And we have a lot of good receivers to catch the ball," added Madden, who has a .757 completion percentage.

The Spartans wasted little time settling the district issue as Madden hit Hilkyah Sampson for 24 yards to start the first scoring drive which ended in a one-yard TD run by senior Jack Gill. Rice passed to Kaiden Flowers for the two-point conversion and 8-0 Bixby lead with 10:55 showing. In the first quarter, Bixby responded with a 31-yard TD pass from Madden to Nathan Hobbs, an 11-yard TD from Madden to Reed Haack, a 29-yard scoring pass from Madden to Landon Thienhardt for a 29-0 first quarter lead.

Two plays into the third quarter, the score increased to 36-0 as Madden connected with junior BJ Jones for a 37-yard TD followed by Lincoln Aragant's conversion kick with 11:35 left before halftime.

Westmoore's bad punt snap which went out of the end zone led to a safety and 38-0 BHS lead with 10:05 showing. It was quickly followed by a 60-yard punt return for a TD by Spartan freshman Maverick Owens for a 45-0 lead at the 9:56 mark.

Owens, who's started in the Spartan secondary since the season opened, was more involved in Bixby's offense and on special teams against the Jaguars. He caught three passes for 36 yards and a touchdown and was a threat as a punt returner.

"Me and my coaches talked about it ... I'm just thankful they let me go out there and show what I can do," Owens said afterward. "We prepare right and that's the outcome that we get. I'm thankful to the coaches for believing in me and I'm thankful for my blocking. I learn something every week."

Coach Schneider added, "We planned to involve Maverick more ... he's doing a good job on defense, so we didn't want to take anything from that side."

Bixby wrapped up the first half with an eight-yard TD pass from Madden to senior Tylan Montgomery, a seven-yard TD pass from Rice to junior Connor Arant and a nine-yard pass from Carter to Owens with 35 seconds remaining for a 66-0 halftime spread.

With the clock continuously running, Bixby ended the scoring after the speedy Rice ran 15 yards for a third quarter touchdown and raced 10 yards for a fourth quarter TD as the Spartans took care of business.

"We came out and did what we needed to do," Spartan head coach Loren Montgomery said.

"Some of the guys played really well and we executed really well. In a game like that when they are playing so many young guys that's what you want to do.

"What you want to do is come out play clean and execute. It gives us a little confidence going into next week. We've got some really good guys as backups ... I was proud of the way we came out in the second half and acted like we had been there.

"We held Q (Butcher) out as a precaution. He could have gone tonight had we needed him, but we decided to hold him out," coach Montgomery added.

NEXT GAME – For the first time, Bixby travels to Edmond to play the Memorial Bulldogs in a district game, starting at 7 p.m. Friday (Oct. 9) at Memorial Bulldog Stadium, 1000 E. 15th St. The spacious facility was remodeled late in 2019 and has seating for around 5,000 fans.

The game will be aired by The Sports Animal, 97.1-FM, with Shawn Tiemann providing play-by-play description and Ethan Roe handling color commentary.

This is the second meeting between Bixby and Edmond Memorial. Bixby defeated the Bulldogs, 29-8, in the 2024 Class 6A-I state semifinals in Claremore. The Spartans led 14-8 at halftime.

Edmond Memorial (2-3, 0-2), led by head coach Justin Merideth, defeated Piedmont (42-15) and Edmond Santa Fe (56-7) in non-district games at home before falling 28-21 at Edmond Deer Creek. Edmond North rallied in the second half in capturing a 39-36 win at Memorial in the district opener two weeks ago.

Unbeaten Broken Arrow defeated visiting Edmond Memorial last Friday, 44-7. The Bulldogs were led by junior quarterback Talon Wilkerson, who was 20-of-31 passing for 282 yards, one touchdown and one interception. Memorial was held to 26 rushing yards.

Senior receiver Cameron Quarrels, who is being recruited by small schools and junior colleges, had 10 receptions for 190 yards and a TD.

Defensively, 6-2, 215-pound senior linebacker Colton McCombs was credited with 13 tackles, five solo stops, three tackles for loss and two sacks. The three-star McCombs is committed to Kansas State and is listed at No. 15 on the Daily Oklahoman's Super 30 high school players in the state.

On the season, Wilkerson has passed for 1,277 yards and seven touchdowns while Quarrels has 32 receptions for 632 yards and four TDs. McCombs is the defensive leader with 49 total tackles, six tackles for losses, three sacks, one interception and one fumble recovery.

Senior Beckett Freel, a 6-6, 225-pound defensive back, is credited with 42 total tackles and one tackle for loss.

“We saw them a little at our team camp,” Spartan head coach Loren Montgomery said. “They’re physical and well coached ... we’ll have to play well.”

NOTABLES – Bixby’s win last week gives the Spartans a 21-game winning streak while it was also the 103rd victory in the Spartans last 106 games. MaxPreps ranks the Spartans No. 39 nationally entering the week. ... BHS captains in the Westmoore game were Nathan Hobbs, Kaden Penny, Ben Puckett and Matthew Kohnstamm. ... Bixby’s defense dominated, limiting the Jaguars to minus-2 yards of total offense and one first down. There were 20 Spartans credited with tackles as the starters sat out the second half. The balanced effort was led by senior Kaiden Flowers with seven total tackles, five unassisted. Senior Nathan Hobbs and senior Ben Puckett finished with six total tackles each as Puckett recorded five solo stops. Senior Cain Brackney had five total tackles and two sacks. Gill also had five tackles. Senior Max Hackler was also credited with a sack. Puckett leads BHS’s defense this season with 47 tackles and three sacks while Kaiden Flowers has 35 tackles, Hobbs 30 and Brackney 29. ... Senior kicker Lincoln Aragona successfully booted eight extra points. ... Offensively, eleven Spartans ran the ball while 14 players caught passes led by senior Jack Gill’s 30 yards rushing and sophomore Hilkyah Sampson’s three pass receptions for 49 yards. ... Through five games, Bixby has 950 passing yards and 1,394 rushing yards for a total offensive output of 2,344 yards. The Spartans are averaging 46 points per game while allowing 16.2 points per game. ... Westmoore’s Jayden Diaz punted six times in the first half.

DISTRICT 6A-1 - In other district games last Friday, Norman North held off visiting Edmond North, 46-28, and Mustang rolled to a 48-0 win at Southmoore.

Other league games scheduled this week include Southmoore (0-5, 0-2) at Norman North (4-1, 1-1) on Thursday night while Friday games include Edmond North (3-2, 2-2) at Mustang (3-2, 1-1) and Broken Arrow (5-0, 2-0) traveling to Westmoore (1-4, 1-1).

MANAGERS – Prior to kickoff at Mustang last Friday, the kickoff time was delayed by lighting followed by rain.

Bixby’s student managers scrambled to protect camera equipment on the second level of the visiting press box, climbing up an iron ladder to secure the equipment, cover up the cameras and clean up excess water in the hallway.

That’s just part of the contributions provided to Bixby’s football program by the student managers - under the guidance of Bixby’s offensive line coach Corbin Burchett – and the creative team, guided by assistant coach Andrew O’Neill.

“We handle day-to-day filming of practice and seven-on-seven events while the creative people make all the promotional stuff,” coach Burchett said. “If it starts raining (like at Mustang) you’ve got to get the cameras covered up.

“They are a great group ... I’ve got three returning seniors and they’re great. I’ve got a good influx of others. They all mesh really well together. It’s a good group to have.

“We couldn’t be as good as we are if we weren’t able to film every practice and every game. Any angle we want we’re able to get and that really helps a lot,” he added.

Student managers and creative team members include Riley Coughlin, Layla Wallace, Brooklyn Callahan, Karlyn Crisp, Juliana Salas, Avery Weems, Sophia Perdew, Abby Dupuis, Quinn Rowe, Victoria Gallardo, Savannah Lymparty, Abby Stanhope, Adyson McNamar.