

SPORTS

New Caney continues hot streak, tops Oak Ridge 35-21

Rob Tate, Staff writer

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Oak Ridge wide receiver JaQuale Harrison (1) catches a pass in the first quarter of a District 13-6A high school football game at Woodforest Bank Stadium, Thursday, Sept. 22, 2022, in Shenandoah.

Jason Fochtman/Staff photographer

SHENANDOAH — The New Caney Eagles continue to crash the District 13-6A party. Now they've added disrupting homecoming games to the season resume.

Tied going into the third quarter, the Eagles secured a pair of turnovers and controlled the clock with the ground game and two fourth-quarter Kedrick Reescano touchdowns for a 35-21 win at Woodforest Bank Stadium Thursday night.

The Eagles are 5-0 for the first time since the 2018 season and continue turning heads with wins over Willis, The Woodlands and Oak Ridge.

“We prepared for this,” Reescano, a Michigan State commit, said of the fast start to the season. “We came out. We balled. And that’s how it went.”

New Caney (3-0 in district play) had concerns going against Oak Ridge (1-3, 0-2) this week, especially off the high of a 14-7 win over The Woodlands last Friday.

The War Eagles had a bye and plenty of time to get ready for the Eagles.

“They are very tough, very athletic, and very well-coached,” New Caney coach Travis Reeve said. “We were extremely concerned about this game. It was a short week with a really good football team. If you’re going to have a successful season, you’re going to have to overcome adversity throughout the year. You’re going to have to win these types of games. At least tonight, our kids proved they were up to the challenge.”

It was a 21-all tie heading into the fourth quarter.

Oak Ridge was driving when a mishandled handoff resulted in a fumble recovery by Jalen Menny.

Two plays later and Reescano, who totaled 223 yards on 27 attempts on the night, dashed for a 53-yard score.

“Going into this game preparation-wise, I felt like if we do the stuff we need to do, we’re going to be right there with them,” Oak Ridge coach Mark Schmid said. “We were until we got to the fourth quarter. We have a drive (to possibly) go in to score and we fumble at the 30-yard line. Instead of us going in to score to make it 28-21, three plays later, they score and make it 28-21.”

Oak Ridge punted on its next possession. Reescano then led the charge, picking up first downs all the way down the field until he ran in a 15-yard score with 1:15 left to ice it.

“It was really a team effort,” Reescano said. “I couldn't get too caught up in the moment because it was just something that had to be done. We had to go win that game and that's what it took.”

Oak Ridge was ready to get down to business in the first quarter after a week off.

The War Eagles got things going on the second play of the night as quarterback Steve Smedley hit Elijah Porter for a 76-yard touchdown.

“We felt like we had a good game plan, both offensively and defensively,” Schmid said. “We felt like there were some holes we could exploit in the secondary throwing the football and that was one of them. Worked like a charm and gave our kids a huge lift.”

Oak Ridge then went up 14-0 on its second possession as Frankie Arthur sprinted in a 35-yard touchdown run.

The War Eagles' two-touchdown lead only lasted a matter of moments.

On the ensuing kickoff, New Caney senior CJ Blocker, a state-qualifying sprinter last spring, put his legs to good use with a 103-yard return to the end zone.

Reeve said afterward that New Caney has seen contributions all season from offense, defense and special teams.

“Tonight, it was special teams,” he said. “I think that's a mark of a good football team. We needed those plays and we were down early. It got us back in it and gave us a chance to regroup at halftime and come out with a win.”

That swayed things for New Caney. Junior Daylen Wilson picked off a pass on the next Oak Ridge possession, but New Caney punted.

With Oak Ridge back in possession, the Eagles got their second interception and took it to the house. Junior DJ Lewis got his mitts on a deflected ball at the Oak Ridge 47 and turned up field for the pick-six and the tie ballgame just 52 seconds into the second quarter.

Oak Ridge and New Caney exchanged rushing touchdowns to take a 21-all lead into halftime.

Oak Ridge went up 21-14 at the 6:11 mark as Larry DeBose broke some ankles with a swift move on a linebacker and sprinted the rest of the way for a 23-yard touchdown.

Kedrick Reescano then converted a fourth-and-1 from the Oak Ridge 6 for a touchdown to tie the game with 10 seconds before halftime.

“We just felt like we hadn’t executed as well as we would like,” Reeve said of the feeling at halftime. “We knew we were playing a great football team and we just needed to come out and play better. I thought our kids never panicked. They continued to believe and good things happen when you do that.”

Blocker added an interception to his earlier kick return touchdown to end the game.

“They’re a good football team,” Schmid said. “Coming into the night, they’re 4-0 and now they are 5-0. There’s a reason they are.”

New Caney quarterback Nehemiah Broussard was 9-for-13 for 81 yards. Dravon Wilson had six receptions for 56 yards.

After their bye next week, the Eagles host Conroe on Oct. 7.

Oak Ridge had 88 rushing yards from Arthur and 72 from DeBose. Porter finished with a nice night of five receptions for 137 yards. Smedley threw for 211.

Oak Ridge is back in action next Friday at Conroe.

“I told the kids after the game that every week is about getting better,” Schmid said. “We’ve got six district ball games left and whatever we want to accomplish is out there. We have to continue to get better.”

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