

SPORTS

FOOTBALL: Offense shines in Montgomery win over Oak Ridge

Rob Tate, Staff Writer

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1 of 26

Montgomery wide receiver Maddox Plazek (13) scores a 49-yard touchdown during the second quarter of a non-district high school football game, Thursday, Sept. 23, 2021, in Montgomery.

Jason Fochtman, Houston Chronicle / Staff photographer

MONTGOMERY — In the non-district finale for the Montgomery Bears and the Oak Ridge War Eagles, offense was the name of the game.

A touchdown was a result of each of the first eight series of the game -- seven offensive and one from special teams -- in the first half Thursday night in the first half at Montgomery ISD Stadium.

The Bears seized a sizable lead by halftime and went on to a 62-32 win. Montgomery has beaten Oak Ridge two straight years.

“Both offenses played very, very well,” Montgomery coach John Bolfing said.

Montgomery is 4-0 for the first time since 2011, a season it went 9-3 overall and made the area round. Oak Ridge (1-4) has now dropped four straight contests as it heads into the bye week.

Montgomery senior quarterback Brock Bolfing tossed three touchdown passes in the first half with two going to Justin Herman. The junior had a 24-yard score in the first quarter and a 32-yard score in the second quarter.

Bolfing also found Maddox Plazek for his longest throw of the first half. Plazek caught and ran in a 49-yard score midway through the second quarter.

Montgomery senior running back Jalen Washington opened up the scoring with a 2-yard score on the first drive.

Then late in the second quarter, the Bears blocked the first punt attempt of the night by Oak Ridge.

Junior linebacker Kade Nuchia scooped it up and scored from 38 yards out.

Oak Ridge had some fireworks on its first drive of the night, which lasted just one play.

Sophomore running back Frankie Arthuer busted out down the left sideline for a 71-yard touchdown run.

Ethan Rodriguez had two touchdown passes in the second quarter. The first went to Camden Morgan on a 6-yard swing pass and later, Tevian Jefferson caught a 10-yard touchdown. The War Eagles didn't convert on either point-after attempt.

Oak Ridge then failed to convert on a fourth down at the goal line right before halftime.

“We talked about it at halftime,” Oak Ridge coach Mark Schmid said. “We had a great game plan and it really was working. But what happens is we had a punt that was blocked and returned for a touchdown. We responded with a great drive but we came up short at the 1-yard line before the half.

“To me, those two things right there were huge momentum shifters for us.”

Out of halftime, Montgomery stopped another Oak Ridge drive with an interception for a touchdown. Korbin Ballenger jumped the route and it was open space all the way down the other way for the 75-yard score and a 42-19 lead.

“We start the second half and we put a great drive together and throw a pick-six,” Schmid said. “As the snowball was rolling down the hill, it just got bigger and bigger.”

On the first Montgomery offensive drive of the third quarter, the Bears marched 12 plays and capped it with a 1-yard score from running back Traven Lewis-Johnson.

Lewis-Johnson then capped another long drive to begin the fourth quarter with his second TD. He busted through the line for a 53-yard score for Montgomery’s fifth straight touchdown.

The 19 points for Oak Ridge stayed on the board until a couple late drives against the Montgomery defense. Arthur finished with 159 yards passing while Larry DeBose had 101.

But the Bears really slowed things down as they built the lead.

“We made some adjustments and we kind of picked it up on the defensive side of the ball,” Bolfing said. “Offensively, we just kind of kept doing what we were doing all night and had success. To me, it was just a really good team effort. We covered kicks well and did everything pretty well tonight.”

With 5:30 left in the game, Oak Ridge scored for the first time since the second quarter. Rodriguez tossed his third touchdown of the night to Jaquale Harrison, who ran it in from 38 yards out.

Braylan Harrell then added a 45-yard touchdown for the War Eagles with just over three minutes left in the game.

With 42 seconds left, Ryder Adler scored on a 34-yard run for Montgomery.

Brock Bolfing totaled 232 yards passing with 96 going to Herman. Lewis-Johnson's late runs put him over 100 at 106.

John Bolfing was pleased with how his team didn't back down from the early see-saw battle to pull away to the big win.

"We couldn't stop them and they couldn't stop us," he said. "Finally we got the blocked punt and we obviously stole some points there. We had a good, solid lead at halftime and they came out moving the ball again and we get the pick-six."

Montgomery won last year's meeting -- also on a Thursday night -- at Woodforest Stadium, 38-13. The Bears and War Eagles were district foes in 2016-17.

Montgomery opens District 10-5A (Div. I) at Fulshear (Traylor Stadium, 7 p.m. Thursday

Oak Ridge returns to action Oct. 8 at Conroe to start District 13-6A.

"There's a lot of stuff that they have to improve upon," Schmid said of his team heading into the bye week. "It has nothing to do with Xs and Os. It has to do with fundamentals and the basics. All those things that I call little things that will bite you in the rear if you don't take care of them. That's one of our goals is to clean those things up and focus on those."

rtate@hcnonline.com