

SPORTS

Round 1

St. Thomas team falls with the temperature

BY STEVE SMITH JR.

In the frigid "Tundra Bowl" played last Friday, the young Riders defeated St. Thomas Aquinas 15-8.

"The field conditions were horrible," said Coach Mo Tipton. "It was the worst weather we've played in about four or five years. I think the weather hurt our game, because we didn't have a chance to show our speed in the backfield."

But the Riders didn't need speed in this game. Instead they used their power fullback Jack Leeder.

"All I wanted to do was hold on to the ball, run through the holes, and be able to keep my balance," said a very happy Leeder after the game.

"The holes were there all night long. Our offensive line just blew them off the ball. Mark Tillison and Roger Davidoff did a great job of leading me through the holes," Leeder said. "Boy, it feels great. This is my biggest game ever."

Leeder had an excellent game of 113 yards rushing, and was only three yards away from out rushing the entire St. Thomas Aquinas team, which had 115 total rushing yards.

It was evident from their first play from scrimmage that the St. Thomas Aquinas Knights were in for a long night. On the first play, the Knights fumbled and Rex Martin recovered at the Knight's 39-yard line.

But the Riders couldn't punch

the ball in the end zone as the Knight's defense stopped Davidoff short of a first down on fourth and two from the two-yard line.

Later in the first quarter fate struck the Knights again on a punt return as the Knights fumbled and Orrville's Martin again came up with the ball.

Four plays later Tom Bolyard scored the first of his two touchdowns on a two-yard quarterback keeper with 1:01 to play in the quarter. The extra point kick was good to make the score 7-0, as Orrville led at the end of the first quarter.

Bolyard said he thought the turnovers were the key in determining the outcome of the ball game.

"We just kept the ball and they didn't. We made the crucial plays at the right time. We knew we had to keep possession as much as possible because they have a great quarterback Chris Lorentz. If we kept the ball out of his hands, we knew we could do it," said Bolyard, who had an excellent statistical game as he completed five of six passes for 69 yards.

"I can't point out one individual tonight. It was a great team effort. Mark Auble, Bolyard, Leeder and Martin all had super games," Tipton said. "We did a good job of not turning the ball over. We used the option with great success. I think our offense can move the ball on anybody. They have a good

team and have a lot of heart. They deserve a lot of credit. This game could have went either way."

Probably the big play of the game occurred late in the second quarter as the Knights made an excellent drive all the way to the Orrville one yard line, before fumbling away the opportunity as Auble recovered the Knights third fumble of the game.

Early in the third quarter, the Riders committed their first turnover of the game, as Davidoff was hit hard and fumbled.

But the Rider defense held and the score remained 7-0 at the end of the third quarter.

Orrville then drove 48 yards for a touchdown which was capped off by a five-yard touchdown run by Bolyard. Bolyard hit Auble for the two-point conversion to make the score 15-0.

But the Knights countered by driving 71 yards for their first score of the night.

The two-point conversion was good and the Knights trailed only by seven with 5:56 to play.

But in the clutch, Bolyard guided the offensive squad down the field and hit Von Schrock for a crucial first down on a fourth and seven play.

Time then ran out as the Riders took their first step toward the state championship by defeating St. Thomas Aquinas 15-8.

As the Riders look forward to next week, Tipton had this comment, "I want all the marbles!"

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