

Saints top Waverly-Shell Rock

Written by Tom Fruehling

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The Go-Hawks of Waverly-Shell Rock found out right away Monday night that they had nowhere to go against Xavier's stout defense.

They were held to one first down and forced into quick punts the first four times they had the ball in a second round Class 3A playoff game on the Saints' rain-soaked field.

Xavier, meanwhile, had a missed field goal and three touchdowns to show for its first four possessions.

With a 21-0 cushion barely into the second quarter, the Saints (8-3) soared 33-20 and advanced to the quarterfinals Friday night at home against West Delaware.

"We knew they had a good running game," said Xavier Coach Duane Schulte. "So the first thing you want to do is stop the run. And we did that, for the most part, by playing some sound fundamental football."

For the game, the G-Hawks managed just 78 yards rushing on 32 carries.

"We were just flying to the ball and making gang tackles," said Saints linebacker Thomas Ickes.

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With no room to run, Class 3A fourth-ranked Waverly–Shell Rock (8-3) pretty much abandoned its ground game and went to the air the rest of the way. That suited Schulte just fine.

“We wanted to get them to start throwing the ball, even though their quarterback (Jake Velky) is a great athlete,” said Schulte. “He made a couple of big plays. But by then we had a big lead.”

The 10th-ranked Saints relied on the tried-and-true formula of using their rugged offensive line to open huge holes for their running backs. And once the runners saw daylight they made the most of it.

Senior tailback Jay Kortemeyer racked up 109 yards on 21 carries before getting dinged early in the third quarter and sitting out the rest of the game. His trusty understudy, junior Sean Murphy, logged 16 second-half rushes for 112 yards.

“Obviously,” said Schulte, “we want to establish the run game and just keep getting first downs.”

While they gained 272 yards on the ground, the Saints also piled up an uncharacteristic 154 yards in passes with sophomore quarterback Bryce Schulte connecting on seven of nine throws.

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Waverly-Shell Rock (10-1) defeated Saints (7-4) 51-14 in a football game on Monday, October 27, 2014. The game was played at Waverly-Shell Rock's home field. Saints' quarterback, Matt Riehl, completed 10 of 19 passes for 126 yards and 2 touchdowns. Riehl also ran for 20 yards and 1 touchdown. Saints' running back, Matt Riehl, ran for 76 yards and 1 touchdown. Saints' defense held Waverly-Shell Rock to 14 points. Saints' defense held Waverly-Shell Rock to 14 points. Saints' defense held Waverly-Shell Rock to 14 points.