

Lions put clamps on Waterloo East

Written by Mike Condon

Friday, 25 September 2015 23:06 - Last Updated Monday, 28 September 2015 05:11



WATERLOO - It took awhile for the Linn-Mar offense to get started in Friday night's Class 4A District 4 opener with Waterloo East.

However, the Lion defense was in top form right from the start.

Linn-Mar held the Trojans to just 20 yards of total offense, including a whopping minus-65 rushing total, en route to a 54-0 triumph at Memorial Stadium.

The win moves Linn-Mar to 2-3 overall, 1-0 in district play, while Waterloo East falls to 0-5, 0-1. It was the 24th straight loss for the Trojans dating back to the 2012 playoffs.

"We needed a game like this tonight," said Linn-Mar senior defensive end Sam Bries. "I'm just really glad we all came together. Our defense just needed to be ready."

Ready they were. Linn-Mar surrendered just four first downs and the one time East moved inside the red zone after a long completion, Bries and his mates pushed the hosts back 10 yards and took over on downs.

"We just have the mentality of never giving up," Bries said. "Our offense may have been struggling, but we just want to keep working, hoping that will bring them up. We knew it was just a matter of time before they got going."

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It looked like the Lions were well on their way to an early route, scoring twice within the first six minutes. Senior Zach Luehring capped a seven-play drive with a 7-yard burst up the middle.

Then, after a poor East punt, junior Neme Siaway raced 19 yards on his first carry of the season to put the Lions up 14-0.

But the Linn-Mar offense bogged down the rest of the half. East's defense made it tough to run and junior quarterback Reese Phillips struggled in the passing game.

Linn-Mar did manage to get a 32-yard field goal from senior Alexy Boehm, who returned to action after injuring his knee in the season opener, in the final 13 seconds of the half to lead 17-0 at halftime.

"We were absolutely sluggish in the first (half)," Linn-Mar coach Bob Forsyth said. "We weren't focusing on what we needed to do and when the vibe is not right, that's the head coach's fault so we will get that corrected."

It may need to be further corrected, but it was adjusted quickly. Siaway took the opening kickoff 73 yards to the East 1 and then carried it in on the next snap to make it 24-0.

After another three-and-out by the Lion defense, Luehring shot straight through the middle and streaked untouched 70 yards for a touchdown. Another Lion stop on defense led to a short drive capped by Siaway's third TD of the night, a 1-yard plunge and all the sudden it was 38-0 Lions just five minutes into the second half.

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Linn-Mar didn't let up with the continuous clock in play. Senior Logan Hagmeier sacked East quarterback Al Thompson in the end zone for a safety to cap a 23-point quarter for the Lions.

In the fourth, backup quarterback Nolan Hollinger raced in from 7 yards out and sophomore Cevan Walton picked off a Thompson pass and took it 33 yards for the last Lion touchdown in the final 90 seconds.

"We got to play a lot of kids tonight," Forsyth said. "That was a really good thing. We've got some kids who work hard in practice and it is good that we can get them some meaningful playing time."

Linn-Mar faces a huge test next Friday, hosting No. 5 and unbeaten Kennedy for homecoming. East plays crosstown rival Waterloo West.

"I told the kids next week is what high school football is all about," Forsyth said. "It's our homecoming game with a really good opponent coming in. We're going to work really hard this week and I hope the kids enjoy the homecoming week. We just want to come out and play a really good football game against Kennedy."

Bries simply said: "I have great respect for Kennedy. They are a great football team. This is an opportunity for us to step up and show what we are capable of doing."

LINN-MAR 54, WATERLOO EAST 0

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First downs	13	5
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Rushes-yards	28-213	24-(-65)
Passing yards	107	85
Comp-Att-Int	10-23-0	10-27-2
Fumbles-lost	1-1	0-0
Punts-avg.	4-34.7	8-34.2
Penalties-yards	10-93	12-128

Linn-Mar □ □ □ □ **14** □ **3** **23** **14** - **54**

Waterloo East □ □ **0** □ **0** □ **0** □ **0** - □ **0**

Scoring plays

LM - Zach Luehring 7 run (Alexy Boehm kick)
LM - Neme Siaway 19 run (Boehm kick)
LM - FG Boehm 32
LM - Siaway 1 run (Boehm kick)
LM - Luehring 70 run (Boehm kick)
LM - Siaway 1 run (Boehm kick)
LM - Safety, Al Campbell tackled in the end zone
LM - Nolan Hollinger 7 run (Boehm kick)
LM - Cevan Walton 33 interception return (Boehm kick)

Individual statistics

Rushing

Linn-Mar - Brennan McGaffe 7-47, Zach Luehring 8-97, Reese Phillips 2-2, Josh Gassmann 2-9, Neme Siaway 6-37, Cevan Walton 1-11, Nolan Hollinger 2-10.
Waterloo East - Carlton Todd 4-(minus 2), Kierin Johnson 7-(minus 20), Tyre Reed 3-5, Al Campbell 7-(minus 18), Landen Clemmenson 2-(minus 20), Team 1-(minus 10).

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Passing

Linn-Mar - Reese Phillips 9-22-0-91, Nolan Hollinger 1-1-0-16.

Waterloo East - Landen Clemmenson 6-16-0-52, Al Johnson 4-11-2-33.

Receiving

Linn-Mar - Daniel Gorsich 5-51, Josh Gassmann 1-16, Brennan McGaffe 4-40.

Waterloo East - Marquas Gafeney 5-59, Kierin Johnson 3-6, Tyre Reed 2-8.