

Wounded Birds Easily Defeat Little Giants

A wounded varsity Metamora football team made the trip to Canton last Friday night and came away with 44-0 victory over the Little Giants. Due to injuries, the Redbirds played without five starters but Metamora reserves filled in nicely for the rain shorted game.

Lightning stopped the game just as the second half began with Metamora recording six touchdowns and a safety while shutting out Canton. After a 40 minute delay and no relief from the storm in sight, the athletic directors from both teams declared the game complete.

The Redbirds racked up 360 yards of total offense in the first half. For rushing, the Birds were nearly unstoppable. Junior fullback Charlie Nowotnik (#34), filling for the injured Bryan Love (#41) lead all rushers with 90 yards and touchdown. Also filling in at fullback was senior Jake Ferguson (#32). Ferguson added 76 yards on 7 carries to the total while crossing the goal line twice. Senior quarterback Michael Fay (#15) scored the first two touchdowns of the game and rushed for 82 yards on the shorted evening. Backup quarterback Beau Geier (#12) recorded significant playing time in the first half. Geier rushed for 47 yards and scored the third TD of the game. Metamora added a safety midway through the half. Kicker Brennen VanMiegham (#26) was a perfect 6 for 6 on extra point attempts to cap off the offense's attack.

Geier and Fay completed 3 passed on 6 attempts with one interception (Fay) for a total of 51 yards. Junior Ben Friday (#39) made a nice 22 yard reception from his knees to lead the receiving core. Seniors Andrew Jones (#45) and Brett McKinney (#21) each had a receptions for 18 and 11 yards respectively as the Birds used just enough passing to keep the Little Giants guessing. Overall, an outstanding offensive show for a single half of play.

Defensively Metamora gave up a total of 115 yards to the Canton offensive. 54 yards of that total was on a single broken pass play in which Canton quarterback Jake Chenoweth made an outstanding throw in between two Metamora defenders. Otherwise, the Birds only allowed the Little Giants 61 yards of rushing. Most of those yards were recorded by Chenoweth as he scrambled to survive the evening. Linebackers Tom Bieneman (#11-senior) and Blake Mason (#44-sophomore) appeared to be involved in nearly every tackle. Senior defensive lineman Preston Butner (#53), Drew Cullett (#36) and Andrew Jones controlled the line of scrimmage as the Birds allowed only 2 yards rushing to the Little Giants running backs. Senior lineman Tyler White (#48) recorded several tackles as Metamora reserves showed off Redbird's outstanding roster depth.

The Birds limped into Canton after significant injuries in South Elgin game on Saturday September 4th. The South Elgin Storm team, now ranked 8th in class 8A, defeated Metamora by a score of 49-26. South Elgin used a combination of a scrambling quarterback and outstanding receiver speed to expose the Redbirds. Although Metamora lost the game, the Birds showed they can be competitive against nearly anyone despite

playing a school four football classes larger than themselves. Metamora coaches stated they'll use the South Elgin game as a learning experience and prepare the Birds for rest of the season.

Metamora stayed with South Elgin until injuries piled up. The Redbirds sideline was referred to as a MASH unit as six Metamora starters left the game with injuries. Fullback/linebacker Bryan Love and senior tight end/linebacker Ethan Volz (#4) each left the game with ankle injuries. Senior cornerback Kyle Albertson (#1) and linebacker/running back David Tracy (#46) were sidelined with knee injuries. Junior defensive lineman Kyle Reeder (#89) was out do to a head injury and Andrew Jones limped off the field with a sore hip.

Love, Volz, Albertson, Tracy and Reeder all were sidelined last week. The Redbirds injury list grew even further as Brett McKinney (shoulder), Andrew Jones (hip) and junior Dan Kurtz (#55-ankle) left the Canton game with injuries. Several other players have already missed game time this season including senior caption Tyler Burch (#57-knee), senior running back Eric Odum (#5-knee) and junior quarterback Ross Hoover (#8-knee).

Does all this sound familiar? As Yogi Berra once said, "This is like deja vu all over again.". By the 8th game last season, Metamora had 19 players miss important playing time. The Birds are currently on pace to beat that statistic in 2010. Let's hope that doesn't transpire as Metamora begins important conference play.

On the plus side, it's conceivable the Redbirds will return most of these injured players over the next few weeks as the most difficult part of the regular season schedule approaches. Let's hope for a speedy recovery for all these young men.

Metamora returns home this Friday, September 17th to take on the East Peoria Raiders for homecoming. Although East Peoria is winless on the season, the Redbirds had better prepare for the always unpredictable Raiders. Varsity game time is at 7:30pm with the Freshmen taking the field at 5:00pm.

Follow all the Metamora varsity games in the Woodford Courier or online at <http://LakeVermilionRetreat.com/Football> .