

## Redbirds Defeat Dragons, 38-14

For Redbird fans, the Metamora football team is setting a troubling trend. For the second week in row, the Birds had to come from behind after giving up opening touchdowns to their opponents. Two weeks ago it was Dunlap. Last week it was Pekin but Metamora regrouped, again, to win convincingly 38-14.

The Pekin Dragons took their opening offensive possession with 10:11 in the first quarter. Three minutes later, the Dragons were up 7-0 on the Birds after Pekin quarterback Beau Barnes completed a 20 yard pass. Metamora's kicker Brennen VanMiegham (#26) responded with a 34 yard field goal to bring the game to 7-3 with a minute left in the first quarter.

Metamora found their stride in the second quarter. Three different players recorded rushing touchdowns to give the Birds a 24-7 halftime lead. Running back Charlie Nowotnik (#34) and quarterback Michael Fay (#15) each scored short yardage rushing touchdowns. In the closing minute of the half, Colton Willett (#28) broke several tackles on a spectacular 24 yard touchdown run giving the Birds a commanding halftime lead.

Metamora added two more touchdowns in the second half to complete the scoring at 38. Fay and Nowotnik again scored short yardage TD and VanMiegham completed the extra points. Metamora mixed in just enough passing to keep Pekin guessing. Fay found running back David Tracy (#46), tight ends Andrew Jones (#45) and Chase Scott (#49) for 66 passing yards in the game. Nowotnik lead all rushers with 165 yards on 23 carries. Willett, Fay, Tracy, Jake Ferguson (#34) and Beau Geier (#12) completed the Metamora rushing with 249 yards total.

Metamora's starting defense was outstanding after giving up the opening touchdown. Linebackers Blake Mason (#44) and Tom Bieneman (#11) made adjustments early to lead all tackling. The Bird's defense gave up just 132 yards total to Pekin. The majority of those yards came on the Dragons opening and closing scoring drives of the game. Metamora held Pekin to just three first downs in-between those drives.

The Redbirds got mixed news this week on the injury front. Kyle Albertson (#1) will miss the rest of the season with a knee injury but should be at full strength in time for the spring baseball season. Captain Bryan Love (#41) began light workouts last week and was dressed for the Pekin game but did not see action. Captain Tyler Burch (#57) took the majority of snaps at right guard and appears to be fully recovered from his injury. Brandon White (#58) saw significant playing time at tight end last week after breaking his hand in the Dunlap game. Andrew Jones aggravated his hip injury in game and will be evaluated throughout the week. Senior Ethan Volz (#4) is scheduled to return this week after suffering a serious high ankle sprain in the South Elgin game. Overall, the Birds are slowly returning to near full strength.

Congratulation to kicker Brennen VanMiegham. VanMiegham had five extra points and a field goal in the last game to tie the state career scoring record and should break the record this week.

Metamora travels to Morton this week to take on the Potters. Morton shocked Washington last week with a 23-12 victory over the ranked Panthers. The Redbirds will need to control the line of scrimmage against a strong Morton offensive line. Expect a huge battle upfront as the Birds defensive line will be tested.

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