

No. 1 Saints roll by Maquoketa

Written by Tom Fruehling

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It may seem simplistic, but Xavier Coach Duane Schulte says you seldom know how a game's going to turn out until you start to play.

"You never know what to expect," the highly successful 21-year veteran said Friday night after his powerhouse Saints mauled undermanned Maquoketa, 49-6.

A jam-packed home crowd and a trickling of Maquoketa fans found out soon enough how this one was going to play out when Xavier (4-1, 3-0) scored quickly on its first possession and let never let up.

The Saints also made touchdowns on the next six times they touched the ball and mercifully punted for the first time on a fourth down they could have easily made as the first half ended.

Cardinal Coach Kevin Bowman said afterward he figured the game was lost before his boys even stepped off the bus to face Xavier, which is ranked No. 1 in Class 3A.

"They just had a defeated look about them," he noted. "I thought we'd come out with a more enthusiastic attitude. But I think some of our players were a little intimidated."

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Maquoketa (0-5) punted six times and lost the ball on fumbles twice in the first half alone as the Saints rolled to a 49-0 shellacking.

As the continuous clock ran for the whole second half, they made their initial first down with 4:40 left in the game and finally scored two minutes later on a short pass play.

It was the only time the Cardinal crossed the 50-yard line and was set up by a fumble by Xavier's third-string quarterback.

Maquoketa, which has been outscored this year 184-36, dressed just 27 players. Xavier, meanwhile, had 71 in uniform and Schulte said he thought all of them saw some action as the starters sat after halftime.

In its first year of district play in Class 3A, the Saints have now outscored their opponents 166-15 after a 24-2 season-opening loss to Class 4A defending champ West Des Moines Dowling.

"We're just happy to be 4-1," Schulte said. "We wanted the kids to execute and do their jobs.

"We weren't perfect, but coaches are never satisfied. We just keep trying to improve."

Senior defensive back Cam Stovie echoed his coach's view that there's room for improvement, but he nonetheless felt the Saints were spectacular both offensively and defensively Friday night.

"We came out firing," he said, "and we just kept firing."

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