

2006 state champs motivate No. 1 Saints

Written by Jim Ecker

Saturday, 17 September 2016 06:37 -



Xavier High School honored its 2006 football team Friday night on the 10th anniversary of those Saints stunning the world and capturing the Class 4A state title despite stiff odds against bigger schools.

A decade from now, Xavier might be honoring this year's team for winning another state crown.

The top-ranked Saints cruised to a 35-7 victory over Charles City Friday night in a Class 3A district game that was not nearly as close as the final score suggests.

Bryce Schulte threw four touchdown passes and Xavier opened a 35-0 bulge midway through the third quarter before Coach Duane Schulte emptied his bench and gave everyone a chance to play on Senior Night.

The 2006 state champs were saluted during a reception in the Xavier Commons before the game and were introduced at halftime of the varsity contest.

"I can't describe how great it was to walk in our Commons and see all those guys there," said Coach Schulte, who steered the Saints to their state crown 10 years ago. "It warms my heart to see them back here, to be honest with you.

"They're great guys," he said. "They're the standard for what Xavier football kind of is."

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Xavier is 4-0 overall and 2-0 in district competition this year as it motors toward the Class 3A playoffs. Their ultimate goal is winning a state title of their own, and seeing the 2006 state champs at the game Friday got their attention.

"It certainly motivates us a little bit," said linebacker John Rocca, who had several sacks and helped the Saints hold Charles City to just 16 yards on the ground.

The 2016 Saints lined up on the track at Saints Field and paid their respects to the 2006 Saints after they were introduced at halftime. "We gave them fist-bumps," said Bryce Schulte, "and they told us to get after it.

Xavier tailback Maliki Wilson, who carried the ball 11 times for 125 yards Friday, began the scoring for the Saints when he burst 43 yards for a touchdown on Xavier's third play from scrimmage.

Bryce Schulte took over from there with a 5-yard touchdown pass to Brett Burns, a 3-yard TD dart to Nolan Butkowski, an 11-yard touchdown strike to his brother Quinn Schulte and an 8-yard TD pass to Butkowski.



When the 2016 season began, Bryce Schulte and his older brother Reggie had both produced 54 touchdowns during their Xavier football careers and were tied for the school record. Bryce Schulte has now shattered that record and is gaining on Reggie in several other categories as the season rolls along.

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Reggie Schulte threw for 49 touchdowns and ran for five TDs during his career in 2011 and 2012. Bryce Schulte has now passed for 42 touchdowns, run for 17 TDs and caught one touchdown pass for 60 total touchdowns.

"I remember Coach Dennis Martin, one of our eighth grade coaches, saying that when Bryce got up here he thought that he would break all of Reggie's records," said Coach Schulte, the quarterbacks' father. "Of course you don't plan on that stuff. You kind of let it flow and that's what happened."

Reggie Schulte did all of his damage in two seasons. Bryce Schulte made a few spot appearances for the varsity as a freshman and has been a three-year starter as a sophomore, junior and senior. Bryce might break all of Reggie's career records - including TD passes and passing yards - but Reggie appeared in fewer games than his brother.

"I haven't talked to Reggie about it," said Bryce. "He might give me a 'Hey, nice job,' or something like that."

Friday's game against Charles City was never in doubt. The Comets arrived with only 23 players on their roster, compared to 63 for the Saints, and Xavier scored easily on its first three possessions for a 20-0 lead with 2:52 left in the first quarter.

Charles City quarterback Drew Mitchell gave his team a lift by completing 8 of 17 passes for 164 yards, including a beautiful 83-yard touchdown pass to Jaden Foster in the third quarter against some of Xavier's reserves.

The Saints sacked Mitchell six times in the ballgame, with Rocca leading the charge from linebacker on blitzes.

"My coach tells me where to go and I go," Rocca remarked. "I like how it works."

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Charles City fell to 1-3 overall and 1-1 in the district.

Xavier visits Decorah next Friday night for another district game.

XAVIER 35, CHARLES CITY 7

C. City Xavier

First Downs	8	16
Rushing	26-16	37-277
Passing Yards	164	128
Att/Comp/Int	8-17-0	13-19-0
Punts	6-27.8	3-17.7
Penalties	2-20	7-45
Fumbles/Lost	1/1	0/0

Charles City 0 0 7 0 - 7

Xavier 21 7 7 0 - 35

Individual Stats

Rushing

Charles City: Koresh 11-32, Baker 6-16, Foster 1-8, Mitchell 8-minus 40.

Xavier: Wilson 11-125, Rodriguez 5-66, B.Schulte 5-49, Lange 8-22, Junge 5-12, Drahozal 1-4, Q.Schulte 1-1, Team 1-minus 2.

Passing

Charles City: Mitchell 8-17-0, 164 yards.

Xavier: B.Schulte 10-16-0, 110 yards; Q.Schulte 3-3-0, 18 yards.

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Receiving

Charles City: Foster 6-150, Cleveland 1-14, Walker 1-10.

Xavier: Q.Schulte 3-50, Butkowski 3-19, Wilson 2-27, Rodriguez 2-20, Burns 2-10, Dempewolf 1-2.