

No. 1 Saints roll by Benton, 47-14

Written by Jim Ecker

Friday, 09 September 2016 23:54 - Last Updated Saturday, 10 September 2016 07:13



VAN HORNE - Schulte pulled Schulte from the game in the third quarter and put Schulte in at quarterback instead.

Confused? Don't be. It was just Xavier rolling to an easy victory Friday night with Coach Duane Schulte and his sons - Bryce and Quinn - helping the Saints stay perfect at 3-0.

The top-ranked Saints dumped Benton Community, 47-14, in the Class 3A district opener in Van Horne with the defense and special teams making it easy for the offense.

Xavier had three touchdown drives - if you can call them drives - of 3 yards, 4 yards and 3 yards. Another drive went 25 yards, with all those easy scores courtesy of two long punt returns and two fumble recoveries.

Maliki Wilson, who led the state in rushing when the night began, broke loose for a 49-yard touchdown in the third quarter, but he carried the ball only five times for 59 yards.

The Saints led 41-0 midway through the third quarter, which allowed Coach Schulte to rest starting quarterback Bryce Schulte and give sophomore Quinn Schulte his first snaps behind center.

Schulte was able to clear his bench in the second half for the only time this season.

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"We've found over the years that it's great for morale and chemistry," he said. "Those guys practice just as hard as the starters do all week, so we try to give everybody an opportunity."

The Saints took control early and were never threatened at Bobcat Stadium.



Josh Gerke returned a punt 31 yards to the Benton 25-yard line early in the first quarter and the Saints scored five plays later on a 1-yard plunge by fullback Erik Rodriguez.

The Bobcats tried to punt on their next possession, but the snap sailed over the punter's head and Beau Van Berkum recovered the mishap for Xavier at the Benton 3-yard line. Wilson scored on first down and it was 14-0 with 5:23 left in the first quarter.

Later in the first period, Wilson broke loose for a 56-yard punt return to the Bobcat 4-yard line and Bryce Schulte scored on the next play to make it 21-0 with 55 seconds left in the quarter.

And so it went.

Bryce Schulte tossed a 21-yard touchdown pass to Nolan Butkowski to make it 28-0, Wilson rambled 49 yards to make it 34-0 thanks to a terrific downfield block by Brett Burns, and Jack Lemke made it 41-0 when he stepped in front of a pass and raced 51 yards for a touchdown with 8:07 remaining in the third quarter.

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Lemke and the starters were happy to yield to the Scout Team players after that.

"They always give us a great look in practice, they're always working hard, working as hard as us, so they really deserve it," said Lemke. "They deserved to play as much as they did."

It was not a night for gaudy stats for the Saints, thanks to all the short scoring drives and Schulte's decision to clear the bench in the third quarter with the game well in hand.

Xavier collected only eight first downs and finished with just 241 yards of total offense, but it hardly mattered. Bryce Schulte completed only 4 of 7 passes for 73 yards, but Coach Schulte knew there was no reason to apologize to his son or to Wilson for not padding their stats.

"Quite frankly, we've had a lot of teams with good players like that over the years," he said. "We could have had guys over the years with an unbelievable amount of stats, but they give that up in exchange for letting everybody play on our team. That's a credit to our starters.

"Will Martin (all-state in 2006) could have rushed for 3,000 yards. And Reggie Schulte (all-state in 2012) could have thrown for 3,000 yards. And Corbin Woods (all-state in 2012) could have had receptions for 2,000 yards.

"Our buys bought into the company line of trying to help everybody get some playing time."

Wilson has rushed for 623 yards and scored nine touchdowns in three games for Xavier this year.

Quinn Schulte, who is a starting wide receiver and defensive back, took only three snaps at quarterback in the third quarter. Jack Scott ran the club after that and scored on a 10-yard run in the fourth quarter after Collin Yanga recovered a fumble at the Benton 3-yard line.

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The Bobcats (1-2, 0-1) committed five turnovers, with three fumbles and two interceptions. McClain Burger also recovered a fumble for the Saints.

Maurice Williams carried the ball 24 times for 111 yards for Benton Community.

Xavier (3-0, 1-0) hosts Charles City next Friday night.

XAVIER 47, BENTON COMMUNITY 14

Xavier □ □ □ Benton

First Downs	8	14
Rushing	28-168	44-163
Passing Yards	73	103
Passing	4-7-1	7-17-2
Punts/Avg	3-39.3	5-32.6
Penalties	2-10	4-25
Fumbles/Lost	0/0	3/3

Xavier □ □ **21** □ **7** □ **19** □ **0 - 47**

Benton □ □ **0** □ **0** □ **7** □ **7 - 14**

Scoring Plays

X - Erik Rodriguez 1 run (Shane Scott kick)

X - Maliki Wilson 3 run (S.Scott kick)

X - Bryce Schulte 4 run (S.Scott kick)

X - Nolan Butkowski 21 pass from B.Schulte (S.Scott kick)

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X - Wilson 49 run (kick failed)

X - Jack Lemke 51 interception return (Nicholas Koechner kick)

B - Maurice Williams 2 run (Vance Bartelt kick)

X - Jack Scott 10 run (kick failed)

B - Riley Pfiffner 5 run (Bartelt kick)

Individual Statistics

Rushing

Xavier: B.Schulte 6-61, Wilson 5-59, Rodriguez 5-16, Q.Schulte 1-15, J.Scott 2-12, Junge 3-6, Tobin 3-0, S.Scott 3-minus 1.

Benton: Williams 24-11, Wiebel 6-43, Pfiffner 6-18, Davis 3-8, Franzenburg 3-6, Thompson 1-minus 4, Team 1-minus 19.

Passing

Xavier: B.Schulte 4-7-1, 73 yards.

Benton: Wiebel 6-15-2, 69 yards; Pfiffner 1-2-0, 34 yards.

Receptions

Xavier: Butkowski 2-54, Q.Schulte 2-19.

Benton: Pfiffner 3-24, Marshall 2-48, Marcus 2-31.