

Marquette Explorers break through tough EA WR defense to win 31-8 on Saturday afternoon

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EAST ALTON/WOOD RIVER - After their original matchup was cancelled on Friday night due to the wet and muddy field conditions, the **Marquette Catholic High School Explorers** returned to **East Alton-Wood River High School's gridiron** on Saturday to finally have the chance to compete with the Oilers.

The teams traded the rainy mess that was Friday night with a sunny, warm mid-September Saturday day game that had both sides eager to get out on the field.

After four quarters of battle, the Explorers defeated the Oilers 31-8.

"We had two primary goals for today's game, which is something we have dealt with all year: play four quarters, be physical," **Marquette head coach Darrell Angleton** said after his team's victory. "I think we did that today. A couple of times, we had a mistake here or there, there were some penalties - a lot more than we usually see - from probably our best defensive lineman, but hey, that's all a part of the game."

"You can't win with four turnovers like that," **East Alton-Wood River coach Garry Herron** said. "Bottom line. It's not anything new. We've talked about that."



"We just have to play more intense," he said. "They were the more intense team, more aggressive team, and that showed."

D'Avion Peebles got the Marquette offense kicked off with an unusual but key play at around 7:37 left on the clock in the first, a punt return intended for running back TJ Lawson was fumbled and came into the hands of Peebles, who then ran it into the end zone. After a good free point kick by senior Liam Maher, the Explorers took the early lead against the Oilers at 7-0.

The momentum continued into the second with an early 38-yard touchdown run by **Treven Swingler**. The 6-foot sophomore navigated through the Oiler defense and dodged several tackles to land the TD. Maher's kick earned another free point and the Explorers continued to lead 14-0. **Quarterback Brady McAfee** passed the pigskin to Jayce Magg from the 30-yard line to land another touchdown. Yet again, Maher earned another free point from the kick to bring the score to 21-0. With a little over one minute left on the clock for the first half, Maher successfully brought kicked in a field goal to close the second quarter with a score of 24-0 for the Explorers.



The Oiler defense did a lot better job holding off Marquette's speed in the third, but could not get any magic happening on their own offense. Both teams were scoreless in this quarter.

The Explorers kicked off the final quarter of the game by scoring with a 35-yard touchdown by McAfee. With the extra point by Maher, MCHS continued to lead by 31-0.

Determined not to give up, the Oilers made their push down the field to get their team on the scoreboard. Sophomore Dominic Scroggins was able to score on a safety to put three points up for the Oilers. With just one minute left on the clock for the game, quarterback Justin Englar successfully passed the ball to wide receiver Zach Wells who made it in to the end zone. After the Oilers missed their 2-point attempt, the score was brought to 31-8 before the final buzzer.

"I was happy for our defense," Herron said. "Our defense is ten-times better this year than it was last year. We were catching a lot of people - this year, we're going to get them. That's the philosophy of the 3-5 defense and we're trying to get the kids to buy into that and so far, I'm happy with them."

After Saturday's win, the Explorers stand at 2-0 in the Prairie State Conference while the Oilers are split at 1-1. In total games played, both teams are 2-2. Next week, Marquette will host Pawnee at Public School Stadium while Metro-East Lutheran High School will travel to EAWR.