

MELHS shows no quit in 40-8 loss to Dupo

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE – Metro East Lutheran’s football team fell 40-8 to Dupo on Friday night at MELHS, but the Knights’ head football coach Micah Pomerence said the game “felt much closer than that.”

“It’s just the kind of thing where you’re disappointed in four turnovers, and we gave the three on-side kicks – they onsided ever time, but got two onside kicks to start the game,” the coach said. “We made some silly mistakes and just didn’t execute at the right times.”

Two of the Knights’ seniors, Zach Bozarth and Damonte Bean, led the way for Metro-East. Defensively, Bean had 17 tackles, and offensively, both had big runs that helped the Knights.

“I think Bean had like 17 tackles,” the coach said. “Bean also had a touchdown and two-point conversion. Bozarth showed his quickness and stuff. We just got tired. We got tired up front, we couldn’t block. It takes 11. Granted, those guys played their butts off; our whole team played their butts off. But it’s a team game, and there’s a lot of areas we need to improve on. Just more repetition.”

The first game jitters were also there for the Knights, as their original season opener against Chicago Noble/Hansberry was cancelled after a shooting incident near the game’s venue.

“This is our first game,” Pomerence said. “Some of the first game jitters that you have, we’re having in week two. And they had week one, and we didn’t have the benefit of playing that.”

The Tigers did start off the game by recovering an onside kick, but were stopped by the Knights’ defense. In their second possession, the Tigers took the lead after setting up shop on the Metro-East 25. Devin Similey scored the first of his five touchdowns on the night, going in from the one with 6:58 left in the first quarter to give Dupo a 6-0 lead, but a two-point convert attempt missed. On the Tigers’ next possession, they drove 75 yards in 12 plays, climaxing with a 35-yard touchdown pass from C.J. Robinson to Similey, but another two-point play failed making it 12-0 for Dupo.

In the second quarter, Similey made a diving catch of a Tyler Kyle pass in the end zone to make the score 18-0, but on the next possession, the Knights drove 69 yards in only three plays for their only score of the night. Bozarth made a good run for 20 yards to start things off, and one play later, quarterback Zach Keplar completed to Bean, who broke two tackles and was off to the races for a 45-yard touchdown. Bean then added on the two-point convert 6:29 from halftime to make it 18-8.

The Tigers got that touchdown right back, going 53 yards in six plays, the touchdown coming on a two-yard pass from Kyle to Similey that extended Dupo’s lead to 24-8. After an interception by Camden Biggs, the Tigers took only one play to get the touchdown. After a bad snap from center, Robinson scrambled and found a wide open Nik Houston, who took the pass and went 54 yards for the touchdown. Similey added on the two-point convert to make the halftime score 32-8 for Dupo.

The only score of the second half occurred on the opening possession, as the Tigers took two plays to go 39 yards. Similey took an inside handoff around left end and ran 27 yards for the touchdown, then added on another two-pointer to make it 40-8.

The Knights had many good opportunities to score, especially in the final quarter on a drive that took nearly four minutes off the clock as both Keplar and Bean made some good runs. But Dupo recovered a fumble to end the drive, and Metro-East could get no closer as the game ended in the 40-8 final.



[Dan Brannan also contributed to this story.](#)