

CM Gets Big Efforts On Offense, Blanks Marquette Catholic 22-0 In Rainy Season Opener

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August 31 2019 6:36 AM





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ALTON – Civic Memorial’s first possession of their 2019 football season opener definitely set the tone for the game on a rainy Friday night.

It was a 12 play, 65 yard march that took 4:34 to complete, and that, along with four Marquette Catholic turnovers, helped propel the Eagles to a 22-0 week one win over the Explorers at Public School Stadium.

The kickoff, originally set for 7 p.m., was delayed approximately 45 minutes because of a steady, somewhat heavy rain that went through the St. Louis area late Friday afternoon, causing the postponement of many of the area’s opening games, suspending other games, and in some instances, cutting them short.

“Well, it was a tough night,” said CM head coach Mike Parmentier, “because we obviously didn’t get started on time, and started about 7:45, eight o’clock, and the rain, and the mud, and everything. I thought our kids came out, and I thought we really set the tone, both offensively and defensively, we got a couple of touchdowns, and the defense played real well, and special teams played real well. So, jumping out early on them, I think, helped us, and helped our confidence.”

The opening drive set the tone, with quarterback Noah Turbyfil, running backs Kuron Parchman and Nick “Suge” Walker doing much of the work as the Eagles took a lead they never would relinquish.

“That was huge,” Parmentier said. “When you can your opening drive, then shut them down, and then come back and put some points on the board, and then, it was so muddy out here, the conditions, we didn’t really want to kick, as we had trouble in the pregame, so we went out for two, and made two out of three. So, great job for the offense. We’ve got a lot of young offensive linemen, I thought, really stepped up, and then our backfield, Suge, Noah Turby, and Logan (Turbyfil), and Kuron, those guys did a great job, with the offensive line just moving the ball and running.”

Parchment did indeed have a great game for CM, making some key runs in the drives, along with Turbyfil in the passing game, with everything clicking on all cylinders for the Eagles.

“Yeah, and the conditions were really bad,” Parmentier said. “I don’t think it quit raining for, maybe, five minutes. It was just a continuous downpour. So we’re just happy to get this game in today, and there’s a lot of teams, I know of, got cancelled tonight. So, we were fortunate to get this thing in, and Marquette made a great decision with playing this game tonight, so kudos to those guys. Like I said, it’s just nice to, obviously, win game one, and they’re a really good team, they’re really well-coached, and they’re going to be right in the middle of it at the end of the year.”

The muddy conditions did play a big factor in the game, especially as the field became more greasy, wet and slippery as the game went on.

“I think the conditions had a little bit to do with it,” said Explorer coach Darrell Angleton, “but you know, I take my hats off to my opponent, I think he came in with a game plan, and said ‘hey, if it’s going to rain like that, I’m going to try to run it between the tackles, and see if I can execute that way’, and throw a little bit to keep me honest, and he did it. And he really executed. And that’s a big deal. We’ve got to stop that; it wasn’t until after the first quarter that we decided we can stop that run. So, again, you’ve gotta give CM a lot of credit by executing, where we didn’t. Four turnovers is tough. Just because you have a first-year quarterback (Jake Hewitt), you know, he’s really looked good in practice. If we’re going to be a spread team, we’ve got to connect with those short passes, that were open all night. It wasn’t that we had open receivers. We had a couple of drops, we had a couple of bad passes, and a couple of bad read decisions. So, you kind of pay the price on that.”

The Explorers had a lot of offensive line problems, many which caused sophomore running back sensation Cliff Chandler not a lot of space to create some of the big runs

he became known for in his breakout freshman season last year, especially at the start of the game.

“We had an ineligible guard because of something that happened last year,” Angleton said. “And so, he’ll be back next week, and so, we had a first-year offensive guard. I think that was some, but there were some times where the offensive line didn’t play downhill in the mud. And you can’t let that, especially with Cliff. Cliff’s a dynamic kid; you saw him in the fourth quarter. He had some inside runs that were nice, and give him a little bit to work with. So, I think that’s important. But I felt like the defense was giving us the flats, they were giving us the short pass game. So hey, a five-yard pass is as good as a five-yard run. And we’ve got to be able to take advantage of that, and we absolutely did not.”

A bright spot for the Explorers was senior running back and linebacker Zach Smith, who played well on both sides of the ball.

“Zach’s a heck of an athlete,” Angleton said. “He shows it week in and week out. He’s got good hands, he runs hard. But really, my receiver corps, for the most part, they’re a talented bunch of guys. And we want to make it where you’re going to have to spread out, because we’ll get that five-yard short pass game. And we didn’t do it tonight. I don’t know what the pass stats were, but I’m sure they were bad, along with the three interceptions. A couple of those were really tough reads. That fumble, though, that Jake had, I feel bad for him, because it was wet, he had the ball up, and the guy hit him with the helmet. It was a good tackle. I will say that CM up the middle, their linebackers are both back, they’re both veterans, and they tackle well, the middle linebacker.”

The Explorers did get an initial first down on its first play from scrimmage of the year, but quickly punted the ball to the Eagles, who went on their drive that set everything up for the evening. Parchment and Walker took turns carrying the ball for good gains, while a key play in the drive was a 14-yard pass play from Turbyfil to his brother Logan. Walker capped the drive by turning the left corner nine yards for the Eagles’ first touchdown of the season, with a two-point pass to Parchment in the end zone being good with CM going ahead 8-0 with 5:25 left in the opening quarter.

On Marquette’s next possession, a couple of penalties slowed things down considerably, and on a punt near their own end zone, a fumbled snap led to the ball being soccered off the ground and going out of bounds at the Explorer 36. CM took advantage of the short field to take five plays to go down the field, with Parchment going around the left side for 20 yards, and ending with Noah Turbyfil going up the middle for a nine-yard touchdown run, then completing a two-point pass in the end zone to give the Eagles a 16-0 lead with 2:18 left in the period.

The defenses then took over, as both sides were able to stop the opposing offenses for the rest of the half. CM recovered a Hewitt fumble in the second period as the Eagles took their 16-0 lead into the changing rooms at halftime.

CM had first possession of the second half, and immediately took 6:05 off the clock to drive 60 yards in 11 plays, with well-executed, straight ahead running by both Parchment and Walker, with Turbyfil going on a small run to shake things up. In the end, it was Walker, who had a nice run of 12 yards to set up a one-yard run with 5:08 left in the third quarter and CM off and running at 22-0

Angleton was very impressed with Parchment's and Walker's running abilities.

"They were definitely solid," Angleton said. "Especially when you get a bigger guy that got outside, but a part of it was my outside linebackers; you just can't get hooked into it. Again, it was they were faster, for certain. It's one place, again, that if I'm in the other coach's shoes, if it's a slow track, I'm going to take advantage of it, because that negates some of my speed. We had some of our faster guys slip around some."

Defense ruled the remainder of the game, with the Eagles getting their three interceptions on nice plays to stop Marquette, while the Explorers coming up with some good plays to help keep the score as it was. Marquette did have a very drive on their final possession, with Hewitt mixing his plays well, and Chandler being able to break free. The drive stalled, however, when the Explorers were stopped on downs, turning the ball over to the Eagles, who ran out the clock to preserve their 22-0 win.

The now 1-0 Eagles are on the road again, playing up against a very good East Alton-Wood River team, and Parmentier knows that his team will need to be ready against the Oilers and their wing-T offense.

"They're going to be really good," Parmentier said. "They've got a lot of guys back, the coaching staff does a real good job, they've got hard-nosed kids, they run the wing-T really well, so it'll be a little bit different for us, obviously. Marquette spread it out, and ran a lot of shotgun, so when you think that it's a different concept of football, so they're going to play-action and run the ball hard on us. So we've got to be ready to go, and it's just a whole different game plan for us. So, we've got to be ready to go. Just real happy with the start. Like I said, you just never know what you've got in week one. That's my biggest fear, hoping you cover everything. And do, I thought our kids did a pretty good job tonight, and we can get better. And hopefully, we can continue to improve and stay healthy; we stayed healthy tonight, too, which is a big plus."

The 0-1 Explorers go on the road to play a good Breese Mater Dei Catholic side that's emerged in recent years. And Angleton also knows what lies ahead for his team, and what they can do with Prairie State Conference games down the road.

"Mater Dei's tough," Angleton said. "The big thing for us is we've gotta win the conference games. It's a six-team conference, you win five conference games, you go to the playoffs. And that's what our focus has to be. We're going to go out there, play good ball, don't make mistakes, and stay healthy."

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