

# **Napovanice Runs For 189 Yards And A Touchdown, Braundmeier Throws For Two Others, As Mater Dei Defeats Marquette**

by Chris Rhodes, Reporter  
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ALTON - Breese Mater Dei Catholic running back Jayce Napovanice ran for 189 yards and a touchdown, while quarterback Reed Braundmeier was five-for-15 passing for 130

yards and two touchdowns as the Knights defeated Marquette Catholic 49-6 in the season opener for both teams Saturday afternoon at Public School Stadium.

Things started off well for the Explorers, but were eventually worn down by the Knights. Marquette also had numerous turnovers that Mater Dei took advantage of.

"It started off as a good game," said Explorer head coach Leon McElrath III. "We turned the ball over too many times, and you'll never win turning the ball over that many times. And my kids seemed a lot more fatigued than our opponent."

Marquette did hang tough and did some good things, but couldn't take advantage of their chances.

"We really had some opportunities," McElrath said, "we just didn't execute on the opportunities we had."

Napovianc ran well on the day, and McElrath was very impressed with his efforts.

"He's a very, very good runner," McElrath said, "he has speed and he has good vision."

In the first quarter, Braundmeier scored on a 32-yard run, while Napovanice scored on a one-yard run to give the Knights a 14-0 lead. Jake Hewitt scored from six yards out late in the second quarter to cut the lead to 14-6, but Braundmeier connected on a 24-yard pass to Carson Loepker to make the score 21-6 for Mater Dei at halftime.

In the second half, Nolan Foppe scored on a 12-yard run, Mitchell Haake took a pass from Braundmeier 72 yards for another score, Braundmeier scored his second touchdown of the day from two yards out, and Loepker caught his second touchdown pass of the afternoon, a 52-yard strike from Bryce Reverman to make the final score of 49-6.

Despite the loss, McElrath was very pleased to be on the sidelines in his head coaching debut for the Explorers, and was also very happy for the fans who attended the game.

"It was really fun and exciting to be on the sidelines, and head coaching a game," McElrath said, "and the fan support that showed up for the game was tremendous. It's great to be back on the field."

The Explorers are 0-1 to start the season, and hosts Salem next Friday in a 7 p.m. kickoff.