

Round Two Preview – Shells Host Aerial Threat St. Joseph Ogden In Second Round

by Bradley Piros, Reporter November 2 2023 2:50 PM



ROXANA – After a dominant 50-22 win over No. 14-seeded Paris (5-5), the Roxana Shells (10-0) earned their second straight trip to the second round of the IHSA Class 3A football playoffs.

Last year, a No. 9-seeded Roxana team lost to No. 1 seed Fairbury Prairie Central 41-20 in the second round. That was after the Shells beat Hillsboro on the road in round one by a score of 13-7.

This year, Roxana, with a more favorable No. 3 seed, will be taking on No. 6-seeded St. Joseph Ogden (8-2), a school located 15 minutes East of Champaign.

St. Joes beat Carlinville (6-4) by a score of 38-15 in the first round and have now won four straight.

The Spartans' last loss was on Sept. 29 to Bloomington Central Catholic (10-0), a No. 3-seeded team in IHSA Class 2A. It was a 35-21 defeat.

Roxana's round two opponents are much more of a throwing team. Look out for senior quarterback #9 Logan Smith in this game. With a 76 percent completion rate and 24 touchdowns, he'll be a force to be reckoned with. He's pretty comfortable running the ball as well with 557 yards gained for another 19 touchdowns.

When the ball's on the ground, senior running back #10 Justice Wertz is more than proficient with 599 yards and five TDs.

In the air, Smith has plenty of options, his favorite being junior receiver #25 Coy Taylor. He's racked up 1,137 yards receiving with nine scores. He also has junior #22 Tanner Siems and sophomore #5 Tim Blackburn-Kelley as viable options. The two of them have combined for another 1,200 yards receiving and 15 TDs.

Last game for the Shells, the three-man rushing machine of Andruw Ellis, Evan Wells, and Terrel Graves went back at it. Wells was the best on the day with 195 yards and three touchdowns.

But, given the chance, Roxana quarterback Chris Walleck mixed things up a little bit in round one. He threw two touchdown passes.

After a 24-yard reception to Ellis and another 50-yard dime to senior Aiden Briggs, Walleck now has 11 passing TDs to his name this season.

In this week's Max Preps rankings, Roxana remains at No. 2 in Class 3A while the Spartans are at No. 7.

The game between the Shells and Spartans will be <u>live-streamed</u> on Riverbender.com.

The game starts at 3 p.m. on Saturday from Charles Raich Field in Roxana.