

MELHS-Madison play first game in Madison in 23 years against Bunker Hill

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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MADISON – The game reports will simply say what the final score was.

But for the **Metro East Lutheran-Madison football team**, Saturday's Prairie State Conference opener against **Bunker Hill** was so much more than a football game.



For the players who attend Madison High School, it was the chance to perform before their fellow classmates and the residents of Madison.

For the city of Madison and Madison High School, it was the first football game played there since the end of the 1992 season, when the Trojan football program was disbanded.

Madison joined with MEL to form a football co-op starting this season, and Saturday morning's game was the first played at Sam Dymas Field since then. And the Knights were ready to go, staying close before the Minutemen pulled away with a pair of touchdowns to come away with a 20-0 win.

The on-field result wasn't what the MEL and Madison fans were hoping for, but the fact a high school football game was being played in Madison for the first time in nearly a quarter-century made it a memorable day.

“There are a lot of people to thank,” said MEL-Madison coach Matt Tschudy. “There are a number of sponsors from both schools who worked to bring this together, people who marked the field, got the field ready and what not. The administration from Madison, Jaime Cotto (MHS's athletic director) and Rob Miller (MHS's principal) have been very supportive of what we're doing here.

“The players from both schools have really gotten along well and made this work. I've coached in a couple of significant games, this one and (MEL's) first night game, and while they're special moments, it's about the players. This was a very special moment for Madison today.”

As for the game itself, the Knights had several chances to get on the board following an initial 10-yard touchdown run by Bunker Hill's Larry Sievers with 4:57 left in the opening term, but penalties or turnovers would set the Knights back.

“This was eerily like our first game with them (a 28-0 Minutemen win in Week 1),” Tschudy said. “It was like 6-0 into the fourth quarter before it got away from us. We looked at some of the stats at halftime, and their rushing yardage was lower and ours was higher. We definitely saw some improvement there.”



It stayed that way until early in the final term, when Christian Summers went in from four yards out to extend the lead to 12-0 after a missed two-point convert; the Minutemen sealed the game with 6:24 left when Summers bounced into the end zone from six yards out, with Sievers adding a two-point convert for the final margin.

Bunker Hill had 297 yards of total offense on the day (218 yards of it on the ground), with MEL-Madison gaining 82 yards of offense. Maulik Allen led the Knights with 66 yards rushing.

The Knights, now 0-3 overall and 0-1 in the PSC, travel to South Fork for a 7 p.m. Friday clash.



