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Mt. Bethel eases past another Florida opponent

By Jack Martin MDJ Sports Correspondent
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MARIETTA — Mt. Bethel Christian continued its string of Florida opponents, beating Eagle's View Academy 17-6 on Friday at Arrow Field.

The Eagles (6-1), who spoiled the Warriors' 370-mile road trip from Jacksonville, Florida, previously beat the IMG Academy State team from Bradenton and earned a forfeit victory against Palm Beach Christian of West Palm Beach.

The forfeit left Mt. Bethel with a three-week gap in varsity games since its Sept. 12 loss at Greenville.

The Hidden Cause of Bad Breath?

Both teams leaned on the run game early Friday, but penalties, miscues and turnovers kept the game stagnant until late in the first half.

With under 5 minutes remaining in the half, Mt. Bethel mounted a nine-play drive, which resulted in a field goal with 56 seconds left.

In the midst of a defensive battle, Eagles coach Micah Hughes said the message to his players at halftime was clear.



“I want to see somebody step up and make plays,” he said. “Stop waiting for somebody to make a play. You be the one to make a play. That resonated coming out of halftime because we had multiple guys who made some big plays after that half.”

Mt. Bethel got the message, recording two interceptions in the second half to push its takeaway total to four on the day.

Juniors Asher Adams and Ethan Pederson both recorded interceptions, which set the Eagles up with great field position. They capitalized on both picks as quarterback Ronin Thompson punched in two rushing touchdowns off the turnovers.

Hughes said the turnovers were a huge factor in the win.

“Obviously, Ronin had a couple (turnovers), Pederson had a big interception and then Asher had that huge interception that brought the ball into the red zone,” Hughes said. “That was huge for us. That is something we hang our hats on in practice, and we plan for these things. It showed tonight, and we’re really excited about that.”

Mt. Bethel held Eagle’s View (4-3) without a red-zone visit, with the Warriors’ only score coming on a 21-yard pass. They did not have a gain of more than 15 yards until the final 8 minutes of the game.

Hughes said the identity of this team lies within the defense.



“I’m a defensive guy,” he said. “That’s something we put a lot of effort into, and we have some really explosive athletes on that side of the ball. Across the board, we have a ton of guys who have done a lot for us defensively to help us get some of these big defensive plays.”

Hughes spoke about the impact of Adams and Thompson, saying their presence is felt throughout the team.

“Asher Adams is our guy,” Hughes said. “He’s sure-handed at the receiver spot. You can count on him in every aspect of the game, whether it’s offense, defense or special teams. Same thing with Ronin. All the stuff he does defensively, we wouldn’t be able to do it without him.”

The Eagles’ offense snaps at quarterback were split between the rush-first Thompson and the pass-first Gino Luckie.

Hughes said he enjoys the offensive blend of Luckie and Thompson.

“Ronin is a football player. That’s what I call him,” Hughes said. “He is an all-purpose athlete and is probably our best football player. Gino is a true pocket passer. As far as throwing the ball and distributing it, he’s done a phenomenal job for us. Having that to balance what we do and keeping the defense off-balance has been huge for us this season.”





PHOTOS: Eagle's View-Mt. Bethel Christian football

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