

Margaretta back in SBC title chase

Bears stymie Oak Harbor

By ED FOX
Staff Writer

OAK HARBOR — Margaretta found weapons on both sides of the ball en route to a 26-6 win over Oak Harbor Friday night. Meanwhile, the Rockets fizzled as much of their artillery was sidelined.

Senior all-purpose threat Calvin Metcalf was unable to see action after spending time in the hospital earlier in the week with a boil on his right knee.

The Polar Bears thrust themselves back into the Sandusky Bay Conference title chase with a 2-1 record and improved to 5-1 overall while Oak Harbor fell back to 2-1 in the conference and 4-2 overall.

Both teams are just one back of frontrunner Huron, now 3-0. "We really came together as a football team tonight. We had some breaks go our way and this gives us some light," said Margaretta head coach John Zang.

The Polar Bears jumped on top early with a pair of scores in the first seven minutes of the game.

With 6:42 to go in the opening quarter, senior Bill Yeager scooted around right end on a 12-yard touchdown run. Although the PAT failed, the Polar Bears had a 6-0 lead.

It was a nine-play, 58-yard scoring drive and Margaretta stayed on the ground except for one pass, a 14-yard completion from Charlie Weyer to Matt Brunner when the Bears were faced with a first-and-10 situation at the Oak Harbor 29-yard line.

Just one play earlier, they had converted on a fourth-and-one situation with Brunner, who gained 58 yards on 12 carries, picking up the first down with a two-yard run.

The Polar Bears quickly doubled their total with the defense getting in the act.

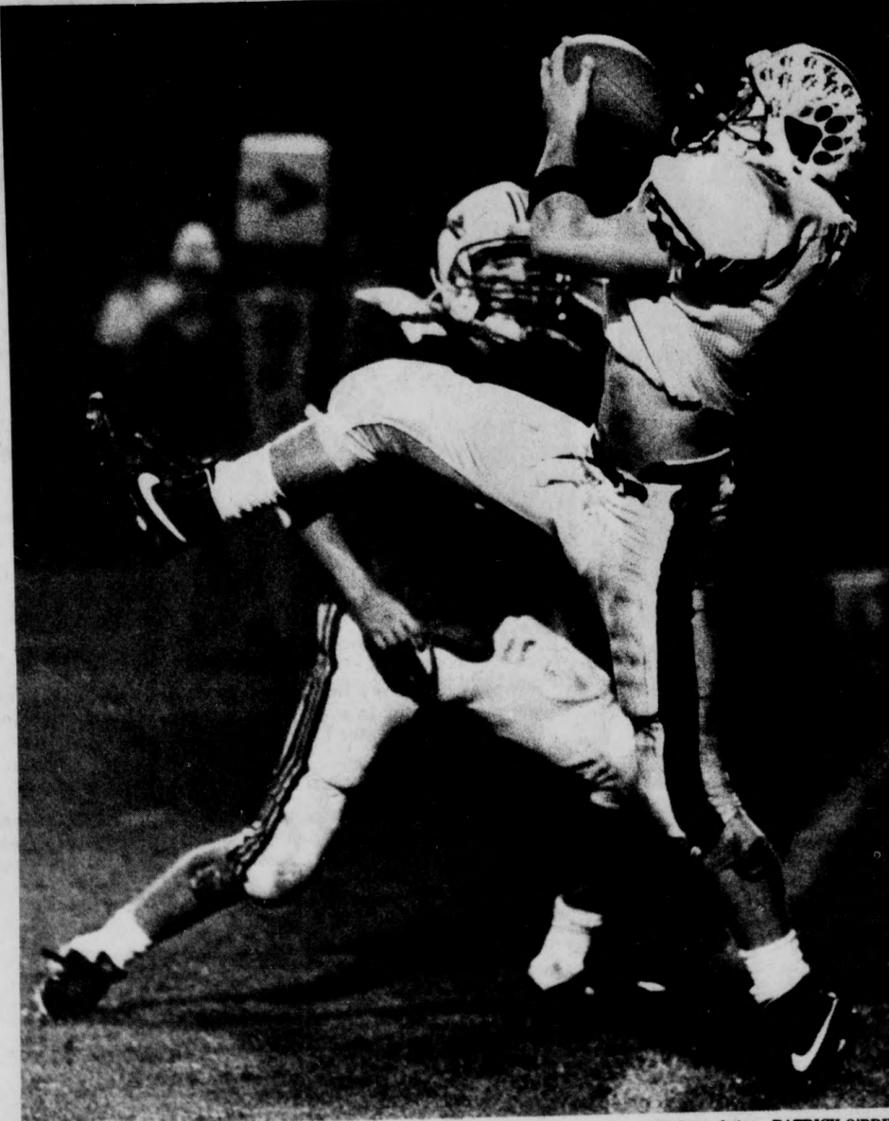
Senior defensive lineman Troy Kajfasz picked off a pass by Oak Harbor quarterback Nathan Whitman after it was tipped in the air by Steve Jarrett of the Bears. Kajfasz had no defenders in front of him and raced 35 yards to paydirt with the theft. Again, the Bears missed on the PAT attempt but had a 12-0 lead with five minutes left in the quarter.

"That was just a tremendous defensive play. It's something you don't expect to happen. Jarrett leaped in the air and tipped the ball in the air and Kajfasz grabbed it when it came down and realized a lineman's dream," said Zang.

The Polar Bears added to their lead in the second period, putting together another sustained drive.

Following an Oak Harbor punt, the Bears drove 63 yards in 10 plays with Weyer finding Yeager in the left flat for the final 12 yards. Henry Suarez booted the conversion and the Bears had a 19-0 lead with 6:52 left in the half.

Brunner carried six times on the drive for 37 yards. On the



Margaretta senior Matt Verhoff (right) comes up with an interception to thwart an Oak Harbor scoring drive right before halftime of Friday's SBC clash. The Polar Bears prevailed by a 26-6 score to hand Oak Harbor its first conference loss.

touchdown pass, Yeager tipped the ball in the air and brought it down while on the run.

As the half was winding down, Oak Harbor was threatening to put points on the board. However, they were slowed by a penalty for ineligible receiver and Margaretta's Matt Verhoff came up with an interception at the Bears' one-yard line in the closing seconds.

Margaretta pushed the lead to 26-0 at the 4:14 mark of the third quarter when Verhoff hauled in a 30-yard scoring toss from Weyer. It was a two-play drive of 31 yards following an Oak Harbor punt. Suarez booted the conversion for the Bears.

Another ineligible receiver call kept the Rockets off the board after an apparent touchdown with 6:01 left in the game. Whitman had tossed a nine-yard touchdown pass to Sam Ulery but it was called off and the Rockets failed to reach paydirt after two incomplete passes and a three-yard gain by Dane Epling.

On the final possession of the game, the Rockets started from their own 43 and made their way to the end zone with Ulery

hauling in a six-yard scoring toss with just four seconds left to play. Whitman completed five of seven passes during the 10-play drive.

"Our kids came back from last week's adversity. We knew it would be a battle at the line of scrimmage and our kids really played well up front. Offensively, we were able to do some things which we hadn't been able to do recently," added Zang.

The Polar Bears, who visit Clyde next Friday, gained 166 yards with Yeager leading the way with 82 yards on 13 carries. Weyer completed three of five passes for 56 yards.

"They controlled the line of scrimmage. Their defensive line whipped our offensive line and their offensive line whipped our defensive line and that was the difference," said Oak Harbor mentor Gary Quisno.

"Certainly, we missed having Metcalf out there but we're not using it as an excuse. We had to mix it up offensively because they have a big line and we planned to throw the ball more than we had in earlier games," added Quisno. The Rockets, who visit Port

Clinton next Friday, had 149 yards rushing with Ulery picking up 74 yards on 18 carries while Epling had 61 yards on 13 attempts.

Whitman completed 16 of 29 passes for 106 yards and was intercepted twice. Rob Monak caught four passes for 30 yards and Ulery grabbed three for 22 and Epling caught three for 28.

STATISTICS		M	OH
First Downs (total)	.....	15	17
by rushing	.....	10	11
by passing	.....	3	6
by penalty	.....	2	0
Rushes (total)	.....	44	35
net yards rushing	.....	166	149
passes attempted	.....	5	29
passes completed	.....	3	16
passes intercepted	.....	1	2
net yards passing	.....	56	106
Total plays	.....	49	64
Total Net Yards Gained	.....	222	255
Fumbles (number)	.....	3	1
ball lost	.....	1	0
Penalties (number)	.....	4	4
yards penalized	.....	41	36

SCORE BY QUARTERS		M	OH
Margaretta	.....	12	7
Oak Harbor	.....	0	0
Margaretta — Bill Yeager, 12 run. (kick failed).	.....	
Margaretta — Troy Kajfasz, 35 interception return. (run failed).	.....	
Margaretta — Yeager, 12 pass from Charlie Weyer. (Henry Suarez, kick).	.....	
Margaretta — Matt Verhoff, 30 pass from Weyer. (Suarez, kick).	.....	
Oak Harbor — Sam Ulery, 6 pass from Nathan Whitman. (pass failed).	.....	

Willard, Bellevue primed for NOL showdown battle

Friday's Northern Ohio League showdown battle between Bucyrus and Willard shaped up as a defensive struggle.

And, it lived up to that billing with the Crimson Flashes prevailing by a 7-6 score.

Last year, Willard won, 12-7, and went on to record a perfect 10-0 regular season and earn a playoff berth. The loss was the only setback for Bucyrus, which finished 9-1 and stayed at home during the playoffs.

Likewise, Friday's win by Willard kept the Flashes on top in the NOL at 3-0 along with Bellevue, a 27-13 winner over Shelby. And, it was the first loss in six outings for Bucyrus, which is now tied for third in the league with Tiffin Columbian.

Now, Willard will take a 5-1 overall slate into Bellevue next Friday night in the second of three crucial weeks for the top three teams in the league.

Bellevue is also 5-1 after its win over Shelby.

In other action, Tiffin Columbian downed Norwalk, 33-16, while Galion blanked Upper Sandusky, 7-0.

"As we looked at the game, there were two great defensive teams on the field. But, I don't think Bucyrus had any respect for our defense and we wanted to show them we could play defense, too," said Willard head coach Terry King.

The Flashes certainly slowed Bucyrus senior running back Cliff Foght. Entering Friday's game, he had accumulated 832 yards and was held in check with just 59 yards against Willard.

"We wanted to stop him (Foght) and it's a credit to the middle of our defense including (Todd) Corbin, (Jeremy) Slone, (Jeremy) Sowers and (Dan) Kousma. They really did the job," added King.

After a scoreless first half, Willard got on the board as Corbin, a junior, ripped through the Bucyrus defense on a 47-yard touchdown scamper. Chris Long added the conversion which proved to be the deciding point with 9:10 left in the third quarter.

Bucyrus came right back with John Burge scoring on a six-yard run with 2:20 left in the third period but the conversion attempt was wide to the right, leaving Willard with a 7-6 lead.

The Redmen threatened on other occasions. They reached the Willard 25 and 16-lines on two possessions but couldn't score.

With time running out, they threatened again but John Vogel came up with an interception in the end zone to turn away the Redmen with just nine seconds to go.

Bellevue 27 Shelby 13

SHELBY — Bellevue got a pair of touchdowns from senior Brad Weider to set the stage for next week's showdown bat-

NOL

STATISTICS		B	W
First Downs (total)	.....	11	11
by rushing	.....	9	8
by passing	.....	1	3
by penalty	.....	1	0
net yards rushing	.....	154	142
passes attempted	.....	6	7
passes completed	.....	2	5
passes intercepted	.....	1	0
net yards passing	.....	35	33
Total Net Yards Gained	.....	189	175
Fumbles (number)	.....	2	2
ball lost	.....	2	1
Penalties (number)	.....	4	3
yards penalized	.....	30	35

SCORE BY QUARTERS		B	W
Bucyrus	.....	0	0
Willard	.....	0	0
Willard — Todd Corbin, 47 run. (Chris Long, kick).	.....	
Bucyrus — John Burge, 6 run. (kick failed).	.....	

The Redmen wasted little time getting on the board as junior Kelly McClain rambled 93 yards with the opening kickoff return and Matt Hoerig added the conversion for a 7-0 lead with just 15 seconds gone in the game.

Just before halftime, Bellevue hiked its lead to 14-0. Sophomore quarterback John Bollinger hooked up with Chad Crosby for an eight-yard scoring play and Hoerig again converted with just 18 seconds showing on the clock.

Shelby, winless at 0-6 and 0-3, cut the Bellevue lead in half as Tony Seibert plunged to paydirt from one yard out and Jerome Kurtz added the PAT with 5:24 left in the third period.

But, Weider came back with a 19-yard run to the end zone with 13 seconds left in the period as Bellevue moved to a 20-7 lead.

With 6:17 to go, Weider scored on a 16-yard run and Hoerig again converted to give Bellevue a 27-7 lead and the Whippets scored in the final minute.

Tiffin 33 Norwalk 16

NORWALK — At halftime, it looked like Norwalk was going to win for the second straight week after snapping a 15-game losing streak with a 20-14 win over Upper Sandusky last week.

But, Tiffin rallied from a 16-13 halftime deficit, taking the lead for good with three minutes left in the third quarter on a four-yard run by Gene Duffey, the second of three touchdowns for him in the contest.

After Tiffin jumped out to a 7-0 lead, the Truckers (1-5, 1-2) went ahead on a 25-yard scoring run by Londunn Luna and a two-point conversion pass from Reid Shoop to Brian Hovatter with time running out in the first period.

Then, Norwalk upped its lead to 16-7 as Mark Meyer scored on a nine-yard run and Shoop hit Hovatter with the conversion at the 1:39 mark of the second period.

But, Duffey got the Tornadoes closer with a touchdown in the waning seconds of the half and he added a third touchdown early in the fourth period.

Mapleton, New London 1-2 in Firelands

FIRELANDS CONFERENCE

New London 44 Monroeville 22

NEW LONDON — With a 5-1 record, New London is off to its best start since 1973 when the Wildcats opened the season six successive victories.

And, the Wildcats jumped out to a 16-0 halftime lead Friday night.

Quarterback Rob Lavengood scored on a one-yard run in the first period and Derek Davidson scored on a two-yard run late in the second quarter. Sandwiched between was a 28-yard field goal by Jay Raphael at the outset of the second period.

Monroeville, falling to 3-3 overall and 2-2 in the conference, got as close as 17-8 following Andy Homan's 10-yard run to the end zone and a two-point conversion pass from Jason Poths to Rick Lodwick at the 5:57 mark of the third period.

But, the Wildcats answered with four touchdowns within a 6½ minute span to break the game open. When the dust had cleared, New London had a 44-8 lead.

Monroeville came back with two late scores but the outcome was well decided by that point.

Black River 20 W. Reserve 14

SULLIVAN — Black River battled back from a 14-6 deficit, scoring twice in the final 14 minutes of the game for a 20-14 win.

The Pirates, 3-3 overall and 2-2 in the conference, got the equalizer when Ron Hamilton plunged over from one yard out. Then, Steve Dreher hauled in a two-point conversion pass from Jeff Nixon to tie the score at 14-14 with 1:54 left in the third period.

Then, Black River put the game-winner on the board when Jason Bidinger scored on a three-yard run with 8:49 remaining in the contest.

St. Paul 28 Crestview 7

ASHLAND — Crestview, winless at 0-6 overall and 0-4 in the conference, scored in the first period and held a 7-0 lead

throughout the first half.

St. Paul, improving to 2-4 overall and 2-3 in the FC, got on the board with 4:23 left in the third period on a 28-yard scoring run by Alex Schaffer but the conversion try failed as Crestview held a 7-6 lead.

With just 36 seconds left in the third period, Schaffer scored again on an eight-yard run and the two-point conversion try was also good as the Flyers took a 14-7 lead.

And, coach John Livengood's squad added a pair of touchdowns in the final quarter. Randy Myers scored on a 17-yard fumble return with 5:48 left to play and Schaffer capped off the scoring with a 35-yard touchdown grab from John Rossman.

Plymouth 25 Danbury 7

PLYMOUTH — Curt Handshoe scored a pair of touchdowns to spark Plymouth to its fourth win in six outings.

Dennis Cunningham, with 97 yards on 17 carries, and Handshoe, with 65 yards on 16 attempts, powered the Plymouth running game while Reeder completed 10 of 19 passes for 131 yards.



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