



**Chiefs' shutout Breaux Bridge 41-0 in season-opener**

**NATCHITOCHES, La.** – The Natchitoches Central Chiefs' football team opened the season in style with a 41-0 win over the Breaux Bridge Tigers Friday night at Turpin Stadium on the campus of Northwestern State University.

The Chiefs (1-0) came storming out of the gate. NCHS senior quarterback Owen Smith connected for a 64-yard touchdown pass to Kelton Howard for the opening score making it 7-0 less than a minute into the game (Amsden Pasche kicked the point after attempt).

Later in the quarter, Smith found KJ Newton in the middle of the field for a 74-yard touchdown reception followed by a Pasche PAT.

NCHS added to their lead midway through the second quarter. Howard scored again on a five-yard touchdown run pushing the lead to 21-0 Chiefs with 7:03 to go until halftime.

The Chiefs maintained a 21-0 halftime lead through the third quarter as the defense continued to dominate. NCHS held Breaux Bridge scoreless for their first shutout since Sept. 23, 2022 when they beat Southwood 27-0.

NCHS would put the game away in the fourth quarter on a six-year TD pass from Smith to Newton making it 28-0. Then, NCHS senior Jeremy Lowe intercepted a pass for a 37-yard touchdown as the Chiefs' lead ballooned to 35-0 before freshman Kobe Jones scored on a 5-yard run to round out the scoring late in the fourth quarter.

"I'm proud of the entire week we put together," said second year NCHS head football coach Brad Laird. "I thought we prepared all week and came out and played well in all three phases of the game. I thought we left some points out there and will still make some corrections. But overall, it was a solid team effort top to bottom."

Smith finished 11-for-20 for 243 yards passing and three touchdowns to lead the Chiefs' offense.

Next up, the Chiefs will take on the Evangel Eagles Friday, Sept. 12 on the road. Evangel is coming off a 33-32 loss to Neville in Week 1. The Eagles defeated the Chiefs last year at Turpin Stadium 45-7.

“They’re a really good team,” said Laird. “But we’re going to enjoy this one tonight then get back to work tomorrow for a really good Evangel team.”