

Tigers route Northwood Lena 59-20 on Senior Night

NATCHITOCHES, La. – The St. Mary's Tigers scored 33 unanswered points in a 59-20 win over the Northwood-Lena Gators Friday night for Senior Night at Turpin Stadium in Week 9 of the high school football season.

Prior to the game, SMS honored its six seniors as Cole Yopp, Haiden Nelson, Chalin Gandy, Tucker Johnson, Blaise Conant and AJ Lavespere played their final regular season home games.

As for the game, the Gators (2-6, 1-3 in 3-1A) jumped out to a 14-0 lead. They scored on the game's opening drive. Northwood-Lena drove 87 yards and took 6:36 off the clock. After SMS turned it over on downs at the NWL 21 yard-line. Moments later, the Gators scored on a 74-yard touchdown pass with 28 seconds left in the first quarter.

The Tigers' (3-5, 2-1 in 3-1A) offense went to work. They immediately responded with a 57-yard touchdown run by JP Thibodaux (Carter Hogg kicked the extra point) cutting the lead to 14-7 on the first play of the following drive. Later in the quarter, Thibodaux scored again from 17 yards out but SMS missed the extra point to cut the lead to 14-13.

On the following possession, junior Michael French intercepted a pass on fourth down and returned it 42 yards for a touchdown as SMS led 19-14 (PAT no good).

The Tigers' came up big in the special teams moments later as Yopp recovered an onside kick. SMS cashed in as AJ Johnson connected for 39 yards with Jacob Thibodaux for a touchdown (two-point conversion pass to Hogg from Johnson) making it 27-14 with under two minutes to go in the half.

SMS forced a turnover on downs again then scored on an eight-yard reception by Hogg from Johnson making it 33-14 with 37 seconds left (PAT no good). The Gators responded with an 18-yard touchdown pass with just two seconds left in the first half to make it 33-20 at halftime.

The Tigers' offense continued to roar early in the third quarter. Junior Dennison Morgan caught a 22-yard touchdown pass from AJ Johnson making it 40-20 (Hogg PAT good) with 10:02 left in the third quarter.

After the Gators fumbled on the first play of their next drive inside their own 25-yard line, Yopp caught a six-yard TD pass from Johnson pushing it to 47-20 (Hogg PAT good). SMS would score two more touchdowns in the fourth quarter on two runs by Tucker Johnson to run away with the win.

St. Mary's will wrap up the regular season Friday, Nov. 7 at Lakeview (0-9) as SMS looks to clinch a playoff spot. The Tigers entered Friday ranked 21st in the Division IV select power rankings.