



Chiefs' valiant effort falls short in 26-18 loss to Opelousas

NATCHITOCHEs, La. - The Natchitoches Central Chiefs fought valiantly in a 26-18 loss to the reigning Division II non-select state champion Opelousas Tigers Thursday night at home in non-district action.

The Chiefs (1-5) dropped their fifth straight game despite the efforts. NCHS finished with 221 total yards of offense and 133 yards rushing.

The Tigers (2-3) finished with 333 yards rushing led by D'Shaun Ford who had 247 yards on 33 carries and three touchdowns.

Ford opened the scoring on the first play of the second quarter. He scored on a two-yard touchdown run (point after attempt no good) as the Tigers took a 6-0 lead.

The Chiefs responded as they tied the game midway through the second quarter. Sophomore KJ Newton scored on a 12-yard touchdown run (PAT no good) making it 6-6 with 6:45 left in the second quarter.

The Tigers wasted little time in retaking the lead as quarterback Zacheus Malveaux connected with Landon Hammond for a 21-yard touchdown reception to make it 14-6 with 5:09 left in the second quarter. (Ford converts two-point conversion).

Opelousas added to their lead early in the third quarter. Ford scored from 22 yards out to make it 20-6 with 9:56 left in the third (two-point conversion no good). The Tigers tacked on another score early in the fourth quarter as Ford, again, punched it in from three yards out making it 26-6.

The Chiefs didn't fold as they responded with a drive highlighted by two 15-yard runs by Smith (two-point conversion no good) to make it 26-12 with 7:48 left.

NCHS's Derrick Beaudion recovered a fumble for the Chiefs' defense at the OHS 25-yard line. Moments later, the Chiefs' offense capitalized as Smith scored on a 25-yard touchdown run to make it 26-18 with 6:30 left in the game.

Unfortunately, the Chiefs never got a chance to tie the game as Opelousas ran the clock as Ford was unstoppable. He converted on 4th and 1 from the Tigers' 30-yard line as that was the closest NCHS would get to getting the ball back as the Chiefs' remarkable comeback bid fell short.

The Chiefs will be back in action Friday, Oct. 18 on the road against Byrd (4-1, 3-1 in district 1-5A) in district action.