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Jesuit continues turnaround by beating Holy Cross 28-7

BY MIKE STROM | SPECIAL TO THE ADVOCATE SEP 28, 2018 - 11:02 PM



Jesuit Blue Jays Brayton Whittington (24) stiff arms Holy Cross Tigers cornerback Dru Stephens (21) for additional yardage on Friday, September 28, 2018, at Tad Gorm

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Advocate Photo by STEPHEN LEW

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Mike Strom

Don't look now, but the Jesuit Blue Jays are back.

And in Catholic League contention at that.

With an uncharacteristic 2-9 season a year ago growing more faint by the week, the Blue Jays recorded their fourth consecutive victory in five games with a 28-7 humbling of archrival Holy Cross on Friday night in a pairing of Metro area-ranked teams played before approximately 15,000 at Tad Gormley Stadium.

Ninth-ranked Jesuit (4-1 overall) moved to 2-0 in District 9-5A and maintain a share of first place while handing No. 7 Holy Cross (4-1, 1-1) its first loss of the Guy LeCompte coaching area.

"We are not surprised," Jesuit coach Mark Songy said of his team's turnaround. "We think we've got a chance to be a pretty good football team. We play real hard. That was a hell of a win for us."

The Blue Jays also recorded their 57th victory in the 99th meeting between these age-old rivals. The Blue Jays lead the series that dates to 1922, 57-40-1.

Defense, as it has all season, served as the linchpin of Jesuit's good fortunes as Blue Jays defenders limited the previously high-scoring Tigers to 128 total yards, 26 yards rushing, seven first downs and one touchdown.

Ends Perry Ganci and Owen Melville, tackle Sonny Hazard and safety Cameron Helm were just some of the Blue Jays' defensive standouts.

"We have a real physical defensive line, we have some of the best linebackers in the state and our defensive backs are playing so much better this year. They're playing lock-down coverage," Ganci said. "And our team is really coming together."



Jesuit's offense played its role as well, particularly in the second half, when the Blue Jays tacked on three touchdowns to the 6-0 lead kicker Max Scheurich provided with first- and second-quarter field goals covering 36 and 44 yards.

Running backs Willie Robinson and Brayton Whittington rushed for touchdowns of 15 and 1 yard while keying a 224-yard ground game that gained steam after reserve quarterback Luke Besh returned the second-half kickoff 93 yards for a touchdown.

Robinson rushed for 107 yards on 18 attempts. Whittington had 85 yards on 14 carries and quarterback Robert McMahon accounted for 150 of Jesuit's 342 yards with his running and passing.

Holy Cross avoided a shutout with an 84-yard drive late in the third quarter culminated by a 7-yard scoring pass from wide receiver Jalen Johnson to quarterback Bryan Broussard on an end-around play.

"We couldn't establish the run. We didn't have a lot of time to throw the ball. And that's not a good combination," said LeCompte, whose team played without five starters, including leading rusher Celven Hulbert and defensive end Dominic Lamm. "(Jesuit plays) really physical and they run well on defense.

"This will give us an idea of some of the areas that can improve on. So we'll go back, look at the film and do that."

Jesuit moves on to play fellow co-leader John Curtis (4-1, 1-0) next Friday while Holy Cross faces Rummel (3-1, 0-0). Rummel opens Catholic League play at Shaw at 2 p.m. Saturday.

"This is no surprise to me," Ganci said. "I knew we were going to have a big season once we overcame all of the losses (from last season). Our senior class was strong. We have learned how to win."

JESUIT 28, HOLY CROSS 7

Holy Cross

0 0



Jesuit **3** **3** **14** **8** **--** **28**

HC **JES**

First downs	7	18
Rushing	26	224
Passing	102	118
Total offense	128	342
Passes	10-21-0	8-17-0
Penalties	10-79	10-72
Punts	8-35.0	4-25.6
Fumbles/lost	3-1	1-1

SCORING:

J: Max Scheurich 36 field goal.

J: Max Scheurich 44 field goal.

J: Luke Besh 93 kickoff return (Max Scheurich kick).

J: Brayton Whittington 1 run (Ma

HC: Bryan Broussard 7 pass from Jalen Johnson (Nolan Heitmeir kick).

J: Willie Robinson 15 run (Luke LaForge pass from Robert McMahon).

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