

Dartmouth High Football tops New Bedford 20-14

By Brendan Kurie
Contributor

The red zone wasn't kind to the New Bedford High football team on Friday night.

Three times the Whalers drove inside the 20 only to be turned away without points by Dartmouth's defense in a 20-14 loss at Memorial Stadium that kicked off the 2020-21 high school football season.

"They did a great job," New Bedford coach Mark DeBrito said. "They played great upfront and we were misaligned a lot. They took advantage of it. We just have to stay true and teach these guys. We'll keep working on it."

Despite twin brothers Bill and Billois Sousa teaming up for a touchdown and 160 rushing yards from electric junior tailback Jayden Frazier, a shifty, compact runner in the style of Maurice Jones-Drew, the Whalers stepped on their own feet too often, committing six second-half turnovers and failing to score on four-straight plays from the 4-yard line in the third quarter.

"I can't make excuses," DeBrito said. "You have to go out there and perform. But when you have guys who haven't been in that situation before, it's tough. We had some guys forget what they were doing and weren't sure of themselves so they're going slower than they normally would. Those are things we have to clean up."

PLAYER OF THE GAME

For the Whalers, it was Frazier, who averaged 8 yards on his 20 carries, including a 43-yard scamper in the fourth quarter

that nearly got New Bedford back in the game.

"He's a workhorse," DeBrito said. "I was hoping we could get him in the end zone, but we didn't. He's a tough back. He has a low center of gravity and some wiggle in him. We just have to find ways to get him the ball as much as we can and I think we'll be alright."

THE BIGGEST PLAY

For the Whalers, it came while trailing 6-0 with five minutes left in the second quarter. Billois Sousa broke through Dartmouth's line to block a punt deep in Dartmouth territory. His twin brother, Bill, came up with the scoop and score and Ian DaCosta tacked on an extra point to give New Bedford its only lead of the game, 7-6.

"That was nice for them," DeBrito said. "They're awesome. They've taken a leadership role. They've always been leaders, but this year, especially, with it being their last time playing for us, they're helping out a lot with the younger guys."

THE GAME PLAY

Dartmouth junior JJ Esterlin opened the game with a 41-yard kickoff return. Two plays later, Dartmouth converted a 3rd-and-18, and two plays after that Marques broke off a 16-yard touchdown run up the middle.

After a Whalers punt, the Indians were poised to add to their 6-0 lead, but a 64-yard drive was undone by a fumble on New Bedford's 17-yard line.

The Whalers drove down to Dartmouth's 16, but turned the ball over on downs after a 10-yard pass on 4th-and-12 failed to reach the marker.

After a three-and-out, Dartmouth was punting the ball away when the Sousa brothers teamed up for New Bedford's first lead, 7-6, with 5:05 left in the second quarter.

That lead lasted exactly 17 seconds. On Dartmouth's next play, junior quarterback Will Kelly hit a wide open Baron Dutra in stride on a seam route up the middle for a 67-yard touchdown. A blocked extra point made it a 12-7 game with 4:48 left before halftime.

New Bedford's first possession of the second half started strong with three Frazier runs for 43 yards and a 12-yard connection from junior quarterback Ryan Dosenberg to senior wide receiver Michael Fernandes. But even with a powerful offensive line, New Bedford couldn't find pay dirt on four plays from the 4-yard line. Junior Dan Martin made the stop on fourth down and Dartmouth took over on its own 2.

The Indians proceeded to march 98 yards on 12 plays, highlighted by a 53-yard run by Kelly and capped by a 2-yard off-tackle touchdown run by Marques.

Frazier broke off a 43-yard run down to the 11 with just under seven minutes left, but the Whalers were unable to score once again, throwing incomplete on third and fourth downs.

The Whalers nearly got stifled a fourth time inside the red zone, but Dosenberg slipped through a small hole on a 4th-and-goal play from the 4. With the Whalers out of timeouts, they had to attempt an onside kick, which Dartmouth recovered.

THE RECORDS

Dartmouth is now 1-0, while New Bedford is 0-1.

SERIES HISTORY

This was Dartmouth's first win over New Bedford since 2016. It was the lowest scoring game between the two teams since Dartmouth won 10-6 in 2014.

THE NOTES

Dosenberg had a nifty no-look, behind-the-back handoff to Frazier in the fourth quarter. ... New Bedford committed eight penalties for 45 yards, with six of those whistles and 35 yards coming in the second half. ... The Whalers regularly used

a huddle, while the Indians used cards held up on the sidelines to signal their plays.

UP NEXT

New Bedford has a bye in Week 2 before Bridgewater-Raynham comes to town on Saturday, March 27.

"We'll keep working," DeBrito said. "We have some talent. It's just a matter of getting some experience. If we can keep these guys learning and watching film, we'll get there."

THE STATISTICS

Total offense: Dartmouth 307, New Bedford 251

Rushing yards: Dartmouth 212, New Bedford 178

New Bedford

Passing: Ryan Dosenberg 8-18-73

Rushing: Jayden Frazier 20-160, Ryan Dosenberg 6-18

Receiving: Darius Harrison 1-4, Michael Fernandes 4-55, Flordan Bazile 2-18, Ranen Goodine 1-(-2)

Dartmouth

Passing: Will Kelly 3-6-95-1

Rushing: Will Kelly 17-128, Ethan Marques 11-39-2, JJ Esterlin 4-36, Patrick Crane 2-9

Receiving: Baron Dutra 2-94-1, Ethan Marques 1-1

THE BOX SCORE

New Bedford;07;0;7-14

Dartmouth;6;6;8;0-20

Scoring Plays

First Quarter

Dartmouth: Ethan Marques 16-yard run (run failed) 9:24

Second Quarter

New Bedford: Bill Sousa recovers blocked punt (Ian DaCosta good) 5:05

Dartmouth: Baron Dutra 67-yard pass from Will Kelly (kick

blocked) 4:48

Third Quarter

Dartmouth: Ethan Marques 2-yard run (Kelly run) 1:00

Fourth Quarter

New Bedford: Ryan Dosenberg 4-yard run (Ian DaCosta good) 1:49