



The Comcast Network Game of the Week

IHSA Football 7A Semifinal – Libertyville vs. Bradley-Bourbonnais

BRADLEY – The beauty of the IHSA playoffs is often the paths teams take to reach the semifinals.

Libertyville seemed destined to reach this position, cruising in at 12-0 with one of the state's most dynamic players in Northwestern-bound senior quarterback Riley Lees.

Bradley-Bourbonnais meanwhile had only four playoff wins in school history before this year and went 6-3 in the regular season.

No matter the journey, a berth in the Class 7A state title game in DeKalb next Saturday is on the line when the two teams face off in Bradley on Saturday at 3 p.m., a game which will be broadcast by CN100 at Noon and 4 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 22, and 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 24. You can also see it any time in HD with Xfinity On Demand.

The headliner is Lees, who made news over the summer when he decommitted from Miami (Ohio) and switched to Northwestern where he projects to be a wide receiver. Lees' season makes it look like Pat Fitzgerald pulled off a coup to land the offensive standout.

Lees has rushed for 2,162 yards and 30 touchdowns in 182 carries. He's also thrown for 1,658 yards, 24 touchdowns and four interceptions.

Senior running back Noah Moderwell takes off some of the pressure in the backfield, rushing for 694 yards and 11 touchdowns on 114 carries.

Lees spreads the ball around in the pass game. His top target is senior receiver Henry Schmidt with 40 catches for 802 yards and 12 touchdowns. Senior receiver Cam Shaffer added 31 catches for 370 yards and six touchdowns and senior receiver Timmy Calamari had 25 catches for 406 yards and four scores.

Defensively, 6-foot-6, 235-pound defensive end Ben Kimpler leads the way. Kimpler, who is also the team's punter, posted 45 solo tackles, 25 assists, eight sacks and seven tackles for loss. Senior linebacker Riley Buncic is the team leader with 58 tackles, adding 25 assists, two sacks, five tackles for loss and an interception. Senior DB Nick Neumann has 39 solo tackles, 17 assists and two sacks.

The Wildcats, who won their only state title in 2004, boast a 508-165 point differential.

It has been a Cinderella run for Bradley-Bourbonnais (9-3). The Boilermakers have consistently reached the postseason with playoff appearances in eight of the last nine seasons, but this is the first time they've appeared in the state semifinals.

Unlike Libertyville, which relies heavily on Lees, the Boilermakers spread responsibility around. Senior quarterback Owen Starr has thrown for 1,561 yards, 16 touchdowns and eight interceptions and rushed for 319 yards and two touchdowns.

A pair of senior running backs anchor the run game with Donnie Ringo (709 yards and six touchdowns) and Noah Fritz (560 yards and four touchdowns) the horses on the ground.

Junior receiver Camron Harrell is the Boilermakers' big-play threat. He has 36 catches for 726 yards and eight touchdowns, averaging over 20 yards per catch. He also rushed for 171 yards and nine touchdowns to create a red zone threat in multiple ways. He's even thrown for two touchdowns and returned a punt for a score. Harrell serves as the team's kickoff and punt return specialist.

Senior receiver Colin BeDell contributed 59 catches for 569 yards and seven touchdowns.

Defensively, Bradley-Bourbonnais is led by senior defensive lineman Cameran Douglas (four sacks), junior DB Damien Williams (four interceptions) and senior LB Davin Senesac (two sacks).

- Paul Johnson, CN100 Correspondent

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