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CBHS quarterback Nate Brick escaped the clutches of Briarcrest linebacker Conner Ferguson Friday night during the Saints 29-28 win.

OH NO, BROTHERS!

Saints hold off CBHS with late two-point conversion, remain unbeaten

By Thomas Sellers, Jr.
Richardson Media Group



Purple Wave athletes fight for a couple of extra yards Friday night on the turf of Landers Field at Tom Nix Stadium against rival Briarcrest. The Saints were able to leave Memphis victorious 29-28

MEMPHIS — Riding high off a win over previous unbeaten Southwind, the Briarcrest Saints knew a rivalry showdown was next on the agenda before a clash of titans with Brentwood Academy.

Boarding the bus on campus Friday evening to leave Eads, Saints Head Coach Phil Massey gave his players a not so subtle reminder about their opponent the Christian Brothers High School Purple Wave.

"We tried to tell our kids that they're a very competitive, very physically tough team," he said. "They do a great job. Their coaches do a great job so I knew they would be very prepared."

The textbook October conditions of mild temperatures and a mist gave the backdrop to Tom Nix Stadium on Landers Field for a classic. By the time the final whistle blew, the Saints marched out of Memphis still undefeated and survivors of a 29-28 decision.

"They played a hard fought game," Massey said of the Purple Wave. "That's what we told our kids before we even got on the bus to leave Briarcrest. It's going to be a dogfight. I wasn't too sure how much they believed it, but I know they believe it now. Certainly it was a hard-fought high school football game."

Briarcrest (7-0, 2-0 in Division II-3A West) struck first with a Octavius Flynn 5 yard touchdown run to make the score 7-0 just 4 minutes into the game.

The Brothers (4-3, 0-2) came out the corner swinging a haymaker when quarterback Nate Brick threw a picture-perfect deep ball hitting receiver Christian Harris in stride. The connection deadlocked the game at 7-7 midway through the first quarter.

Before the opening period concluded, Saints quarterback Cayden Dixon toss a pitch to Flynn leading to his second TD of the night. Briarcrest was ahead 14-7 entering the second quarter.

The Purple Wave continued the trend of answering back with its passing attack. Brick's next target was Trey Burse. The TD pass tied the game at 14-14 just a minute into the period.

As both defenses held the opposition for most of the quarter, Briarcrest had a breakthrough when Caden Sage caught a pass from Dixon setting up the Saints at the 1-yard line. Dixon did the honors a couple of plays later to regain the lead for Briarcrest.

With 2 minutes and 36 seconds on the clock, CBHS had plenty of time to answer back again. Brick threw his third touchdown pass of the night. Ezra Caswell was on the receiving end of the TD with a minute and 24 ticks on the clock before halftime.

The tally was deadlock at 21-21 at the break. The Brothers received the ball first in the second half and made a statement. Brick tossed his fourth touchdown pass of the night. The 45-yard strike to Burse made the score 28-21 in favor of CBHS with 8:19 on the clock.

"Our head coach actually told us that before the game that we were going to be in for a dogfight," Dixon acknowledged. "So we were ready for it."

Briarcrest was stopped time and time again in the second half. The Purple Wave was neutralized the rest of the game by the Saints' defense.

The Saints took over possession one more time late in the fourth quarter.

"It was fourth down and about 18," Massey recalled. "We just wanted our offensive line to give (Dixon) some protection. If we give him time, we know JD could get open. We had to have proper spacing and all the receivers did their responsibilities. We have confidence in Cayden in that moment to deliver the ball."

On the 33-yard line and facing fourth and long, Dixon hit a

See **Football**, *page 7*

GEC RECOGNIZES SEPTEMBER TEACHER AND YOUTH EXCELLENCE AWARD RECIPIENTS

The Germantown Education Commission recognized two outstanding members of the community during the Board of Mayor and Aldermen meeting on September 28, honoring Dogwood Elementary School fifth-grade teacher Jessica Schlesser as Teacher of the Month and Elaina Cowles, a senior at Evangelical Christian School, with the Youth Excellence Award.

Schlesser is known for creating a welcoming classroom where students feel supported while being challenged to reach their full potential. She uses student data to tailor instruction, provides additional support through RTI and develops resources to help students continue learning when they are absent. She also makes time to attend student events, chaperone field trips and support activities outside the classroom. Parents and colleagues describe her as patient, kind and approachable, with a talent for holding students accountable while making them feel valued. Schlesser's commitment extends to the broader school community through volunteering, securing grants for classroom materials, supporting music programs and coaching opportunities. Her dedication to students and her positive influence on the Dogwood



Dogwood Elementary fifth-grade teacher Jessica Schlesser displays her September Teacher of the Month award from the Germantown Education Commission. Schlesser was honored Sept. 28 for creating a welcoming classroom, supporting students' individual needs and contributing to the school community.

Photo: City of Germantown

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Germantown Mayor Mike Palazzolo speaks after receiving an EDGE Memphis Leadership Award on Oct. 1 at the Economic Development & Community Recognition Awards breakfast at FedEx Event Center at Shelby Farms. Palazzolo was honored for his contributions to regional economic development.

Photo: City of Germantown

PALAZZOLO HONORED FOR REGIONAL LEADERSHIP IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Staff Reports

GERMANTOWN, Tenn. — For more than a decade, Germantown Mayor Mike Palazzolo has been part of the region's ongoing conversation about growth, business and the quality of life that connects communities across Shelby County.

On Thursday, that regional leadership was recognized with an EDGE Memphis Leadership Award.

Palazzolo was one of two recipients honored Oct. 1 at the fourth annual Economic Development & Community Recognition Awards hosted by the Economic Development Growth Engine for Memphis and Shelby County, known as EDGE Memphis.

The awards breakfast, held at the FedEx Event Center at Shelby Farms, brought together developers, business leaders, elected officials, chambers of commerce and community organizations from throughout the Memphis area.

Palazzolo shared the Leadership Award with David Bradford.

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