

Arrows 1-1 after big upset road win at Olive Branch

By Danny C. Smith

Before the season started, many felt Clinton could play seven games before winning a game. After all, Clinton would face six teams in the Top 10 in its first six games.

But, after the Arrows' stunning 13-7 road win over #7-ranked Olive Branch on August 30, CHS looks like a contender in 2019. Clinton is now 1-1 after a closer-than-the-score-indicated opening 32-22 loss to Pearl at home. The Arrows will host pre-season #3-ranked and longtime rival Brandon Friday night, September 6, at 7 p.m. at Arrow Field.

Ironically, then also unranked Clinton defeated #2-ranked Olive Branch 17-13 on the same field on November 12, 2004, in the opening round of the 2004 playoffs. At the time, that win was considered one of the biggest road wins in Arrow football history. But Friday's win ranks right up there with it, especially considering Olive Branch (OB) finished 12-2 in 2017 and 2018, with their only losses over the last two years being to Class 5A State Champion West Point.

The Arrows, with a strong running game, dominated the time of possession and, with a stellar defense play, were able to upset the highly ranked Conquistadors.

"I am very proud of our team tonight and how they traveled three hours to play in a hostile environment against a top ten ranked team and find a way to win," said Arrows head coach Judd Boswell. "We're still a young team and have a lot to improve on, but these guys just found a way to win against a good team on the road tonight."

A look at time of possession helps tell the story of how the upstart Arrows walked off the field a winner 200 miles to the north of Clinton.

CHS held the ball almost thirty minutes of the forty-eight minutes, with 29 min 19 seconds compared to OB's 18:41. The first half was more one sided, with Clinton holding the ball

carries and 176 total yards of offense. Olive Branch did not gain a first down in the first half. CHS forced three turnovers, two fumbles and an interception.

of the second half to go up 7-3.

Clinton answered quickly after Antonio Thompson's interception on OB's next possession. The key play on the drive to take back the lead was

QB Caleb Miller's 18-yard pass to Michael Hughes to the OB eleven yard line. One play later, Jeremy Hughes took a hand-off and ran around right end 11 yards to score. Barefoot's extra point put Clinton back ahead 10-7 with 4:44 left in the third. Three minutes later, Barefoot's 31 yard field goal made it 13-7.

A big play by the Arrow defense preserved the win. With the Conquistadors driving for possible winning points, OB running back Jeffries Preston was hit hard at the Arrow one yard line by sophomore Robin Gray, forcing a fumble in the end zone for a touchback with only 1:59 left. Miller and the offense ran the clock out for the upset win.

"That was a big play that helped us win," said Boswell. "This was only his [Gray's] second varsity game to play in,

and he plays both ways for us. We've got a lot of other young players just like him that only get better every week that they play."

A week earlier, the Arrows almost pulled off an upset win at home against #5 Pearl. After falling behind 12-0 in the first quarter, the Arrows battled back to cut the Pirate lead to 25-22 with a minute left. But the Arrows were out of timeouts, and Pearl broke a long run in the final seconds to make it 32-22.

For the Arrows, freshman running back JaKobe Calvin was impressive, scoring two touchdowns for Clinton on runs of 13 and one yards. Junior Omauree scored on a five-yard run, and Miller had a two point conversion run.



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16:27 to 7:27. Clinton ran 53 plays, compared to 37 for Olive Branch.

"We were able to run the ball well especially in the first half," said CHS offensive coordinator Jeff Stockstill. "We wanted to control the

clock and keep our defense off the field, and we were able to do that."

And when the defense was on the field, they stopped the Conquistadors and got turnovers. The Arrow defense limited OB to 48 yards rushing on 23

"We played real good against the run," said CHS defensive coordinator Hamer Morgan. "We've got some young defensive backs and gave up some big pass plays in the second half. We've got to get that corrected."

In the second period, after the defense forced OB to punt out of its own end zone, Clinton's offense ground it out and moved 22 yards to the Conquistador 15, where junior kicker Carson Barefoot was good on a 33-yard field goal to make it 3-0.

OB scored on their first possession

