

Jesuit explodes for eight touchdowns in routing rival Holy Cross, 56-14

By Mike Strom, NOLA.com | The Times-Picayune
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Holy Cross wide receiver Darius Rodrigue (3) takes in a pass from quarterback Kyle Shexnayder, eluding Jesuit defenders Jakirai Wiley (4), Dillon Knight (28) and Brad Gaudet (65)

After recording the fourth highest scoring total in the 95-year history of their storied series against Holy Cross, the [Jesuit](#) Blue Jays were ready to crow.

Gush the Blue Jays did after recording a 56-14 District 9-5A victory in the Catholic League opener for both teams Friday night played before a crowd of approximately 15,000 at City Park's Tad Gormley Stadium.

The state's No. 6 ranked team in Class 5A scored five of its eight touchdowns in the first half in assuming a commanding 35-0 lead before finishing with 558 yards of offense and 23 first downs.

Jesuit, 5-1, 1-0, rolled up 322 of those yards on the ground in winning its fifth consecutive game as running back [Chris Mills](#) rushed for 116 yards on 15 carries and stable mate Charles Jackson ran for three touchdowns covering 18, 4 and 23 yards en route to totaling 70 yards on eight carries.

The Blue Jays recorded another 236 yards through the air as [Trey LaForge](#) completed 14 of 18 passes and two touchdowns without being intercepted in addition to running for a 5-yard touchdown. LaForge's scoring passes covered 53 and 30 yards respectively to wide receivers Malachi Hull and Kalija Lipscomb.

[Holy Cross](#), 4-2, 0-1, had a four-game winning streak broken as Jesuit increased its series lead to 55-38-1, which includes one no contest in 1937.

"I honestly think that we're as good as we want to be," LaForge said after being named the game's Outstanding Player in this Great American Rivalry Series contest. "If we set our (sights) high, the sky is the limit for us."

Defensive tackle Hunter Robert and reserve quarterback Peter Hontas scored Jesuit's two other touchdowns via runs of 29 and 1 yards in the second and fourth quarters respectively.

Crew Jacobs was perfect on all eight of his PAT kicks to complete the scoring.

"We had a lot of things go right for us," Jesuit Coach Mark Songy said. "We came out ready to play. I was very pleased about that. I think this is the best ballgame we've played."

In addition to their state ranking, the Blue Jays are ranked No. 6 among New Orleans Metro area large schools from Classes 5A and 4A by NOLA.com | The Times-Picayune and apparently ready to soar higher with Shaw due next on the schedule.

"We're better than I thought we were," Songy said when asked for an assessment of his squad. "Holy Cross, I thought, was a good test for us. We came out and played hard and had a decisive victory. Our kids put the foot to the pedal. I'm really proud of them.'"

Jesuit drove for touchdowns on its opening two possessions and then added three more in the second period to take a 35-0 lead to intermission.

Jesuit's first half was even more impressive statistically as the Blue Jays piled up 395 yards of offense and 14 first downs while limiting the Tigers to 94 yards and six firsts.

LaForge paced the Blue Jays onslaught in passing for two touchdowns and running for a third before exiting following the third quarter. A 6-foot-4, 200-pound senior, LaForge completed 10 of 14 attempts for 176 yards in the first half with the scoring passes to Hull and Lipscomb.

Hull's touchdown after he dropped the ball following an 11-yard gain, scooped up the ball continue on for the 53-yard touchdown. Lipscomb's touchdown came on an acrobatic leaping catch in which he wrestled the ball away from a Holy Cross defender.

LaForge's 5-yard run on a bootleg around left end supplied the final touchdown of the first half and capped a four-play, 81-yard possession that began with a 63-yard run by Mills.

The Blue Jays also rushed for 219 yards in the first two periods with Mills leading the way with 111 yards on nine carries. Jackson contributed 40 yards on five carries with an 18-yard touchdown run to culminate the game's opening possession.

Robert popped free for a 29-yard touchdown run on fourth-and-1 while playing fullback to account for Jesuit's first score of the second quarter and third touchdown overall.

Holy Cross wide receiver Michael Chigbu had two scoring catches in the third and fourth periods to help the unranked Tigers avert a complete disaster.

Reserve quarterback Kyle Hunter completed a 2-yard scoring pass to Chigbu just inside the front pylon on the goal line on fourth-and-goal to culminate the opening possession of the second half for the first score. Hunter was subbing for starter Kyle Schexnayder who had been shaken up.

Chigbu then took a hitch from Schexnayder for 40 yards for the Tigers' final touchdown with 8:06 remaining.

“We treated this game no differently than any other game,” Jesuit defensive end Osman Torres said. “We prepared really well. We try to be consistent in our game preparation. It all goes back to our coaches. Coach Songy has been absolutely great for us.”



Jesuit quarterback Trey LaForge (11) dives into the end zone to score the Jays' fifth touchdown of the first half against Holy Cross in Friday night's Great American Rivalry game. Tight end Foster Moreau leaps over LaForge while wide receiver Kalija Lipscomb (17) tries to shake off a Tiger defender who the ref thought was holding, hence the flag coming in at left.



Michael Chigbu (15) sends off a punt, as Jesuit's Chris Mills (25) attempts to block it. Chigbu demonstrated his excellent punting skills five times in the game, showing why he is the top punter in the New Orleans area.