

September 21, 2009

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THE ROAD TO MIAMI HAS BEGUN



**ASHEVILLE GRIZZLIE RB CORTEZ OLIVER (BENEDICT
COLLEGE) OFTEN REQUIRES GANG-TACKLING- PHOTO BY
DONNIE BEAUCHAMP**

**SATURDAY NIGHT, SEPTEMBER 26,
STRATFORD HIGH SCHOOL-**

NASHVILLE STORM AND ASHEVILLE GRIZZLIES BATTLE FOR SOUTHERN (REGULAR SEASON) SUPREMACY AND #1 NAFL SOUTH PLAYOFF SEED

THE TEAMS- The Nashville Storm (11-0, 9-0 in NAFL play) play their final 2009 regular season game against the Asheville Grizzlies (7-1), a highly talented and well-coached NAFL rival. The 2 teams last met in the 2008 NAFL playoffs, with the Storm winning 47-27.

THE OPPONENT- The Asheville Grizzlies have abundant talent on both sides of the football and a Hall Of Fame Head Coach in Phil Lytle. On offense, RB Cortez Oliver (Benedict College) is one of the premier running backs in NAFL history. The QB is Frank Meade, a strong-armed and accurate thrower who is also an elusive runner. In 2008, the Nashville Storm defense only gave up 4 TD passes all season. Meade threw 3 of them. On defense, the Grizzlies are led by LBs Thomas Brunson (North Carolina State) and Travis Colston (University of Tennessee). All in all, the Grizzlies present a strong challenge in the Storm's regular season finale.

THE PLACE- Buster Boguskie Stadium at Stratford High School (1800 Stratford Avenue, Nashville, TN 37216).

THE TIME- Saturday night, September 26, 2009; Admission Gate opens at 6 PM, Kickoff will be at 7 PM.

THE ENTERTAINMENT- DJ Lil Les and the lovely ladies of the Nashville Storm Dance Team.

THE COST- Adult admission is only \$8.00; kids aged 0-14 GET IN FREE. There is abundant parking on the Stratford High School premises, also FREE OF CHARGE.



Storm QB Phelepe Hall threw for 408 yards and 3 TDs against the Indianapolis Tornados

NASHVILLE STORM STUN DEFENDING NATIONAL CHAMPION INDIANAPOLIS TORNADOS IN INDY REMATCH 42-0

On August 29, in Nashville, the Nashville Storm defeated the defending NFL National Champion Indianapolis Tornados 23-13 in a battle of then-unbeaten teams. For the following 3 weeks, the Tornados plotted their revenge in the September 19 rematch in Indianapolis, swearing the outcome would be different this time, and in a way, it WAS----- just not in the way the Tornados had planned, as the Nashville Storm won

Saturday's rematch at Indianapolis' Park Tudor HS by a dominating 42-0 final score.

The first 2 offensive series of the game (one for each team) functionally dictated the remainder of the game; the Tornados got the ball first, and on the Tornados' 2nd offensive play, Tornado QB Quincy Adams (Earlham University) took a devastating hit from Storm DE Lonnie Harris (Arkansas-Pine Bluff) while delivering a 16-yard completion to Tornado RB Mo Virgil (Illinois); the collision knocked Adams out for the remainder of the game. Adams' replacement, Eric Golliday, would complete 9 of 23 passes for 75 yards and one interception on the night.

After the Tornado opening drive stalled, the Tornados punted to the Storm, who had planned a surprise; the Storm, a team who had run the football on 60% of their 2009 offensive snaps, came out in a no-huddle, 5-wide receiver formation with Storm QB Phellepe Hall (Maplewood/TSU) in the shotgun with no running backs in the backfield. The Storm would stay in this formation except for goalline plays for almost all of the first 3 quarters of the game, and the results were results that would delight any Storm fan; the Storm scored touchdowns on their first 3 offensive possessions, as Hall passed for 277 first-half yards, and then drove for 2 more 3rd-quarter TDs. By the time the Storm returned to their more traditional 2 running back offensive set, the Storm had put the game out of reach at 35-0; Hall finished the night with 22 completions in 31 attempts for 408 passing yards and 3 TD passes (the other 2 Storm offensive TDs were on 2 1-yard runs by giant Storm FB/RB Julius Johnson). The Storm defense would account for the Storm's other score in the 4th quarter when the Tornados fumbled on their 3-yard line and Storm DB Joshua Gordon (Antioch HS) scooped up the fumble and ran it into the end zone.

The Nashville Storm are now 11-0 in 2009, 9-0 in NAFL play and finish their regular season at home on September 26 against the 7-1 Asheville Grizzlies. The Tornados, now 7-2, wrap up their 2009 regular season in Indianapolis on September 26 against the Traverse City Wolves.

NOTES ON THE GAME:

- **Tornado RB Mo Virgil (Illinois), one of the Indy heroes of the 2008 National Championship Game, didn't play in the first Storm-Tornado game in Nashville, and the Tornados hoped Virgil's presence in the Indy rematch would be an offensive game-changer for them. It didn't happen. Virgil had one really nifty 33-yard carry early in the 4th Quarter, but only got 5 yards in his other 9 carries and finished with a pedestrian 38 yards in 10 carries.**
- **Storm K/P Garrett Morgan (Central Arkansas) was back for this game after missing the previous week's game against the Indiana Warriors and was excellent again despite not getting to attempt a Field Goal; Morgan was 5 for 5 on extra points, punted 4 times for a 43.3 yard average, and kicked his usual long, booming kickoffs. Backup Storm K John Gorecki (Centennial HS) successfully kicked the 6th Storm extra point.**
- **#44, legendary Nashville Storm LB Nathaniel Claybrooks (MTSU), played in his first game for the Storm since 2007--- and looked like he's never been away. Claybrooks racked up 3 ½ tackles for losses including a QB sack.**
- **The Storm outgained the Tornados 400-153 in total offense, and the Tornados never got inside the Storm 25-yard line in the game. The Tornados did attempt field goals of 56 and 47 yards, and missed both.**
- **The Tornados were devastating in one aspect of the game- defense against the Storm's running game. Led by a spectacular game by Tornado DT Evan "El Presidente" Triggs (Ball State), the Storm were held to (-8) yards rushing on the night. Kelcey Williams (Humboldt HS/Northwestern Oklahoma) actually led the Storm runners with 9 yards on 1 carry.**
- **Several Storm receivers had big nights, though; DeQuinn Watford (THE St Ambrose University), who didn't play in the first Storm-Tornado game due to a death in his family, caught 7 passes for 87 yards; Jeremie "Bird" Whittaker (Coahoma CC) had 5 catches for 123 yards and 2 TDs, Ivan Burley (TSU) had 6 catches for 124 yards and 1 TD. Mario Merriweather (Clarksville HS/Bethel College) had 3 catches for 43 yards, while Kevin Carter (Austin Peay) had 1 catch for 31 yards. "Bird" Whittaker now has 10 TD catches in 2009 despite missing 3 games with a groin injury.**

- **Storm QB Phelepe Hall, en route to his 408-yard passing night, actually racked up 101 passing yards on the Storm's first offensive possession of the game (the possession started at the Storm 10-yard line, and the Storm were penalized 15 yards during the TD drive).**
- **The Storm defense racked up 12 tackles for losses including 4 QB sacks; DT Danny Roberson (TSU), DE Lonnie Harris (Arkansas-Pine Bluff), and LB Nathaniel Clayrooks (MTSU) had 1 sack apiece, and the 4th sack was made by Storm DTs Eldred Howard (TSU) and Matt Breymeyer. Howard, a 2008 MLFN 1st Team All-American, returned to action for the first time since early July, having been sidelined because of an operation on a large tumor in July. Roberson's sack resulted in a fumble recovery for the Storm. Rookie Storm DB Joshua Gordon (Antioch HS) had the game's only interception in addition to his fumble recovery for a TD.**
- **The Storm victory was the Nashville Storm's 22nd straight victory in a road game in a streak dating back to June of 2006.**