

## **Bears Nip Mars Hill, Win Seventh Straight**

Written by Staff Reports

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The 24th-ranked Lenoir-Rhyne Football Team (7-1, 5-0) made it seven wins in a row with a 27-20 victory over Mars Hill (2-6, 0-4) Saturday afternoon at Meares Stadium in a South Atlantic Conference game.

Junior halfback Jarrod Spears (Bunnlevel, N.C.) and junior quarterback Miles Freeman (Sacramento, Calif.) finished with 138 and 137 yards rushing, respectively, as the Bears equaled their best start since the 1967 season.

Lenoir-Rhyne, ranked third in the nation in rushing, finished with 373 yards on the ground and was able to hold off Mars Hill in the end despite the play of Shaikel Davis (East Flat Rock, N.C.).

Davis ran for 213 yards and scored on touchdown runs of 81 and 77 yards but the Lions continue to search for their first league victory of the year.

Davis' 81-yard touchdown run opened the scoring early in the first quarter but the Bears responded with 21 straight points.

Freeman tied the score with a two-yard touchdown run before completing a six-yard touchdown pass to sophomore wide receiver Greyson Wells (West Jefferson, N.C.) to give L-R the lead for good early in the second quarter.

Spears gave the Bears a 21-7 advantage entering break following a 24-yard touchdown run which came after his own 52-yard scamper.

Trailing 24-7, the Lions cut the margin to four points following Davis' second score and Dimitri Holmes' (Athens, Ga.) 34-yard touchdown reception but couldn't any closer the rest of the way.

L-R senior placekicker Zach Neumann (Mechanicsville, Md.) rounded out the scoring with a 38-yard field goal, his second of the day, and senior defensive back Michael Green (Kingsland, Ga.) ended Mars Hill's last-ditch rally with an interception with 23 seconds remaining.

On defense, Lenoir-Rhyne was led by redshirt freshman linebacker Rodney Singleton (Hawthorne, Fla.) and junior linebacker Tanner Botts (Lawrenceville, Ga.) with nine tackles each. The Bears also tallied four quarterback sacks to increase their season total to 35. Mars Hill's Sammy Siasia (Marietta, Ga.) tallied a game-high 26 tackles.

Lenoir-Rhyne returns home to take on Carson-Newman (7-1, 3-1), ranked No. 18 in NCAA Division II, on Saturday in a league showdown beginning at 2:00 p.m. Mars Hill travels to Salisbury, N.C., to face Catawba on Saturday at 1:30 p.m.

**Photo Courtesy: Jarrod Spears, L-R Athletics**