



Palm Beach **MARINERS**

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GLADIATORS HUMBLE M's, 42-7

Mariners Portside News Staff Writer - 1/10/2011

(Bradenton) - Maybe the nearly four-hour trip from West Palm Beach was too much and caused "road lag", or maybe it was a case of being short-handed with only an available playing roster of 27. Whatever the case may be, the Mariners had no answer for the Bradenton Gladiators on Sunday in a one-sided affair that could have easily been worse.



With the exception of an impressive 88-yard touchdown drive early in the fourth quarter, the highlights for Palm Beach were few and far between in their 42-7 loss at the hands of Bradenton of the Florida Football Alliance, which notched their second win of the pre-season against no defeats.

Gladiators quarterback Kirby Nicholas was 11 of 22 for 192 passing yards with 4 touchdown passes in leading his team to victory, but his numbers are not truly indicative of just how well he played. On several occasions Bradenton receivers dropped some very "catchable" passes. Most notable of Bradenton's miscues was a completed 49-yard pass on their very first play from scrimmage to start the day which was fumbled away and recovered by the Mariners at the Palm Beach 11-yard line.

The Gladiators also racked up 108 yards on the ground against a Mariners defense that had yielded only 114 total rushing yards in their previous two pre-season games combined.

As imposing as the Gladiators offense was, their defense was that much better.

Palm Beach didn't post a first down until late in the 1st half with less than five minutes in the second quarter on a 25-yard pass play. However, the enthusiasm over the monumental task was abruptly halted 4 plays later by an interception at the Gladiators 6-yard line that was returned for 45 yards to the Mariners 49. Three plays later, the Gladiators added their 3rd touchdown to the scoreboard with 26.4 seconds left in the half on a Nicholas 13-yard toss to Bonshavior Bean, making it 21-0 in favor of the home team.

"We were outplayed and out-coached", said Avion Brown, Mariners Head Coach. "Every team has a day like this, and today was our day."

The loss dropped the Mariners to 2-1 on the pre-season, as Bradenton improved to 2-0 with the win. The Mariners will play their final exhibition game of the pre-season at home on January 22nd vs. the Chattanooga Steam of the Deep South Football League in the Tyler McLellan Foundation Charity Game at Suncoast Stadium. Palm Beach will open their Southeast Football League regular season on February 12th in Fort Pierce at Lawnwood Stadium against their division rival, the Treasure Coast Bucs.



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