

The Charlotte 49ers picked up their second win in three games and claimed their Conference USA opener, 28-25, over visiting Old Dominion, Thursday. The game, originally scheduled for Saturday, was moved up to Thursday due to the poor weather conditions expected over the weekend from Hurricane Florence.

“It’s huge,” said 49ers head coach Brad Lambert. “We’ve been in some great battles with these guys and come out on the back end every time, so it was good to finish it off. To be able to take a knee and win the game because we’ve been in some big games with them and it was time for us to win one of them.”

Charlotte (2-1; 1-0) answered the Monarchs’ go-ahead touchdown on the opening drive of the second half with a decisive 13-play; 75-yard drive to retake the lead in the third quarter. A fourth quarter TD lifted the 49ers ahead by 10, 28-18 before ODU (0-3; 0-2) scored in the final three minutes to close to within 28-25.

Charlotte recovered the onside kick and was able to get the one first down necessary before kneeling out the final minute and a half.

This was the third game in four meetings between the schools that was decided by a touchdown or less, with ODU winning the previous two.

Charlotte got on the board first when RS-Fr. QB Chris Reynolds found fellow rookie Victor Tucker for an 18-yard TD reception to cap an eight-play, 61-yard drive in the first quarter.

The Monarchs took advantage of a muffed punt by the 49ers at the 16-yard line to cut the lead to 7-6 on Kesean Strong’s four-yard run. Charlotte DT Timmy Horne blocked the point after attempt.

True Fr. Jonathan Cruz, who was named C-USA Special Teams Player of the Week for his performance last week, blasted field goals of 42 and 36 yards to push Charlotte ahead 13-6. ODU scored in the final two minutes of the half on Lala Davis’ 20-yard run to make it 13-12, after a failed two-point conversion attempt.

“The game went pretty much the way I wanted it to go,” said Lambert. “We made some good plays all the way across the board. I thought Chris Reynolds played well. I thought our defense got off the field. There’s always something you can do better in a game. I thought our guys were humming around pretty good.”

The Monarchs took their first lead in the second half on a 75-yard drive to open the half. Davis crashed in from three yards out for his second TD of the game. Another failed two-point conversion left ODU with an 18-13 lead.

Charlotte answered right back on their next drive. Reynolds completed 4-of-6 passes and RB Benny LeMay rushed for 46 yards on seven carries. Charlotte converted two third downs on the drive, including the TD pass to senior Mark Quattlebaum on third and goal from the four. LeMay’s two-point conversion gave Charlotte a three-point lead, 21-18.

When a team scores, you can’t let the momentum swing like that,” Reynolds said. “My job as a quarterback is to make sure our team is ready to roll, drive down the field and answer right away. I felt good about what I was seeing. The line, everyone knew what we were seeing. Everybody has to execute for anybody to drive down the field.”

The 49ers had interceptions in two of the Monarchs final three drives and mixed in their own 12-play, 71-yard touchdown drive to push the lead to 28-18. In that drive, LeMay converted a fourth-and-one at the ODU 43 to keep the drive alive and RB Aaron McAllister rushed for the final 29 yards, including the 14-yard touchdown run.

R-Sr. Juwan Foggie had a 47-yard interception return on the Monarch’s next possession to thwart a promising ODU drive that had reached the Charlotte 35. The 49ers did not score on the possession but forced two ODU timeouts before turning the ball over on downs.

“I thought that was the big play in the game,” Lambert added.

“It was our big emphasis this year,” Foggie said. “Getting turnovers and executing them. Actually (at first) I saw the sun. (At the) last second, I saw the ball and thought, ‘oh, I’ve got to catch it.”

The Monarchs drove 80 yards on 11 plays to cut the lead to 28-25 with 2:57 to play.

McAllister recovered the onside kick and rushed for the crucial first down that used up ODU’s final timeout and allowed the 49ers to kneel out the victory. Reynolds completed a career-best 24-of-34 passes for 202 yards, two touchdowns and no interceptions. LeMay finished the game with 93 yards rushing and 13 yards receiving. McAllister added 60 rushing yards and one TD.

The 49ers converted 9-of-17 third downs while ODU converted 5-of-11. Charlotte put up 373 yards of total offense to ODU’s 338. Charlotte had the two interceptions while ODU recovered the muffed punt.

ODU was held to 123 rushing yards but Steven Williams completed 16-of-28 passes for 215 yards. Jonathan Duhart caught seven passes for 127 yards and a TD.

Jr. LBs Anthony Butler (11 tackles) and Jeff Gemmell (10 tackles and three QB hurries) both had double-digit tackles for the 49ers. Horne added three tackles, 0.5 sacks, two pass breakups and a blocked kick.

The 49ers will hit the road for Massachusetts, next Saturday at 3:30 p.m. That game can be seen, locally, on WCCB Charlotte.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
ODU	6	6	6	7	25
CHAR	7	6	8	7	28

Scoring Summary -----

	ODU	CHAR
FIRST QUARTER		
CHAR TD 6:03		
Victor Tucker 18 Yd pass from Chris Reynolds (Jonathan Cruz Kick)		
8 plays, 61 yards, 4:41	0	7
ODU TD 3:02		
Kesean Strong 4 Yd Run (Nick Rice PAT blocked)		
5 plays, 16 yards, 2:05	6	7
SECOND QUARTER	ODU	CHAR
CHAR FG 11:25		
Jonathan Cruz 42 Yd Field Goal		
13 plays, 51 yards, 6:37	6	10
CHAR FG 4:27		
Jonathan Cruz 36 Yd Field Goal		
8 plays, 63 yards, 3:41	6	13
ODU TD 1:51		
Lala Davis 20 Yd Run (Two-Point Pass Conversion Failed)		
8 plays, 75 yards, 2:36	2	13
THIRD QUARTER	ODU	CHAR
ODU TD 12:38		
Lala Davis 3 Yd Run (Two-Point Pass Conversion Failed)		
5 plays, 75 yards, 2:22	8	13
CHAR TD 6:39		
Mark Quattlebaum 4 Yd pass from Chris Reynolds (Benny LeMay Run for Two-Point Conversion)		
13 plays, 75 yards, 5:59	8	21
FOURTH QUARTER	ODU	CHAR
CHAR TD 8:45		
Aaron McAllister 14 Yd Run (Jonathan Cruz Kick)		
12 plays, 71 yards, 6:41	18	28
ODU TD 2:57		
Jonathan Duhart 2 Yd pass from Steven Williams (Nick Rice Kick)		
11 plays, 80 yards, 3:13	25	28

Team Stats	ODU	CHAR
First Downs	16	25
Total Yards	338	373
Total Plays	56	79
Avg Gain Per Play	6.0	4.7
Net Yards Rushing	123	171
Rushes	28	45
Yards Per Rush	4.4	3.8
Net Yards Passing	215	202
Comp-Att	16-28	23-34
Yards Per Pass	7.7	5.9
Times Sacked	1	1
Yds Lost To Sacks	-1	-4
Interceptions	2	0
Punts	4	3
Punt Average	0.0	0.0
Penalties	3	3
Penalty Yards	28	22
Fumbles	0	2
Fumbles Lost	0	1
Possession	21:43	38:17

Individual Stats

RUSHING

OD	Rush	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
12 Lala Davis	10	63	6.3	20	2
35 Jeremy Cox	7	46	6.6	25	0
5 Steven Williams	5	8	1.6	4	0
1 Kesean Strong	2	5	2.5	4	1
16 Brandon Sinclair	1	2	2.0	2	0
14 Isaiah Spencer	1	0	0.0	0	0
3 Gemonta Jackson	2	-1	-0.5	2	0
23 Brandon Simmons	0	0	-	-	0
CHAR	Rush	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
32 Benny LeMay	25	93	3.7	11	0
5 Aaron McAllister	13	60	4.6	14	1
17 Chris Reynolds	6	23	3.8	14	0

PASSING

OD	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
5 Steven Williams	16	28	215	7.7	1	2	119.1
14 Isaiah Spencer	0	0	0	-	0	0	-
CHAR	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
17 Chris Reynolds	23	34	202	5.9	2	0	137.0

RECEIVING

OD	Rec	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
9 Jonathan Duhart	7	127	18.1	35	1
15 Isaiah Harper	2	21	10.5	12	0
10 Darrell Brown	1	20	20.0	20	0
6 Keion White	2	16	8.0	9	0
89 Marcus Joyner	1	13	13.0	13	0
3 Gemonta Jackson	1	12	12.0	12	0
7 Travis Fulgham	2	6	3.0	3	0
CHAR	Rec	Yds	Avg	Long	TD
9 Victor Tucker	7	79	11.3	18	1
6 Workpeh Kofa	9	54	6.0	13	0
87 Chris Phillips	2	30	15.0	20	0
3 Mark Quattlebaum	2	19	9.5	15	1
32 Benny LeMay	2	13	6.5	7	0
21 Rico Arnold	1	7	7.0	7	0