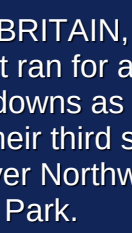




CLASS S



SHEEHAN 21



NORTHWEST CATHOLIC 7

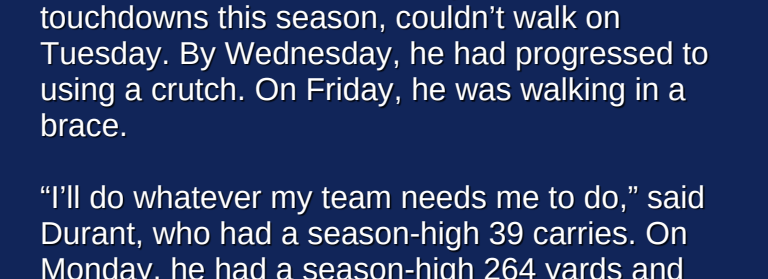
[Photo Gallery Link](#)

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Gerry deSimas, Jr. / Special to CIAC

NEW BRITAIN, Dec. 13, 2025 – Senior Joshua Durant ran for a game-high 215 yards and three touchdowns as the Sheehan High football team won their third state championship with a 21-7 win over Northwest Catholic Saturday at Willow Brook Park.

The No. 5 Titans (11-2) needed Durant since quarterback Jake O'Brien was hobbled with an ankle injury suffered in Monday's quarterfinal win over Woodland Regional.

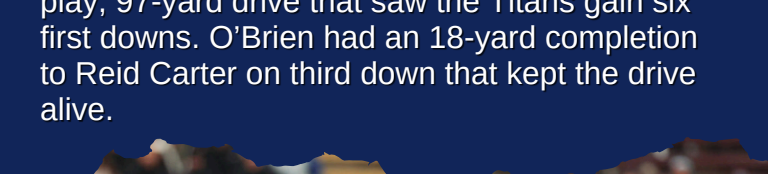


O'Brien, who threw for 1,176 yards and nine touchdowns this season, couldn't walk on Tuesday. By Wednesday, he had progressed to using a crutch. On Friday, he was walking in a brace.

"I'll do whatever my team needs me to do," said Durant, who had a season-high 39 carries. On Monday, he had a season-high 264 yards and rushed for five TDs against Woodland. Against Northwest Catholic, he had plenty of opportunities to run the ball.

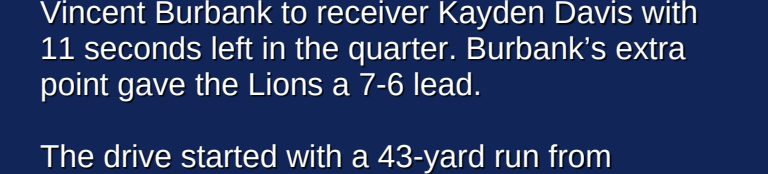
"You saw what Josh Durant is all about," Sheehan head coach John Ferrazzi said. "He is as tough as they come. He's been doing this all year. He never wants to come off the field. If he comes off the field, as soon as I turn my back, he back on the field."

Sheehan won their first state championship since 2019. They dropped a 48-33 decision to Killingly in the Class SS title game a year ago. No. 6 Northwest Catholic (11-2), playing in their first championship game since 2009, made life difficult for the Titans. They were able to bottle up the Titan offense in the first half, forcing a fumble. It was scoreless at the half.



O'Brien returned to the lineup in the second half, even though he had very limited mobility. "(Northwest) played really well and we had to put in Jake and see what we could do," Ferrazzi said. "By having him back on the field, it brought an energy to our team. He was able to make some plays for us when we needed them."

Sheehan took a 6-0 lead on a seven-yard touchdown run by Durant with 2:17 left in the third quarter. His touchdown capped off a 13-play, 97-yard drive that saw the Titans gain six first downs. O'Brien had an 18-yard completion to Reid Carter on third down that kept the drive alive.

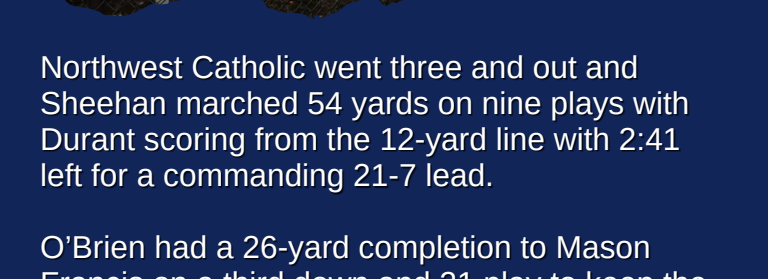


But Northwest Catholic responded immediately, driving 65 yards on three plays with the Lions scoring on a 21-yard touchdown pass from QB Vincent Burbank to receiver Kayden Davis with 11 seconds left in the quarter. Burbank's extra point gave the Lions a 7-6 lead.

The drive started with a 43-yard run from Burbank to the Sheehan 22-yard line. Two plays later, he hit Davis for the touchdown.

Sheehan was hard to stop. O'Brien completed a 16-yard pass to Sebastian Rosato to the Lion 45-yard line. Thanks to a roughing the passer penalty, the Titans picked up another 15 yards to the 33. After a first down run from Durant, O'Brien completed another 18-yard pass to Rosato to the Lion two-yard line.

Durant scored from the two-yard line and Kiely Nolan scored on a two-point conversion pass from O'Brien to boost the Titan lead to 14-7 with 9:22 remaining in the game.

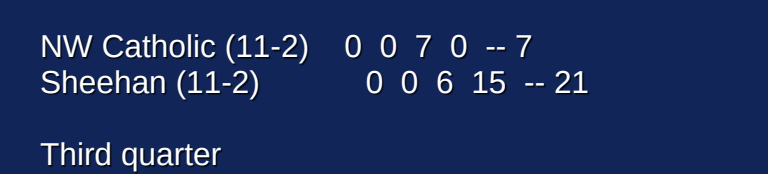


Northwest Catholic went three and out and Sheehan marched 54 yards on nine plays with Durant scoring from the 12-yard line with 2:41 left for a commanding 21-7 lead.

O'Brien had a 26-yard completion to Mason Francis on a third down and 21 play to keep the drive alive and Durant was hard to bring down, frequently carrying a tackler or two as he powered up the middle.

O'Brien, who couldn't really run, completed 6-of-7 passes for 91 yards and his offensive line did a marvelous job of protecting him.

"They've had my back all year," O'Brien said. "They were more physical. They were really the champions."



Sheehan 21, NW Catholic 7
At New Britain

NW Catholic (11-2) 0 0 7 0 -- 7
Sheehan (11-2) 0 0 6 15 -- 21

Third quarter

S: Joshua Durant 7 run (kick failed), 2:17
NW: Kayden Davis 21 pass from Vincent Burbank (Burbank kick), 0:11

Fourth quarter

S: Durant 2 run (Kiely Nolan pass from Jake O'Brien), 9:22
S: Durant 12 run (Reid Carter kick), 2:41
Individual leaders

RUSHING: Sheehan – Joshua Durant 39-215, Zack O'Brien 9-28; NWC – Vincent Burbank 8-51

PASSING: Sheehan – Jake O'Brien 6-7-0, 91, Durant 1-1, 6; NWC – Burbank 17-28-1, 120

RECEIVING: Sheehan – Seb Rosario 4-41, Reid Carter 1-18, Mason Francis 1-26, Mike Simlin 1-6; NWC – Chase Henry 1-7, Kaedean Stewart 1-1, Patrick Knorr 2-16, Kayden Davis 9-83, Ayden Ayala 4-13