

Pirates Win Home Opener 49-46 Over Quad City

ORLANDO, FL, UNITED STATES, April 6, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [The Orlando Pirates](#) brought arena football back to the Kia Center in a rousing 49-46 come from behind victory over the Quad City Steamwheelers. Pirates quarterback Paxton DeLaurent completed 18 of 25 passes for 236 yards with four touchdowns and wide receiver Nyqwan Murray scored twice as the Pirates won their home opener and ran their record to 2-0 on the season. The loss dropped Quad City to 1-2.

The day did not start as the Pirates had planned. The Steamwheelers wasted no time in getting on the board as Daquan Neal connected with Quian Williams on the first play from scrimmage for a 27-yard touchdown pass. Jan Bogdan added the point after for a 7-0 lead.

After the Pirates turned the ball over on downs, the Orlando defense stepped up as Ro Torrence intercepted Neal, but the Steamwheelers returned the favor as Jamon Williams intercepted DeLaurent. Quad City could not capitalize however as Bogdan missed a 20-yard field goal.

On the next Pirate's possession, on first and 10 from the Steamwheelers 20, DeLaurent was intercepted for the



The Orlando Pirates secure a 49–46 victory in a thrilling home opener at Kia Center.



The Pirates bring the energy back to the Kia Center.

second time in the quarter as defensive lineman KeShaun Moore broke up a screen pass and rumbled 28 yards for a pick-six and a 14-0 lead as the quarter came to a close.

As the second quarter began, the Pirates found the end zone for the first time at the Kia Center as Teo Redding pulled in a 24-yard pass from DeLaurent. Axel Preze added the PAT and the Pirates trailed by seven.

Orlando defensive lineman DJ Dale then starred for the Pirates on the next series. On second and five from the Orlando 18, Dale tackled Neal for a two-yard loss. Then on fourth and seven from the 20, he recovered a bad snap to get the turnover on downs.

On the next play Orlando tied the game as Pooka Williams caught a 27-yard touchdown pass. Quad City would re-take the lead on a play that saw Jordan Vesey make a diving catch where he was not touched. Vesey got to his feet and ran 16 yards for a TD to give the Steamwheelers a 21-14 advantage.

The Pirates came right back to tie the game at 21 all with a five -play, 39-yard drive as DeLaurent scored his first rushing touchdown of the season from a yard out. Quad City needed only three plays to go back out front as Neal ran eight yards to cap a three-play, 40-yard series. The extra point was missed, leaving the Steamwheelers with a six-point, 27-21 lead.

The final possession of the half would see Orlando take its first lead of the game as Thomas Owens pulled in a 10-yard touchdown reception. Perez made the score 28-27 with his point after. Those were the last points of half as Orlando's Mike Mason blocked a 49-yard field goal attempt as time expired.

The Pirates added to their lead to start the third quarter as Owens caught four passes on an 11-play, 40-yard march that ended with Murray extending the ball over the goal line on a one-yard plunge to make the score 35-27.

The Steamwheelers answered with a Keyvan Rudd three-yard touchdown run, but the Pirates Destin Mack foiled a two-point conversion run by Jared Ware leaving the score at 35-33 as the third quarter ended.



Nonstop energy all game long at the Pirates' home opener.

The final quarter would see the lead change hands three times. Quad City would score first in the final 15 minutes as Neal rushed four-yards for his second rushing TD of the game as the Steamwheelers led 39-35 as the point after was no good.

The Pirates regained the lead on the ensuing kickoff as Dante Wright fielded the kick five yards deep in the end zone and returned it 55 yards for a touchdown to put Orlando back out front 42-39.

Quad City would not back down as Neal threw his third touchdown pass of the game to Williams. The nine-yard TD reception was Williams' second of the night. He finished the game as the top wide out with 100 receiving yards.

That set up the game winning drive for Orlando as DeLaurent responded by taking the team down the field 30 yards in five plays. He completed two passes to Pooka Williams and then on a crucial fourth and two from the 22 ran for a first down to the 17-yard line. He then connected with Murray in the back of the end zone with 1:55 remaining for the final points of the game. The Pirates defense came up with two stops in the final minute to preserve the victory.

DeLaurent was intercepted three times but still out dueled Neal as he was 18 of 25 for 236 yards and four scores. Neal finished 13 of 26 for 175 yards and three touchdown passes against one interception.

Neal was the leading rusher on the day with 12 carries for 59 yards and two touchdowns. DeLaurent ran nine times for 38 yards and a score.

Williams added just two yards on five carries for Orlando while Ware rushed seven times for 17 yards for the Steamwheelers.

For Orlando, Redding had six receptions for 88 yards and a score, Williams caught five passes for 69 yards and a touchdown and Owens pulled in five balls for 50 yards and a TD.

For Quad City, in addition to Quian Williams' six catches for 100 yards and two touchdowns Vesey had three receptions for 26 yards and a score while Ware added three catches for no yards.

Defensively, for the Pirates Ro Torrence had eight tackles including two for a loss and an interception. Destin Mack added five tackles and assisted on another while breaking up three passes. Lavavious Brini added five tackles with three for a loss.

With the victory the Pirates are now 5-3 all-time in home opening games.

The Pirates will return to the Kia Center on Sunday, April 12 to face the Tulsa Oilers at 4:05 pm.

By: Mick Moninghoff

Catalina Maya
Catalina Maya PR
+1 786-300-5285
[email us here](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/904118710>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2026 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.