

Wounded J-Hawks fall to City High

Written by Ryan Suchomel

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IOWA CITY - The weight of history - and a week's worth of injuries - proved too much for Cedar Rapids Jefferson and the J-Hawks lost to No.10 Iowa City High, 35-10, Friday at Bates Field.

City High improved to 3-1 and became just the second program in Iowa to play 1,000 football games (Harlan is the other).

On the other side of history, Jefferson fell to 0-4 for the season. And the loss was the 34th over the last 35 games for the J-Hawks.

But Jefferson Coach Brian Webb knows his team isn't just a footnote.

"We are improving, regardless of the score," Webb said. "Our sophomore team is 3-1 right now. And we pulled up two sophomores because we were thin on the varsity.

"There are brighter days ahead for Jefferson football."

It was an odd week for the J-Hawks, with 20 players missing some amount of practice due to injuries or illness.

"It's just kind of a deal where the combination of concussion injuries and sickness ... literally half our team was gone," Webb said. "But our kids never wavered. We had kids step in and fill

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those roles. I'm proud of their effort."

The J-Hawks were without several players Friday, including leading rusher Michael Moncivais and linebacker Will Orr, their top tackler.

"With all the injuries and the depth problems we had this week, guys stepped up and did very well," senior quarterback Layne Sullivan said. "That gives us some hope. We do have a lot of guys that can step in and do the job."

The J-Hawks were in the game for three quarters. Jefferson drove into City territory five of the first six times it had the ball, but came away with just 10 points.

"That seems to be the story," Sullivan said. "When we get down in the red zone, we need to execute."

That included a drive in the first quarter that stalled on the doorstep.

Jefferson had 1st-and-goal at the 6. Recently promoted sophomore running back Mason Short gained 2 yards on first and second down, but a sneak by Sullivan on third down was a yard short and he threw incomplete on fourth down.

"That was disappointing," Sullivan said. "It's my job to get the ball in there, especially on the 1-yard-line. I've got to get in there.

"It didn't work out, and we needed that, for sure. That was a big moment."

Instead of being tied 7-7 on the road with 10th-ranked City, the J-Hawks turned it over on downs.

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Jefferson trailed at halftime, 14-3. Senior kicker Nicholas Rocha, who had missed from 38 yards earlier in the second quarter, hit a school-record 45-yard field goal with no time on the clock before intermission.

"After the first one, I had to forget about it and move on," Rocha said. "The more you think about it, the more you tend to miss. I moved to the side. I didn't talk to anyone."

Webb said Rocha had been wanting to get a crack at the school record, and he got it Friday because of a motion penalty that moved the kick from 40 yards to 45. Webb said Rocha can hit kicks from 60 yards out in practice.

Unfortunately for the J-Hawks, they needed extra points to keep pace with City High.

The Little Hawks came out after halftime and drove 94 yards on 11 rushing plays. Senior running back Xavier Washpun, who ended the night with 221 yards on 21 carries, had 81 yards on that drive.

"If we can do that ... well, every team in the country is going to do that if they can," City Coach Dan Sabers said. "That's the best way to be effective. And Xavier is a pretty damn special back."

The drive ended with a 1-yard dive by Jake Leohr. It put City up, 21-3.

"We had to come out the second half better than we did the first," Washpun said. "That's what we did. We got a drive going and got some momentum. We were good for the rest of the game."

City went up 28-3 before Jefferson responded with a touchdown at the start of the fourth

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quarter. Sullivan connected with Brandon Wiederin on a 22-yard scoring strike to make it 28-10 with the PAT.

Sullivan finished 11-for-17 for 187 yards.

"Offensively we moved the ball really well," Sullivan said. "But we've got to score down in the red zone. Certain little things, we need to fix them. We had the chance to put up some points."

Jefferson never got its running game on track and had just 114 yards on the ground compared to 349 for City High. Ben Keoring had 39 yards to lead the J-Hawks.

"We had three or four fresh faces in there that stepped up and played incredibly," Webb said. "We're not leaving this game disappointed."

With its power running game, City was able to run out the clock in the fourth quarter. Jefferson also hurt itself with two late interceptions by back-up quarterback Bryce Cardis.

"Every coach I talk to, when we play them, says 'You guys are so much better than last year,'" Webb said. "I know people look and see our score ... but we're so much better than we used to be."

Jefferson travels to Waterloo East (0-4) next Friday.

"From week one, we've grown a lot," Webb said. "I'm happy with our morale after the game. We were upbeat, and we should be. We played well."

IOWA CITY HIGH 35, JEFFERSON 10

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CRJ	ICH	
First downs	15	20
Rushes-yards	30-114	47-349
Passing yards	212	45
Comp-Att-Int	12-21-1	4-8-0
Fumbles-lost	2-1	2-1
Punts-avg.	1-31.0	1-29.0
Penalties-yards	2-10	6-31

Jefferson	0	3	0	7	-	10
Iowa City High	7	7	7	14	-	35

ICH - Xavier Washpun 42 run (Drew Cornwell kick).

ICH - Washpun 1 run (Cornwell kick).

CRJ - FG Nicholas Rocha 45.

ICH - Jake Leohr 1 run (Cornwell kick).

CRJ - Brandon Wiederin 22 pass from Layne Sullivan (Rocha kick).

ICH - Cory Lindsey 7 pass from Mitch Wieland (Cornwell kick).

Individual Statistics

Rushing

Jefferson - Ben Koering 3-39, Cam Frazier 4-30, Layne Sullivan 11-26, Nick O'Connell 7-7, Mason Short 4-8, Bryce Cardis 1-4.

Iowa City - Xavier Washpun 21-221, Mitch Wieland 5-42, Bryson Runge 7-41, Jake Leohr 4-35, Div Tosingilo 4-9, Chuck Riley 2-8, Kevin Buell 2-minus 11, Ivan Diaz 1-4, Marco Barengi 1-minus 2.

Passing

Jefferson - Layne Sullivan 11-17-187-0, Bryce Cardis 1-4-25-2.

Iowa City - Mitch Wieland 4-8-45-0.

Receiving

Jefferson - Cam Frazier 3-64, Mason Short 3-39, Brandon Wiederin 2-47, Ben Koering 2-22,

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Bryce Lund 1-25.

Iowa City - Jason Jones 2-30, Ivan Diaz 1-8, Cory Lindsey 1-7.