

J-Hawks tripped by Hempstead, 21-12

Written by Tom Fruehling

Saturday, 14 September 2013 00:33

After being on the losing side in 11 of the 12 games he's coached at Cedar Rapids Jefferson, Coach Brian Webb says it's like a broken record.

"It's the same thing over and over," he said Friday night after his J-Hawks lost, 21-12, to Dubuque Hempstead on Homecoming at Kingston Stadium.

"It's about discipline, attention to detail and execution. We perform well in practice. But we get in games and we make mistakes at key times."

Or, as assistant coach Nelson Evans put it, "We just keep shooting ourselves in the foot."

Jefferson defeated Hempstead for its only victory of the season last year, snapping a 24-game losing streak, but the Mustangs got even this time.

Once again, Jefferson (0-3, 0-1) was plagued by costly fumbles and penalties at the worst possible time. And lots of dropped passes.

"I can't count the number of dropped balls we had," Webb moaned. "In the time I've been here, I know we've had more dropped passes than completions."

The tone was set early.

Using a hurry-up offense, senior quarterback Layne Sullivan briskly moved his team downfield on Jefferson's opening possession. He hit Ben Koering on a 28-yard pass to the 23, but two

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plays later Koering turned it over on a fumble at the 13.

“Game after game,” Webb said, “we get it inside the 30 and then give it away.”

They wasted another opportunity at the end of the first quarter when shifty little speedster Michael Moncivais streaked 64 yards to the Mustangs' 10-yard line.

Sullivan called his own number twice, getting to the 2, but then was stuffed back at the 5-yard line.

The J-Hawks settled for a field goal by Nicholas Rocha to take a 3-0 lead.

On the very next play from scrimmage, Hempstead's workhorse tailback Matt Zenner made them pay by zipping through the line for 65 yards. A shoe-string tackle by Sullivan at the 10 saved a touchdown, but fullback Carter Daack scored two plays later and the visitors took a 7-3 advantage.

With under five minutes to go in the half, Koering burst 68 yards down to the 9. A holding penalty, however, pushed the ball back to the 26. Once more, the J-Hawks salvaged only a field goal.

“Plain and simple, we didn't execute when we were close to the goal,” Koering said.

Still, it was only 7-6 at halftime.

But while Jefferson's offense petered out in the second half, the Mustangs' Zenner was a one-man wrecking crew.

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The J-Hawks gained 256 yards total offense in the first half, but just 107 in the second. They rushed 13 times for only 29 yards after intermission.

Senior Brandon Wiederin picked off two interceptions in the game for Jefferson, with little to show for it.

For the night, meanwhile, Zenner ran for all but 60 of his team's 329 rushing yards on 30 carries. He scored from 22 to put Hempstead up 14-6, but Sullivan almost made it right back up with an 80-yard scoring jaunt.

The play, alas, was nullified by a holding penalty.

With five minutes left, Jefferson struck once more when Sullivan passed 23 yards to Koering to get inside the 10. Sullivan then ran it in from the 3, but the identical play failed on the 2-point try to leave the J-Hawks trailing 14-12.

Zenner applied a dagger when he scooted 68 yards for a touchdown with 2:01 left.

The J-Hawks' last gasp ended with another lost fumble.

"We're just this close to getting over the hump," said Jefferson defensive back Dakota Tomkins. "A few plays can make or break a game. But we'll get over the top yet."

HEMPSTEAD 21, JEFFERSON 12

DH	CRJ	
First downs	27	10
Rushes-yards	47-329	33-238

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Passing yards	42	137
Comp-att-int	7-14-2	12-21-0
Fumbles-lost	1-0	4-2
Punts-avg	5-43	5-40
Penalties-yards	12-100	5-58

Hempstead	7	0	7	7	– 21
Jefferson	3	3	0	6	– 12

Scoring plays

CRJ – FG Rocha 21
DH – Daack 2 run (Francis kick)
CRJ – FG Rocha 28
DH – Zenner 34 run (Francis kick)
CRJ – Sullivan 2 run (run failed)
DH – Zenner 68 run (Francis kick)

Individual statistics

Rushing

DH – Zenner 30-269, Daack 6-43, Paulsen 7-12.
CRJ – Sullivan 14-23, Moncivais 13-134, Koering 3-78.

Passing

DH – Paulsen 7-14-2-42.
CRJ – Sullivan 12-21-137.

Receiving

DH – Zenner 2-16, Hodge 2-14, Bushaw 2-10.
CRJ – Koering 6-68, Lund 2-36, Wiederin 2-23, Frazier 2-1.