

J-Hawks foiled by Tigers in OT

Written by Tom Fruehling

Friday, 02 October 2015 23:42 - Last Updated Friday, 02 October 2015 23:52



Jefferson gained twice as many yards on the ground as Cedar Falls Friday night at Kingston Stadium. But when it counted in overtime, the J-Hawks stumbled while the Tigers rumbled just enough to pull out a come-from-behind 34-31 win.

With the first crack to score in the extra period, after being stuffed on two running plays and completing a pass behind the line of scrimmage, Jefferson had to settle for a field goal to go ahead 31-28.

Cedar Falls came back with two 5-yard runs right up the gut to end the game.

"We knew what they were going to do," said J-Hawk coach Brian Webb, himself a product of Cedar Falls' proud prep football program.

"Power right and power left. But we just could not stop them.

"It's unfortunate, because I thought we were the better team. This was a game we knew we could win."

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Instead, Jefferson (3-3 overall) now finds itself 0-2 in district play. The Tigers (5-1) are 2-0 in the district.

For the J-Hawks, jubilation turned to disappointment in a matter of minutes.

Trailing 21-20, the Tigers looked like they had the game salted away when they took advantage of a shanked Jefferson 19-yard punt and methodically marched in to score with 2:02 left in regulation. A two-point conversion pass made it 28-21 for Cedar Falls and made up for an earlier missed extra point that was barely tipped sideways by Jeff's Jalen Woods.

In the next two minutes, however, Jefferson reserve junior quarterback Dylan Hart engineered a precise 83-yard drive to send the contest into overtime.

Filling in for starter Jared Eivins, who re-injured a bum left shoulder on the first series of the second half, Hart connected on six of seven passes down the stretch and twice kept the drive alive by scrambling out of trouble.



He was cool, calm and collected as time was running out. His laser-like strike to Jalyn Stafford for the tying touchdown came on fourth-and-10 with just nine seconds remaining in the fourth quarter.

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"Just a phenomenal performance by a back-up quarterback," Webb said. "To take us 83 yards down the field was tremendous."

Hart, who started last year on the sophomore squad, said he had few jitters when called on to take over for Eivins.

"After Jared hurt his shoulder last week (in a loss to Kennedy), I thought I might play some this week. So I took a lot of reps in practice," he said.

"It was kind of a tough role to be in. But our team knew what had to be done at the end. And we did it. We just never gave up."

Before he left the game, steady senior Eivins had 102 yards rushing on 14 carries and scored Jefferson's first touchdown from 21 yards in the first quarter to tie the game at 7-7.

Hart punched it over from the one to knot the score at 14-14 late in the third quarter.

Senior speed demon Manny Olutunde, who gained 83 yards in the third quarter, put the J-Hawks ahead with nine seconds left in the period when he slipped by a pack of defenders and slithered 45 yards for a score.

After the missed extra point by Cedar Falls, Jefferson clung to a 21-20 lead until the Tigers reclaimed it with two minutes left.

"We had our opportunities," said Webb, who noted that Jefferson has not won this traditional match-up in 22 years. "We had a few errors here and there, but the effort was phenomenal. We just couldn't stop them when we needed to."

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First downs	19	22
Rushes-yards	46-172	52-347
Passing yards	179	87
Comp-att-int	11-18-0	9-13-2
Fumbles-lost	0-0	3-2
Punts-avg	4-31	1-19
Penalties-yards	2-20	3-24

Cedar Falls 70 714 6 - 34

Jefferson 7 0 14 7 3 - 31

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Scoring plays

C – Alexander 1 run (Cook kick).

J – Eivins 21 run (Render kick).

C – Clausen 10 run (Cook kick).

J – Hart 1 run (Render kick).

J – Olutunde 45 run (Render kick).

C – Fagan 45 pass from Alexander (kick failed).

C – Alexander 1 run (Fagan pass from Alexander).

J -- Stafford 10 pass from Hart (Render kick).

J – Render 29 FG.

C – Clausen 5 run.

Individual statistics

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Rushing

Cedar Falls – DeGroote 18-76, Clausen 21-92.

Jefferson – Green 4-32, Rashed 15-100, Olutunde 5-83, Hart 10-32, Eivins 14-102.

Passing

Cedar Falls - Alexander 11-18-0-179.

Jefferson – Eivins 1-3-1-20, Hart 8-9-0-67, Short 0-1-1-0.

Receiving

Cedar Falls – Harrington 4-59, Fagan 2-59, Middleton 4-53.

Jefferson – Green 1-16, Hunt 1-20, Olutunde 1-13, Short 4-22, Stafford 1-10, Rashed 1-6, Crockett 1-10.