

Prairie falls short at IC West

Written by Jon Klinkowitz

Wednesday, 28 October 2015 23:48 - Last Updated Wednesday, 28 October 2015 23:54



IOWA CITY – In the opening moments, it was clear that the Prairie Hawks were facing an uphill battle in their Class 4A first-round playoff football game against Iowa City West Wednesday at Trojan Field.

Jalen Rima returned the opening kickoff 65 yards to the 34-yard line to put the Hawks in excellent field position to start the game. But a bad snap led to a sack of Prairie quarterback Tyler Nunemaker and gave the Trojans the ball.

West answered with a 67-yard touchdown pass from Alex Henderson to Dallas Majors to instantly take the lead. The Trojans went on to win 35-20 and end Prairie's season.

"We all got super-pumped about that," Prairie running back Trevor Northrup said of Rima's return. "We all expect him to do something like that and when he does, it always gets us going. They came out just as hot, though. It was tough."

West then recovered a fumble and Henderson struck again with a 7-yard touchdown run with 4:33 left in the first quarter before the Hawks could really get rolling on offense.

Northrup made the most of Prairie's next chance, however, with a 72-yard run that set up a Nunemaker 2-yard keeper to make it 14-7. But Mason Carter answered with an 88-yard kickoff return for a touchdown for Iowa City West.

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When the dust settled, the score was 20-7 after the first quarter.

The game was nearly even the rest of the way, but Prairie – missing three starters out with the flu – just couldn't get an offense going that had scored 101 points in the previous two games.

"We would call a play out and we'd repeat the play a few plays later, so they would just remember what the number was," Nunemaker said. "But I've got to give credit to them. They played a fantastic game. We just didn't come out the way we wanted."

Nunemaker had touchdown runs of 4 and 5 yards in the second half, but an on-side kick after the final touchdown with 6:07 left to play was recovered by the Trojans to prevent any hopes of a comeback.

Northrup finished with 141 yards on the ground for Prairie, and Nunemaker had 72. On the frigid, windy night, Nunemaker completed just two of three passes for 14 yards, while Henderson was 11 of 17 for 194 for West.

Prairie finished 4-6 under new coach Mark Bliss.

"The thing about it, we just couldn't get a break tonight at certain times during the course of the game, and they had some things go their way, whether it be a tipped ball or a crucial call on third-and-long that they were able to capitalize and get some first downs," Bliss said. "They did a good job of chewing clock tonight and kept us on the sidelines."

Bliss, who brought a completely new offensive system to Prairie this year, loses 21 seniors to graduation.

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"It's been a great year for the first year in the program, and I'd like to say I know we're a different team than June 3rd, when we started the summer pride stuff," he said. "We made the playoffs when a couple weeks ago people wrote us off."

Iowa City West improved to 4-6 and will play in a second-round game Monday.

IOWA CITY WEST 35, PRAIRIE 20

. CRP ICW

First downs	16	15
Rushes-yards	52-275	38-180
Passing yards	14	194
Comp-att-int	2-3-0	11-17-0
Punts-avg.	2-41	1-28
Fumbles-lost	4-1	1-1
Penalties-yards	2-10	2-15

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Prairie 7 0 7 6 – 20

Iowa City West 20 8 7 0 – 35

Scoring plays

ICW – Dallas Majors 67 pass from Alex Henderson (Lucas Karwal kick)

ICW – Henderson 7 run (kick blocked)

P – Tyler Nunemaker 2 run (Joel Collett kick)

ICW – Mason Carter 88 kickoff return (Karwal kick)

ICW – Henderson 5 run (Henderson run)

P – Tyler Nunemaker 4 run (Karwal kick)

ICW – Oliver Martin 29 pass from Henderson (Karwal kick)

P – Nunemaker 5 run (run failed)

Individual statistics

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Rushing

Prairie – Trevor Northrup 15-141, Tyler Nunemaker 21-72, Jalen Rima 7-34, Jake Pinter 4-18, Hunter Johnson 5-10.

Iowa City West – Alex Henderson 10-89, Yeshuwa Hicks 11-64, Mason Carter 8-16, Mason Koch 4-12, Oliver Martin 1-5, Devontae Lane 1-(-4), Team 3-(-4).

Passing

Prairie – Tyler Nunemaker 2-3-0-14.

Iowa City West – Alex Henderson 11-17-0-194.

Receiving

Prairie – Jalen Rima 1-8, Hunter Johnson 1-6.

Iowa City West – Dallas Majors 4-105, Oliver Martin 2-39, Mason Carter 2-33, Devontae Lane 3-17.