

Marion falls at Clear Creek-Amana

Written by Tom Fruehling

Saturday, 19 October 2013 00:56 - Last Updated Saturday, 19 October 2013 01:00



TIFFIN – With a postseason berth on the line, Marion gave up two costly fumbles and fell on the road to Clear Creek-Amana Friday night, 21-7.

Despite losing four of their last five games, the Indians (3-5) could still sneak into the playoffs with a win at home next Friday over DeWitt Central and if things fall in their favor.

“Once again,” said Marion Coach Tony Perkins, “we found ways to beat ourselves. With the fumbles and a couple of penalties, we just shot ourselves in the foot.”

The Marion defense was stout all night.

And on offense, the Indians had almost twice as many first downs (15 to 8) and more total yards (262 to 240). But, as has been the case much of the disappointing season, they were their own worst enemies.

It may have been an omen when, on the first play of the game, Marion senior running back Colton Mowry left the field limping. He's been hampered by a high ankle sprain and also had a knee injury earlier this year.

“He was our starter when the season began,” Perkins explained. “And he's played two games.

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That's been the story of our season. We've been pretty banged up."

Baby bull sophomore Kory Walsh has been a pleasant surprise as a replacement and once again had a strong outing with 98 yards rushing on 22 carries. But it was his fumble at midfield midway through the first quarter that led to the Clippers' first score.

They marched right down the field and went up 7-0 with two minutes to go in the quarter.

Marion quarterback Trevor Hardman came right back with a 35-yard pass down the sideline to lanky wide receiver Quinn Canoy. A holding penalty, however, killed the threat.

After stopping Clear Creek-Amana cold, Hardman engineered a 15-play drive on the ground that culminated with Walsh pounding in for a touchdown from the 1-yard line. The 65-yard drive took almost five minutes.

The Indians held the Clippers (4-4, 2-3) to only three first downs in the first half but could manage just a 7-7 tie.

"Dropped passes hurt us again," Perkins pointed out. "I thought Trevor threw the ball very well tonight."

The game-changer came shortly after halftime.

Marion held CCA on its first series, taking over after a punt on their own 32-yard yard line. On a 2nd-and-2, fullback Nick Kramer lost the ball trying to stretch for the first down.

"It was a simple play up the middle," Perkins said.

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Speedy Clipper defensive back Andrew Beckler scooped up the ball and scampered untouched for a 40-yard touchdown. The sudden momentum shift seemed to lift Clear Creek's energy. For the Indians, it was a kick in the gut.

"For some reason," Perkins said, "we seem to drop our heads when we get behind. We get mentally worn down. I wish I had a magic wand to change that, but I don't."

The Indians did seem to revive some after stopping Clipper quarterback Nile Rourke on a 4th-and-1 at the Marion 37 following an 11-play drive. But two false start penalties in a row snuffed a promising drive of their own. Hardman hit Cannoy twice for first downs, to no avail.

The Clippers (4-4, 2-3) then all but put the game away just after the fourth quarter got under way when scatback Jon Nzambo leaped over a tackler and zipped 58 yards to put his team ahead by two touchdowns. The Indians never threatened after that.

Hardman took the loss hard.

"I thought we came out strong with a lot of intensity," he said. "We didn't capitalize on our own opportunities. They did, we didn't."

"But we gave it our all. It's been a rough year for us. But we're not going to give up. We'll leave everything we've got on the field."

CLEAR CREEK-AMANA 21, MARION 7

MAR CCA

First downs	15	8
Rushes-yards	39-152	39-198
Passing yards	110	53

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Comp.-att.-int 10-29-1 3-9-1

Fumbles-lost 2-2 0-0

Punts-avg 4-30.0 6-37.2

Penalties-yards 8-65 11-80

Marion 0 7 0 0 – 7

Clear Creek-Amana 7 0 7 7 – 21

CCA – Akers 4 run (Jacobson kick)

MAR – Walsh 1 run (Kroemer kick)

CCA – Beckler 40 fumble recovery (Jacobson kick)

CCA – Nzombo 58 run (Jacobson kick)

Individual statistics

Rushing

Marion – Walsh 22-98, Fuller 7-22, Kramer 3-20.

Clear Creek-Amana – Nzombo 13-98, Bandy 9-88, Rourke 9-34.

Passing

Marion – Hardman 10-29-110-1.

Clear Creek-Amana – Rourke 3-9-53-1.

Receiving

Marion – Cannoy 7-92, Fuller 2-10.

Clear Creek-Amana – Beckler 1-19, Nzombo 1-28, Bandy 1-6.