

Old-fashioned Cougars stuff Rams

Written by Jim Ecker

Thursday, 19 September 2013 23:59 -

Amos Alonzo Stagg and Knute Rockne would have loved the old-fashioned offense being run by Cedar Rapids Kennedy these days.

And on this particular stormy night at Kingston Stadium, those ancient Hall of Fame coaches would have loved Kennedy's defense and special teams as well.

The Cougars parlayed their unique brand of football into a 19-9 victory over Dubuque Senior Thursday in a Mississippi Valley Conference game that began more than an hour late due to lightning and dangerous weather.

By the way, Kennedy has a name for its throwback attack.

"Stack-I-Punch-Them-In-The-Mouth," said quarterback Derek Jacobus, who hit 11 of 12 passes and had a good night. "It's a nice offense, man."

The Cougars (3-1, 1-1) often used seven blockers on the line of scrimmage, with tight ends on either side of the ball. They also put all three of their running backs in a straight line behind the quarterback, which means you could throw a net over all 11 of the tightly packed bunch.

Kennedy collected only 203 yards of total offense, but they held Dubuque Senior (1-3, 0-1) to 172 yards and excelled in the punting game with Killian Magee socking the ball five times for a robust 46.2-yard average.

"It was an ugly win, but that's OK, because it's been an ugly week," said Kennedy Coach Tim Lewis. "There were a lot of distractions, topped off by the chaos tonight."

The weather became chaotic during the sophomore game, which was stopped with 4:05 left in the third quarter due to lightning with Kennedy holding a 19-10 lead.

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When lightning persisted, school officials decided to cancel the rest of the sophomore game and go straight to the varsity contest, if possible. It didn't look good for a long time, but they finally began the main attraction at 8:42 p.m. and played in a light rain.

Kennedy struck first on a 5-yard touchdown run by Logan Wedo for a 6-0 lead with 7.7 seconds left in the first quarter. The PAT failed.

The Cougars made it 12-0 with 2:30 left in the first half when Jacobus, the state long jump champion, scored on a risky but successful play. He rolled to his right, leaped for the goal line and - while being hit in mid-air - reached out with the ball in his right hand and broke the plane of the end zone for a touchdown.

"Every time he does that kind of stuff, you just turn your head and close your eyes," said Lewis. "He's an athlete that tries to make plays. He wants the ball in his hands in big situations."

Kennedy misfired on the 2-point conversion, leaving the score 12-0.

The Cougars had to drive only 21 yards for that touchdown thanks to a heads-up play (kind of) by senior Anthony Carter when Dubuque Senior missed a field goal.

The ball was loose and sitting on the 3-yard line when Carter finally picked it up and dashed the other way. It was a live ball, but he didn't know it.

"I didn't," he confessed. "One of my teammates (Famiek Cook) said, 'Pick it up.' I thought they were going to blow it dead. They didn't blow the whistle, so I started running."

Carter didn't stop until he had gone 76 yards to the Dubuque Senior 21-yard line. Carter wasn't sure how long the ball sat on the 3-yard line, but it seemed like a long time.

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"About five or 10 seconds, I would say," he remarked. "I didn't know what to do in that situation at all. As soon as I picked the ball up, I saw the whole right side empty so I just took off down the right side."

The Rams pulled within 12-2 with 1:23 left in the first half when Jacobus was tackled in the end zone for a safety following an errant snap from center in shotgun position.

Kennedy took an 18-2 lead when Jacobus hit Drew Heitland with a 14-yard touchdown pass with 6:40 left in the third quarter. The Cougars marched 70 yards on that drive, eating more than five minutes off the clock to start the second half.

Mark Schulz kicked the PAT to make it 19-2.

Dubuque Senior drove toward the end zone on its next possession, thanks to a 51-yard scamper by backup quarterback Lee Bonifas. The Cougars stiffened and the Rams faced 4th-and-goal from the 3-yard line when Cook made the biggest defensive play of the game.

Bonifas completed a short pass to Colton Iwasaki near the goal line, but Cook - playing with a sore shoulder - raced to the scene and decked Iwasaki at the 1-yard line to prevent a touchdown and preserve the 19-2 lead.

Kennedy did not go anywhere on offense, but Magee belted a 52-yard punt to get the Cougars out of danger.

Dubuque Senior scored its only touchdown with 7:25 left in the game on a 5-yard pass from Bonifas to Sam Jaeger. The Rams "drove" 59 yards for their TD, but got a big lift when Kennedy was called for pass interference and unsportsmanlike conduct on the same play, resulting in 30 yards of free turf for Dubuque.

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Penalties, in fact, were Kennedy's biggest bugaboo Thursday night. The Cougars were flagged 15 times for 127 yards. On the other hand, they did not commit any turnovers after making five last week in a loss to Iowa City West.

Kennedy hosts top-ranked Xavier next Friday night at Kingston.

"I'm excited for that one," said Carter. "It's going to be a rematch for us (from last year). I hope we can get them this time, because they're ranked No.1."

The Cougars undoubtedly will try to use their power offense against Xavier, but the Saints have a powerful defense that has allowed only seven points in three games. Lewis said he'll be looking for ways to loosen things up a little, but he's not going to join the crowd and use a hurry-up spread offense like so many others.

Lewis likes his conservative old attack just fine. In fact, he thinks it may be the wave of the future.

"They're all going to come back to this. You watch," he said. "It all evolves."

KENNEDY 19, DUBUQUE SENIOR 9

DS	CRK
First downs	12 11
Rushes-yards	35-57 40-89
Passing yards	115 114
Comp-Att-Int	12-24-0 11-12-0
Fumbles-lost	2/0 1/0
Punts-avg.	5-34.8 5-46.2
Penalties-yards	1-9 15-127

Dubuque Senior	0	2	0	7	-	9
Kennedy	6	6	7	0	-	19

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CRK - Logan Wedo 5 run (kick failed)

CRK - Derek Jacobus 3 run (pass failed)

DS - Safety (Jacobus tackled in end zone)

CRK - Drew Heitland 14 pass from Jacobus (Mark Schulz kick)

DS - Sam Jaeger 5 pass from Lee Bonifas (Jack Kloft kick)

Individual Statistics

Rushing

Dubuque Senior - Bonifas 11-84, Williams 9-14, Hammel 8-3, Wilbricht 1-2, Clemens 7-minus 46.

Kennedy - Moa 17-61, Hall 6-29, Wedo 7-26, Blank 1-1, Jacobus 7-minus 11, Team 2-minus 17.

Passing

Dubuque Senior - Clemens 8-14-0-80, Bonifas 4-7-0-35, Team 0-3-0-0.

Kennedy - Jacobus 11-12-0-114.

Receiving

Dubuque Senior - Hoftender 4-32, Jaeger 3-59, George 2-41, Iwasaki 1-2, Wilbricht 1-minus 3, Hammel 1- minus 6.

Kennedy - Heitland 4-57, Blank 3-23, Hall 2-19, Cook 1-17, Shannon 1-minus 2.