

Jacobus eager to play for Cougars

Written by Jim Ecker

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The way Derek Jacobus sees it, he's waited too long to get a chance to play in an important playoff game to let a mysterious medical problem stand in the way.

He hopes his kidney specialist feels the same way so he can face Prairie in the first round of the Class 4A playoffs Wednesday night at Kingston Stadium.

Jacobus missed the entire 2012 football season with a shoulder injury and still wears a harness as a precautionary measure, even though his shoulder is fine.

He's had a good year as Kennedy's starting quarterback, but there was considerable doubt about his status for this past Friday's game against Iowa City High after he had urinated blood and went to the emergency room at 2:30 Friday morning.

"It was scary," Jacobus said Sunday before practice. "I was never feeling bad, but I knew something was wrong with everything that was going on."

Jacobus has been told he has a kidney-related ailment, but doesn't know if it's an infection or something caused by an injury. "I have no clue," he said.

Jacobus had lab work done Saturday morning and has an appointment with a kidney specialist Monday. At this point, he's cleared to play on Wednesday. "So far, yeah," he said.

The doctor in the emergency Friday morning advised him not to play, but did not forbid him from playing. "Sitting out all last year, when the doctor said I shouldn't play on Friday, I said, 'No, I'm playing,'" Jacobus related. "I waited a whole year. I need to be playing."

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Jacobus' mother is a nurse and the family is keeping a close eye on the situation.

Kennedy Coach Tim Lewis wondered all day Friday if Jacobus would be able to play against Iowa City High.

"It was a different kind of day with everything that was going on with Jacobus," said Lewis. "And then Logan Wedo (one of Kennedy's running backs) came in and told me they found out he broke his collarbone, and so he was going to be out.

"It was a chaotic mess all day long on Friday. It was kind of nice to get out there and play well."

Kennedy upset Iowa City High, 35-14, with Jacobus playing the whole game at quarterback and scoring two touchdowns, one on a 31-yard run and the other on a 45-yard kickoff return on an on-side kick.

Lewis did not know his quarterback's status until two hours before kickoff. "Basically when he showed up for the meeting at 5 o'clock," the coach said. Sammy Lizarraga is Kennedy's No.2 quarterback and would have gotten the start if Jacobus was unable to play.

Jacobus, a senior, has been a steady hand for the Cougars this season. He's rushed for 368 yards, scored eight touchdowns and completed 48 percent of his passes for 541 yards and five touchdowns. He did not complete any of his three passes against City High, but didn't need to with Miles Moa rushing for a school-record 300 yards.

Jacobus is one of the best all-around athletes in the state. He won a state title in the long jump at the Class 4A track meet last spring, batted .381 for the Kennedy baseball team as a shortstop and center fielder, is the starting quarterback for a playoff team with a 6-3 record and plans to basketball this winter as well.

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He's enjoyed playing football this year after missing the entire 2012 campaign. "We definitely have had a good season so far," he said. "It's been great. It's an all-around team effort."

He hopes to be on the field Wednesday. He feels fine, he said Sunday.

"I'm meeting with the kidney specialist Monday, but for now I'm playing," he said. "That's all I know."