

No. 5 Cougars bowl over J-Hawks

Written by Jim Ecker

Friday, 25 September 2015 23:19 - Last Updated Friday, 25 September 2015 23:32



Shaun Beyer never saw the umpire who got in his way during his 55-yard gallop for a touchdown Friday night against the Jefferson J-Hawks at Kingston Stadium.

Pity the poor ref.

And pity the undersized J-Hawks for the pounding they took from the fifth-ranked Kennedy Cougars as well.

Kennedy rushed for 441 yards and finished with 510 yards of total offense in its 35-7 conquest of Jefferson before a big crowd of approximately 5,000 fans who came to see a battle of two winning clubs.

It was Kennedy all the way.

The bigger, stronger Cougars drove 91, 90 and 84 yards on their first three possessions and never looked back.

They have been playing football at Kennedy since the school opened in 1967, and this is the first time a Kennedy football team has begun a season with five straight wins. It comes a year after the Cougars began the season with six straight losses.

"I feel really good, because I don't think a team has ever been 5-and-0 that's played at

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Kennedy," said workhorse tailback Tyler Dralle, who was right on the money. "I think we're the first team. It feels great to be able to do that."

Dralle lugged the ball 35 times for 221 yards and one touchdown in another typical (for him) night at the office. He's carried the ball 150 times for 780 yards and seven TDs this year behind Kennedy's formidable offensive line and has rarely taken a deep breath all season.

"He's just a tough kid," Kennedy coach Brian White said. "Somebody asked earlier, 'Do you have a pitch count on him? Is there a certain number that you stop running?' And the answer is, 'Yes, when we have more points, that's when we'll stop running.'



"He's a 17-year-old athlete that wants the ball," White said. "And I'm going to give it to him."

Beyer, the do-it-all senior for Kennedy, lined up as the punter on his team's second possession of the game and noticed the Jefferson defense was over-loaded toward his right. He called an audible and took off to his left, smashing into the umpire on his way to the end zone and accidentally knocking that official onto his backside for a few painful seconds.

"Honestly, I did not even see him," said Beyer, who measures 6-foot-5 with 210 pounds of muscle. "I thought it was a player, and when I got back from the end zone they're all like, 'You hit the ref.' I said, 'Really?' I didn't even know.

"I feel bad," Beyer said. "I wonder where he's at. I'd like to apologize."

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Beyer wiped out the poor official and Kennedy's offensive line wiped out the J-Hawks most of the night. Jackson Behn (265), Dalles Jacobus (255), Austin Kerska (220), Mason Jacobs (240) and Jackson Coker (260) were too tough for Jefferson to handle in the trenches.

"What can you do?," said vanquished Jefferson coach Brian Webb. "You just can't make bigger players. They try hard, but 250 pounds against 200 pounds, physics out-weighs everything.

"I knew it would be a long night if we got big-boyed. And we got big-boyed," he said. "They're bigger than us, and size wins in the game of football. They've got tools."

To make things even worse, the Cougars slipped Jacobus into the backfield for their jumbo package in goal-line situations and dared the J-Hawks to stop him. They couldn't as Jacobus barreled into the end zone for a pair of 6-yard touchdowns in the second half. He also carried half the Jefferson defense on his back for a 9-yard run from scrimmage.

Jacobus does not care if he's blocking or running with the ball, as long as he's part of the action.

"I like putting people on their back. You can do that scoring touchdowns, too," smiled Jacobus, who has five TDs on just eight carries this year.

In addition to all their size and talent, the Cougars had motivation on their side after losing to Jefferson, 27-24, in overtime last season when the J-Hawks gambled and scored a touchdown on a fourth-down pass when a field goal would have forced double OT.

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In case any of the Cougars had forgotten what happened last year -- or weren't there to see it -- Coach White gave all of his players a refresher course before the start of every practice this past week by hitting the rewind button on Jefferson's winning TD pass.

"They watched it for five minutes at the beginning of every practice," White said. "They sat there in silence and they watched it, every practice for five minutes.

"Hey, remember that feeling after that play. And that's not going to happen this week," he reminded them over and over. "They were sharp, and they were angry and nasty all week in practice. And we were ready to play a football game tonight."

It all began in the trenches.

"That was our goal coming into it, to control the line of scrimmage, because I feel like our five guys up front are the best in the state," Dralle said.

"They're not overly huge," White added about his offensive linemen. "They're not 300 pounds. But man, they're physical. They want the ball run behind them.

"They're arguing in the huddle which direction we're going to run the ball: Run behind me," the coach imparted, smiling. "So that's a nice problem to have."

Kennedy excelled on defense as well. The Cougars held Jefferson (3-2) to just 149 yards of total offense and seven first downs.

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Valentino Green broke loose for a 71-yard touchdown as the wildcat quarterback to get Jefferson on the board in the second half after the Cougars had grabbed a 28-0 advantage. Green rushed for 128 yards and made about 20 tackles on defense, despite suffering from leg cramps.

"He never quits," Webb said.

Green subbed at quarterback after Jared Eivins injured his left shoulder in the third quarter and had to leave the game. Eivins was wearing an ice pack on his shoulder in the fourth quarter. Webb said he did not know the severity of the injury.

Friday's game was the District 5 opener for both teams.

Kennedy visits Linn-Mar next Friday night. Jefferson hosts Cedar Falls for homecoming next Friday.

KENNEDY 35, JEFFERSON 7

. **CRJ** **CRK**

First downs	7	25
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Rushes-yards	29-109	60-441
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Passing yards	40	69
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Comp-Att-Int 5-14-0 5-8-0

Fumbles-lost 5-0 3-1

Punts-avg. 6-45.3 1-48.0

Penalties-yards 5-35 8-70

Jefferson 0 0 7 0 - 7

Kennedy 14 7 7 7 - 35

Scoring plays

K - Nick Duehr 3 run (Alex Stone kick)

K - Shaun Beyer 55 run (Stone kick)

K - Tyler Dralle 2 run (Stone kick)

K - Dalles Jacobus 6 run (Stone kick)

J - Valentino Green 71 run (Zebadiah Render kick)

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K - Jacobus 6 run (Stone kick)

Individual statistics

Rushing

Jefferson - Green 8-128, Rashed 5-17, Olutunde 4-8, Unkel 1-3, Short 6-minus 2, Eivins 5-minus 7.

Kennedy - Dralle 35-221, Beyer 3-67, DeMaris 4-39, McCarty 1-28, Jacobs 5-28, Duehr 6-22, Jacobus 3-21, Berry 2-17, Team 1-minus 2.

Passing

Jefferson - Eivins 5-11-0, 40; Green 0-1-0, 0; Short 0-2-0, 0.

Kennedy - Duehr - 5-8-0, 69.

Receiving

Jefferson - Hunt 2-16, Rashed 2-15, Short 1-9.

Kennedy - Beyer 1-31, DeMaris 1-19, Coates 1-13, Dralle 1-5, Gardner 1-1.