

'Little' brother leads the way in Kennedy win

Written by Mike Koolbeck

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It's not true that the dinner table at the Heitland household slopes away from Trevor and toward younger brother Drew.

It just seems that way.

Kennedy sophomore center Drew Heitland opened holes for his older, smaller brother, Trevor, that produced a pair of touchdowns and the Cougars whitewashed Jefferson, 32-0, Friday night in a Mississippi Valley Conference football game at Kingston Stadium.

Junior Alex Hillyer also rushed for 109 yards and two touchdowns for Kennedy. The Cougars (3-3) capitalized on three bad Jefferson snaps out of punt formation that produced a touchdown and two safeties. The Cougars also were the beneficiaries of excellent field position. They had first-half touchdown drives of 65, 29, 16 and 25 yards that helped them to a 30-0 lead by halftime.

The loss extended Jefferson's losing streak to 19 games. The J-Hawks (0-6) own the longest current losing skid in Class 4A.

Trevor Heitland showed no ill effects from a broken finger suffered a week ago in the Cougars' 34-13 loss to City High. He carried the ball 14 times for 75 yards and caught four passes for 41 yards. He also ran the Kennedy offense at quarterback out of the Wildcat formation during a second-quarter touchdown drive.

"I just taped it up and it was fine," said Trevor, who is listed at 5-foot-11 and 180 pounds.

Leading the way for Trevor was "little" brother Drew, who is 6-2 and 247 pounds and anchors the Kennedy offensive line.

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Drew said his size is not the result of him being a chow hound.

"My dad's side of the family is pretty big. I guess I just went that way," Drew said.

"I have no idea how that happened," Kennedy Coach Tim Lewis said of the difference in the brothers' size. "They're fun to have."

Both Heitlands said they like having the chance to play together. But that doesn't mean there aren't some moments of brotherly, uh, "love?"

"We put in the Wildcat formation last week during practice with Trevor taking the direct snap and one of the first times we did it, Trevor wasn't ready and Drew snapped it back there," Lewis said. "Of course, Trevor dropped it and they had a little spat.

"I told their dad I wanted to see a knockdown brawl out there, to see who would win that battle, because Drew says he will and Trevor says he will. ... They're both great kids. Drew is going to be a good one and Trevor is having a great year."

Lewis said it was Drew's drive in the weight room during the off-season that got him into the lineup. The Cougars have two sophomores - Austin Holzer is the other - starting in the offensive line.

"(Drew) worked his butt off all winter long. If I was to look back, I don't think he missed a day," Lewis said. "The opportunity is well deserved. That's the toughest spot on the O-line to play."

If the Kennedy offense was good, the defense was outstanding. The Cougars held Jefferson to 38 total yards. The J-Hawks had minus-55 yards rushing, but minus-64 came on the three bad snaps out of punt formation. Take those away and the J-Hawks rushed for 9 yards ... on 30 carries.

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"Definitely our kicking game put us in a bad way," Jefferson Coach Jim Womochil said. "(But) I thought our offense let us down. We couldn't move the ball up front. We were unable to handle their pressure. We never had any rhythm and it was up front where it was lost."

Jefferson was playing without starting tackles Christian Ohrt and Colton Spicer, both of whom are out for the season with injuries.

"We got about three new offensive linemen in there and that hurts us," Womochil said. "We were trying to get the ball on the perimeter, but Kennedy wasn't going to let us do that."

Jefferson did not get anything going until its final drive of the game, when it moved the ball from the J-Hawk 2 (after a false start penalty) to the Kennedy 18. They had minus-47 yards of total offense before that drive.

"Our defense helped us tremendously," Lewis said. "They gave us some three-and-outs and that was something we didn't do last week."

Kennedy also put pressure on Jefferson's punt team. J-Hawk punter Andrew Patience, under a heavy rush, averaged 24 yards on his first three kicks. Then the ball started sailing over his head. A bad snap that Patience recovered gave Kennedy the ball at the J-Hawk 16 midway through the second quarter, with Kennedy holding a 14-0 lead.

Two plays later, Trevor Heitland sliced in from the 7 for a 21-0 lead.

Patience got the punt off the next Jefferson possession, but Kennedy's Josh Jahlas returned it 16 yards to the Jefferson 25. Hillyer swept right on the first play and cruised untouched into the end zone for a 28-0 Kennedy lead with 5:18 left in the half.

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The safeties came late in the first half and early in the fourth quarter. Both sailed into the end zone. Patience kicked the first one out of the back of the end zone and fell on the other one.

"We weren't very good last week against City High. Our special teams kind of let us down," Kennedy special teams coach Kyle Knock said. "I challenged them Saturday morning and said, 'We have to get better. We've always been better.' I think our pressure might have caused the bad snaps, because we were bringing the heat."

And Jefferson wilted.

"We had problems with our kicking game in the second quarter and we just couldn't dig our way out of it with all the short fields," Womochil said. "We also had some problems tackling in the first half, especially on their cutbacks."

Lewis said he was somewhat disappointed in his team's play in the second half, when the Cougars ran for 100 yards and passed for 35. The first team stayed in the game until early in the fourth quarter.

"We told the kids at halftime that we didn't want any drop in their level of play, but that we were going to run the ball," Lewis said. "So I'm a little bit disappointed because we didn't do that. But overall, any win in the MVC is a win you have to be pleased with."

Kennedy hosts No. 9 Iowa City West (5-1) Thursday at Kingston Stadium. Jefferson plays at Prairie (0-6) Friday.

KENNEDY 32, JEFFERSON 0

Kennedy	7	23	0	2	-	32
Jefferson	0	0	0	0	-	0

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CRK - Trevor Heitland 9 run (Jordan Holzer kick)

CRK - Alex Hillyer 1 run (J.Holzer kick)

CRK - T.Heitland 7 run (J.Holzer kick)

CRK - Hillyer 25 run (J.Holzer kick)

CRK - Safety, bad snap kicked out of the end zone

CRK - Safety, bad snap recovered in end zone

Team Stats

First downs -- CRK 15, CRJ 9

Rushes yards -- CRK 42-243, CRJ 33-(-55)

Receiving yards -- CRK 75, CRJ 93

Comp-Att-Int -- CRK 10-13-0, CRJ 9-18-1

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Punts-avg. -- CRK 3-28.3, CRJ 5-25.2

Fumbles-lost -- CRK 1-1, CRJ 2-0

Penalties-yards -- CRK 8-60, CRJ 6-50

Individual Stats

Rushing -- CRK: Alex Hillyer 17-109, Trevor Heitland 14-75, Jonah Heskje 5-46, Prince Kollie 4-12, Ryan Unash 1-1, Shane Williams 1-0. CRJ: Austin Short 16-18, Alex Baxter 3-7, Drake Allen 2-4, Hunter Kloubec 1-2, Layne Sullivan 8-(-22), Team 3-(-64).

Passing -- CRK: Chico Lizarraga 6-9-0-54, Joel Smetzer 4-4-0-21. CRJ: Sullivan 9-17-0-93, Baxter 0-1-1-0.

Receiving -- CRK: T.Heitland 4-41, Jacob Frazier-Flores 1-13, Josh Jahlas 1-8, Heskje 1-7, Hillyer 1-5, Kyle Hermanson 1-3, Unash 1-(-2). CRJ: Christian Knox 4-36, Baxter 2-31, Kloubec 1-13, Austin Goodell 1-8, Short 1-5.

Sophomore score - Kennedy 19, Jefferson 8