

Linn-Mar bumped off by IC West

Written by Mike Condon

Monday, 03 November 2014 23:56 - Last Updated Tuesday, 04 November 2014 09:46



One stop.

That's all the Linn-Mar Lions needed in the final two minutes with Iowa City West sitting 93 yards from the winning score.

That stop never came.

Iowa City West drove the length of the field and scored the winning touchdown on a 9-yard run by Yeshuwa Hicks with 25 seconds left for a 38-34 victory win in the second round of the Class 4A playoffs Monday night at rainy Linn-Mar Stadium.

The victory sends Coach Garrett Hartwig's 7-4 Trojans into a Friday night quarterfinal game against top-ranked Cedar Rapids Washington at Kingston Stadium. The Warriors advanced with a win over Cedar Falls.

Linn-Mar closes its season at 9-2.

Having to play catch-up against good football teams is nothing new for Iowa City West. Linn-Mar was the fifth No. 1 playoff seed the Trojans have faced this year.

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"We've been in this situation all year long," Hartwig said after West rallied from an 11-point deficit in the final five minutes. "We've been down, but we don't quit. These kids are coached not to quit."

And for Linn-Mar, it was a scene all too familiar. The Lions held a two-score lead against Cedar Rapids Washington in their last playoff appearance in 2011, only to see the Warriors rally with a pair of late touchdowns to get the win.

"The football life is hard sometimes," lamented Lions Coach Bob Forsyth. "Give West all the credit. They made the plays and we couldn't get the stop."

Linn-Mar trailed 23-21 at halftime and was struggling in the third quarter until West's Oliver Martin muffed a punt, which was recovered by Jordan Junkins at the Trojan 5. Quarterback Ryan Schmidt scored on the next play to give the Lions a 28-23 lead with the PAT.

The margin grew to 34-23 when Schmidt capped a long solid drive with a 4-yard run.

West rode the right arm of quarterback Aaron Bleil, who completed 21 of 36 passes for 347 yards and two scores and Hicks, a rugged back who carried 28 times for 155 yards.

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Bleil capped a 77-yard drive with a 1-yard run. A successful two-point pass play left West behind 34-31 with 5:11 left. The Lions were able to get one first down and take three minutes off the clock before Sean Zimmerman's punt rolled dead at the West 7.

It appeared the Lions had the big play they needed when a Bleil pass floated right towards Linn-Mar defensive back Perrion Scott, who had the ball slip through his hands with just over a minute left.

That gave West new life and the Trojans took advantage, converting on the fourth down play after Scott's misfortune on the previous play.

That play seemed to inspire the Trojans. They needed just eight plays to drive down the field, capping it off with Hicks' burst up the middle from the 9.

Linn-Mar had one final shot, but Schmidt was ruled to have fumbled on the first play after the kickoff and West recovered to seal the win.

"The kids played hard, but they were a little mismatched up front," Forsyth said. "We counted on our defense all year, and they usually came up big. We couldn't come up with it tonight.

"There's really only going to be one happy team at the end of this tournament and we're not going to be it."

Schmidt capped his two-year career with 167 yards passing with a TD strike and 96 yards rushing and three scores. Scott, who scored Linn-Mar's first TD on a nifty 80-yard run, finished with 132 yards on 15 carries.

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Schmidt and Scott were two members of a large senior class that led the Lions back to respectability after a 2-7 finish in 2013.

"I can't say enough about that group," Forsyth said. "They look back and see that they had a great season. They did a lot of great things for the program. Hopefully they gave a path for the other kids to follow and I couldn't be prouder of them."

IOWA CITY WEST 38, LINN-MAR 34

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| | | |
|-----------------|---------|--------|
| First downs | 26 | 21 |
| Rushes-yards | 37-162 | 42-241 |
| Passing yards | 347 | 167 |
| Comp-Att-Int | 21-36-0 | 9-21-0 |
| Fumbles-lost | 0-0 | 2-1 |
| Punts-avg. | 4-30.0 | 5-37.4 |
| Penalties-yards | 3-35 | 9-55 |

Iowa City West □ □ 7 □ 16 □ 0 □ 15 □ - 38

Linn-Mar □ □ □ □ □ □ 7 □ 14 □ 7 □ □ 6 □ - 34

LM - Perrion Scott 80 run (Sean Zimmerman kick)

ICW - Yeshuwa Hicks 16 run (Connor Gordon kick)

ICW - FG Gordon 27

LM - Garret Evans 23 pass from Ryan Schmidt (Zimmerman kick)

ICW - Oliver Martin 9 pass from Aaron Bleil (Gordon kick)

LM - Schmidt 6 run (Zimmerman kick)

ICW - Tyler Eads 33 pass from Bleil (kick failed)

LM - Schmidt 5 run (Zimmerman kick)

LM - Schmidt 4 run (run failed)

ICW - Bleil 1 run (Connor Creene pass from Bleil)

ICW - Hicks 9 run (Gordon kick)

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Individual Statistics **Rushing**

Iowa City West - Yeshuwa Hicks 28-155, Tyler Eads 1-minus 4, Aaron Bleil 4-17, Oliver Martin 1-minus 1, Chase Blatz 1-1, Michael Krupp 1-minus 3, Team 1-minus 3
Linn-Mar - Perrion Scott 15-132, Ryan Schmidt 20-96, Andrew Gassmann 1-11, Daniel Gorsich 4-2, Jordan Junkins 1-9. Team 1-minus 9

Passing

Iowa City West - Aaron Bleil 21-36-0-347
Linn-Mar - Ryan Schmidt 9-21-0-167

Receiving

Iowa City West - Oliver Martin 7-90, Tyler Eads 6-140, Alex Henderson 3-19, Donovan Doyle 2-15, Connor Greene 2-72, Ayoub Ali 1-11
Linn-Mar - Trevor Noble 4-61, Perrion Scott 2-54, Garret Evans 1-23, Jordan Junkins 1-18, Andrew Gassmann 1-11