

Saints knock off proud Indians

Written by Tom Fruehling

Saturday, 25 October 2014 00:09 -



Marion's hard-luck football season came to a merciful end Friday night with another tough defeat, this time a fiercely fought 37-6 loss to Xavier on the Saints home turf.

But at least Indians senior Dontavious Young closed out his career with a bang.

Down 16-0 at halftime, Marion kicker Carter Stigge opened the second half with a boot that bounced around the near the goal line. Running pell-mell downfield, Young pounced on the loose ball at the 1 yard line.

"Astonished, that's what I was," Young said of his fortuitous fumble recovery. "It hit one of their players, and then I think he thought it was going to go out of bounds or in the end zone.

"It was kind of amazing, but it shows you should never give up on a play 'til the whistle blows."

The lead was whittled two plays later when Hayden Meister made a sliding catch of a short pass from hard-nosed quarterback Gage Kray.

It's 16-6 and we're back in the game," Marion Coach Tony Perkins recounted. "Then, as usual, lightning strikes."

Four turnovers later in their own territory (two fumbles and two interceptions) led to four Saints scores that made the final margin seem more lopsided than it should have been.

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“We were playing on guts,” said Perkins of his injury-depleted team that ended up 1-8 with its eight straight losses. “And these kids played their guts out. Every game they’ve given everything they have. They never give up.”

Young, for one, rarely ran with the ball this year after fumbling his first snap in the second game back in early September. Inserted in mop-up duty in the last minute Friday night, however, he made the most of it by ripping off a 39-yard run as time expired.

“We’ve fought some adversity this year,” said Young. “But we’ve got a lot of strong guys on this team. We fought to the end.”

As for Xavier, it finished the regular season at 6-3 and claimed the Class 3A District 4 title at 5-1. The Saints are a No. 1 seed for the Class 3A playoffs and will host a No. 4 seed in the first round Wednesday night.

It’s a milestone for the Saints, noted long-time Coach Duane Schulte. “This is the first district championship in Xavier football,” he said.

It’s also the first time the school has played in district competition.

“But as Chester A. Arthur once said, ‘It is what it is,’” quipped Schulte.

For Perkins, meanwhile, he’s been chasing the legendary Les Hipple’s all-time Marion coaching record of 105 victories since the Indians won their season opener 28-6 over Mt. Vernon. He’s been stuck on 104 career wins ever since.

“Maybe next year,” the laconic coach said. “I hope so.”

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XAVIER 37, MARION 6

MAR XAV

First downs 5 10
Rushes-yards 34-124 38-183
Passing yards 24 104
Comp-att-int 5-12-2 9-15-0
Fumbles-lost 2-2 2-0
Punts-avg. 7-43.4 5-39.4
Penalties-yards 7-42 3-30

Marion 0 0 6 0 -- 6
Xavier 7 9 14 7 -- 37

Scoring plays

XAV – Jay Kortemeyer 8 pass from Bryce Schulte. Dallas Klein kick.
XAV – Camden Stovie 55 punt return. Kick failed.
XAV – Klein 24 field goal.
MAR – Hayden Meister 8 pass from Gage Kray. Run failed.
XAV – Kortemeyer 8 run. Klein kick.
XAV – Joe Welch 45 pass from Schulte. Klein kick.
XAV – Welch 26 pass from Schulte. Klein kick.

Individual statistics

Rushing

Marion – Kory Walsh 15-61, Dontavious Young 2-40.
Xavier – Jay Kortemeyer 26-154, Schulte 3-13, Andrew Steffensmeier 5-20.

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Passing

Marion – Gage Kray 5-12-24-2.

Xavier – Bryce Schulte 8-14-97-0, Blake Whitten 1-1-7-0.

Receiving

Marion – Meister 4-19, Derek Smith 1-5.

Xavier – Welch 2-71, Kortemeyer 4-25, Matt Downey 1-7, Nick Stark 2-1.

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