

2011 Division 1 State Tournament - Round 1 - Game 7 - Football

Canton vs. Plymouth - Game Preview & News

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Plymouth High School, Canton, MI

VIDEO: Piwowar kick gives Canton 24-21 victory over Plymouth in Division 1 football playoffs

Tom Barry | MLive.com, October 28, 2011 10:13 p.m.



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Canton kicker Scott Piwowar talks to the press after kicking the game-winning field goal in a 24-21 win over Plymouth.

Canton kicker Scott Piwowar made a 36-yard field goal as time expired to give the No. 6 Chiefs a 24-21 road upset over No. 5 Plymouth in a Division 1 Region 2 District 2 pre-district game.

"During the final drive, I was thinking, 'Just give me a chance to win this,'" Piwowar said. "To do this against Plymouth was just perfect. I think the momentum has shifted back our way."

Piwowar's kick capped a wild final 6:19 in which Canton (8-2) outscored Kensington Lakes Activities Association South Division rival Plymouth (8-2), 10-7.

This was the fourth time in two seasons the cross-town opponents have met. Plymouth captured the last two contests, 17-7 in last year's district finals and 31-30 on October 7.

"It feels great to beat Plymouth," Canton coach Tim Baechler said. "I think we should have had it in Week 7, but we let it get away. We finally got the luck on our side."

With 6:19 remaining and the score tied 14-14, Canton capitalized on a drive that started at the Plymouth 47-yard line and used a strong running game to lead up to a 2-yard rush from running back Ryan Jones for the Chiefs' first lead of the game, 21-14.

On the next drive, Plymouth stated at its own 20 and running back Donte Fox ran two consecutive plays for a total of 79 yards to get the ball to the Canton goal line.

Two plays later, Fox punched the ball in for a 1-yard rush to even the score again with 4:40 remaining, 21-21.

Canton was forced to begin from its own 20 on the ensuing drive, but behind the running of Kevin Buford, Zac Merrilat, Malcolm Hollingsworth and Jones, the Chiefs slowly chewed up the clock and with two seconds remaining and put Piowar in position to end the game.

Buford, Jones and Hollingsworth, respectively had 73, 56 and 68 rushing yards, and each had a rushing touchdown.

Merrilat lead all Chiefs with 74 yards on ten carries.

Fox led Plymouth with 149 yards and a touchdown on 15 carries, including two runs of 50+ yards.

Wildcats quarterback Shaun Austin 59 rushing yards and a touchdown on ten attempts to go with 5-for-10 passing for 74 yards.

Plymouth coach Mike Sawchuk said that what has transpired the last two seasons, especially against Canton, has made the Wildcats a force to be reckoned with.

"I think we've built a program," Sawchuk said. "These young kids got to learn from this loss and hopefully we'll keep moving."

Each team scored a touchdown in the first half as Canton struck first with a 1-yard run by Buford with 1:25 left in the first quarter, followed by Fox tying the game for Plymouth with a 53-yard rush with 4:46 before the half.

The Wildcats missed two field goal attempts in the first half.

The teams swapped scores again in the third quarter with a 6-yard run by Austin to give Plymouth a 14-7 lead with 4:40 to go in the frame, before Canton tied things up again with 41-yard score by Hollingsworth with 58 seconds to go before the fourth.

After avenging two tough losses to its archrival, Canton will await the result of Saturday's game between Northville and Detroit Catholic Central to see who its district final opponent will be.

[Plymouth vs. Canton: MyFoxDETROIT.com](http://MyFoxDETROIT.com)