

Chiefs pour it on, 55-14

Rockets, rain can't dampen Canton's homecoming

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Canton running back Charles Turfe (No. 28) eludes Westland John Glenn defender Andre Brown (No. 12) during Friday night's game. / ANN ESPINOZA



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The prediction of heavy thunderstorms Friday night did not come to pass, but the Canton Chiefs rained down points instead.



Westland John Glenn's Travis Solberg (No. 15) tries to bring down Canton running back Robert Daoud (No. 1). / ANN ESPINOZA

Canton also made its homecoming game one to remember as the Chiefs pelted Westland John Glenn 55-14 in a KLAA South Division football tilt.

Scoring almost at will in the first half to go up 35-0 by the time the homecoming king and queen were crowned, the Chiefs (4-0 overall, 2-0 in the KLAA South) had such a grip on the victory that the second half was played with a running clock.

“This is a fun group. They’re practicing their butts off and it’s a game of momentum,” Canton head coach Tim Baechler said. “It’s a little bit of a surprise that we’re doing it so well.

“We really haven’t had many close games other than the first one. But I’m not going to

complain.”

Baechler credited a total team effort on defense for the lopsided outcome.

Apparently, in addition to watching the Weather Channel, the Chiefs spent some time studying film of John Glenn running back Devon Spalding — who ran for about 220 yards the previous week against Livonia Franklin.

Spalding could not get untracked against Canton, winding up with 11 all-purpose yards.

Slow 'mo'

According to John Glenn head coach Tim Hardin, his squad (2-2, 1-1 in the KLAA South) could not gain much traction almost from the start of the game.

Weather had nothing to do with that, but rather the heady performance of the Rockets’ opponent, he emphasized.

“They (Chiefs) played great football today,” Hardin said. “They’re very well-coached, I don’t think that with our guys effort was an issue.

“I don’t think the weather helped, and just the momentum. We couldn’t get the momentum on our side at all and that hurt us.”

Like a well-oiled machine, the Chiefs moved down the field for touchdowns on all five first-half possessions. At the half, Canton had outgained John Glenn by approximately 200-60 and finished with a healthy margin of 441-218.

But things might have been a little different had the Rockets come up with a big stop on Canton’s first drive.

With about eight minutes to go in the first and the Chiefs facing a fourth-and-three at the Rockets’ 12-yard line, Canton junior quarterback Greg Williams (5-of-5 passing, 101 yards, all in the first half) rolled right and fired a touchdown pass to senior Jake Boucher.

“Our first series on defense, we played well,” Hardin said. “And really, we had them shut down. And then they hit a pass over our guy’s head.

“But they scored and came right back and scored again and at that point it’s hard to keep the momentum. We just didn’t play as inspired as they did today.”

Trickery works

Canton’s second TD came with 11:55 left in the first half, when Williams scored on a 5-yard run around the right edge. Helping set up the play was a nifty fake into the line by running back Robert Daoud.

“Good fakes, that’s part of our offense,” Williams said. “We trick guys and fool them and it works.”

On the Chiefs’ next series, a zig-zagging 43-yarder by Daoud set up Williams’ 13-yard TD burst through the middle of the defense.

Williams connected on a 53-yard pass to Charles Turfe to start off Canton’s subsequent possession. Three plays later, senior Westen Price took it in from 12 yards out to put the Chiefs up 28-0.

Before the intermission, extra effort by Turfe resulted in a 4-yard score to build the 35-point halftime bulge.

Brian Newton and Turfe scored on runs of 1 and 8 yards, respectively, to make it 49-0 before the Rockets finally got on the scoreboard. Adding his sixth and seventh extra points of the night was Canton kicker Andrew Loehnis.

Quarterback Chris Scheffer (5-of-8 passing, 104 yards) teamed up with Jaron Flourony on a beautiful, 80-yard catch-and-run with 2:34 left in the third.

Scoring Canton's final touchdown of the game was Dallas Garvey, on a 1-yard plunge.

John Glenn added an 83-yard touchdown run by Kimari Johnson, who walked the tightrope down the right sideline for the final 30 yards of the play.

Sharing the load

The Chiefs had 11 players gain at least 1 yard rushing. Leading the way with 73 yards in seven carries was Ty Jasmin, with Williams (seven carries, 59 yards), Turfe (11 carries, 50 yards, two TDs), Daoud (three rushes, 48 yards), Winningham (five rushes, 44 yards) and Price (seven carries, 34 yards, one TD) not far behind.

"The run game was going good and the outside (run) was really working good," Williams said. "The line did great. They were pinching in for the inside game, but we got them on the outside."

Before the opening kickoff, Baechler said the team wanted to get right to business not knowing what the weather might hold.

"Yeah, earlier today we were worried about it (the forecast)," Baechler said. "And once we got out here, we knew we had an open window of a couple hours where we could get it in."

The Rockets might have wished that those rains indeed had come, the way it turned out for them.