

Turfe, Canton runs over Plymouth, 34-23, to win KLAA South football crown (with video)

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Behind the speed of running back Chuck Turfe, Canton won its crosstown rivalry football game with Plymouth on Friday, 34-23, to capture the Kensington Lakes Activities Association South Division title during the MLive.com Metro Detroit Game of the Week.

Turfe exploited the holes in the Plymouth defense, running 31 times for 128 yards and two touchdowns.

“This is the biggest game of the year for us,” Turfe said. “We’re playing our best friends out there. The offensive line was unreal for us. We would have been able to drive a truck through the holes they created, so all the credit goes to them.”

The Chiefs (7-0, 5-0) will host Northville, a 40-13 winner Friday over Novi, on Oct. 18 at 7 p.m. for the Kensington Conference championship.

Canton is ranked No. 3 in Division 1 according to The Associated Press.



Canton running back Chuck Turfe (28) is congratulated by teammate Jake Boucher (11) after scoring a touchdown against Plymouth. (Jared Purcell | japurcell@mlive.com)

The Chiefs began a methodical drive down the field to open the game, slowly marching down the field until running back Weston Price got his hands on the ball and rushed it into the end zone from 24 yards out for a 6-0 lead following a missed extra point.

Plymouth (5-2, 3-2) took advantage of the failed PAT when wide receiver Cameron Stella took the ensuing kickoff 98 yards for a touchdown and a 7-6 Wildcats advantage.

Canton did its part on its next possession, though, holding the ball long enough to ensure Plymouth would not have an offensive play in the opening quarter.

The Chiefs continued the long drive and were rewarded when Turfe punched in a one-yard run to put the Chiefs back on top, 13-7, just 13 seconds into the second quarter.

The game continued on its quick pace as Plymouth pounded the ball down the field, culminating in a 16-yard rushing score for running back DJ Rossell, giving the Wildcats a 14-13 lead with 6:08 left in the half.

Canton kept rushing the ball while Plymouth struggled to contain the running backs, with Turfe capping it off on another one-yard touchdown run and sending the Chiefs back on top, 20-13, with 1:58 remaining before halftime.

The Wildcats' Matt Busch kicked a 41-yard field goal to trim the deficit to three points, but Canton used another slow running drive that was finished with a Chase Wunningham 27-yard sprint to extend Canton's lead to 27-17.

Chiefs running back Greg Williams added a one-yard score to give Canton its largest lead of the game at 34-17 with 4:52 left in the contest.

Plymouth managed to trim the deficit to 34-23 when quarterback AJ Convertino hit Busch with a 31-yard pass with two minutes to go, but Canton scooped up the onside kick to finish the contest.

As soon as the clock hit zero, the Canton students rushed the field and joined the team in the postgame talk before the players, coaches and students came together to celebrate the team's first KLAAs South title since 2010.

"It was huge to hold them to just a field goal in the second half," Canton coach Timothy Baechler said. "We were able to march right back down the field and score again, so that's a four-point swing right there. We stopped them on fourth down and scored again. That's the way you need to play."

Rossell rushed the ball 22 times for Plymouth, racking up 123 yards and a touchdown.

The Wildcats will try to lock up a playoff berth Oct. 18 at 7 p.m. in a home meeting with Novi.

"Canton was smart tonight," Plymouth coach Mike Sawchuk said. "They had a great scheme to get to our kids. Their stacked-T formation really got to us."

"I told our players to look at the students rushing the field and celebrating with the players and staff. I told them, 'Whether it's the playoffs or next season, remember that.'"

<http://highschoolsports.mlive.com/news/article/-5792482454070855607/turfe-canton-runs-over-plymouth-34-23-to-win-klaa-south-football-crown/>