


## Chiefs lose 44-41 heartbreaker to Warriors

Nov. 2, 2013 |  Written by [Tim Smith](#) Staff Writer

### Amazing comeback by Chiefs goes for naught in 44-41 loss to WLW

Yes, it was only a predistrict football game.

But for thrills and skill, Friday's Division 1 contest between Canton and host Walled Lake Western might exceed anything that takes place later this month at Ford Field when the champions are crowned.

The Chiefs — stoked by the running game of junior Chuck Turfe and the passing combo of junior quarterback Greg Williams to senior tight end Jake Boucher — came all the way back from a 38-20 deficit in the fourth quarter with 21 unanswered points.

Canton went up 41-38 with 2:27 to play when Williams found Boucher for a 23-yard scoring strike.

Unfortunately for Canton, the Warriors weren't done, marching right back to win the game 44-41 with 1:06 left on on a 28-yard pass from senior quarterback Kyle Bambaro to senior split end David Walczyk.

"It's a very tough district, it's a shame somebody has to lose," said Canton head coach Tim Baechler, whose team finished 8-2 for the season. "It'd be nice to be matched up with a 5-4, 6-3 team, but that's not how it works in our state.

"The better team is moving on and we're not, unfortunately. We gave ourselves a great chance to win. I'm so proud of our kids, it was an incredible comeback and a heck of a game if you're a fan."

Western (9-1) moves on to face Novi-Detroit Catholic Central, as the Shamrocks defeated Northville on Friday.

#### Worth the hype

Bambaro, who is a candidate for MLive's Player of the Year Award, showed why he is so highly touted. The 5-9 quarterback was a dominating force from the start of the contest, completing 10 of-17 passes for 141 yards and three touchdowns while also running for 214 yards.

He showed his mettle when his team needed it most, finding itself down following Canton's fourth-quarter explosion — which also included Williams' 66-yard TD pass to Boucher (seven catches, 198 yards, two TDs) and a 3-yard scoring plunge by Turfe (24 carries, 193 yards, three TDs).



Canton senior Jake Boucher (No. 11) eludes Walled Lake Western's Luke Schuman (No. 49) after catching a pass Friday night. John Kemski | Express Photo



Canton defenders Forrest Hall (No. 18) and Jake Pagel (No. 49) try to haul down Walled Lake Western's John Simmons during the predistrict football contest. JOHN KEMSKI | EXPRESS PHOTO

A pass interference penalty against Canton moved the sticks near midfield and Bambarid ran for chunks of 13, 7 and 6 yards down to the Chiefs' 28. Bambarid then found Walczyk (eight catches, 117 yards, three TDs) in the end zone to give his team the lead and crush Canton's hopes in the process.

"He's unbelievable," Baechler said about Bambarid. "Even when we had him locked up, we couldn't tackle him. He's just a quick, shifty kid. He's tough."

"We corralled him a couple times, but for the most part it was a tough night trying to tackle that kid."

With just over a minute left and 80 yards to drive the football, there wasn't much time for one last miracle.

### **Go the distance**

"It's got to be that we put the ball in the end zone," Bambarid said about the mind-set after suddenly trailing the Chiefs late in the fourth. "As an offense we're confident. The whole game we were moving the ball, just a couple self-inflicted wounds."

"But we moved the ball all game and we just knew that we had to do it one more time."

Boucher congratulated the Warriors for the hard-fought victory and wished them the best against Catholic Central.

"I'm hoping they make it far," he said. "I don't want to lose to the team that loses the next round. I want them to win states."

Canton actually got out of the gates quickly, leading 14-3 midway through the first.

After Western opened the scoring on a 42-yard field goal by — who else — Bambarid, the Chiefs took a 7-3 advantage on a 47-yard run down the sideline by Turfe.

Drew Misenko recovered an ensuing Warriors fumble and Turfe scored two plays later, from 19 yards, out to give Canton a sudden 11-point lead, quieting the home fans at Warrior Stadium.

Bambarid got seven of those points right back, on a 10-yard TD pass to Walczyk before the end of the first.

Canton looked to be marching toward another touchdown early in the second, especially after Williams (12-of-15 passing, 249 yards, two TDs) connected on a 33-yard pass to Turfe on fourth down.

Turfe grabbed the ball near the 15 and was pulled down inside the 5-yard line by John Witkowski.

On the next play, however, Williams fumbled the snap right back to the Warriors and it only took Bambarid three plays to turn the tables for a touchdown.

He ran for 68 yards on one play and then threw a 25-yarder to Walczyk in the left corner of the end zone to make it a 17-14 Western lead.

Bambarid's next highlight-reel play was good for a 32-yard touchdown run and sent the Warriors into halftime with a 24-14 edge.

After Bambarid veered toward the sideline, he went completely against the grain, cutting it all the way to the far side of the field and into the end zone.

The Chiefs sliced that deficit to 24-20 with 7:08 left in the third on a 1-yard run by Williams.

An interception by senior Daniel Kilgore led to that TD. Kilgore snared a tipped ball near the Western 40 and ran it down to the 17.

Western took a 31-20 lead into the fourth, thanks to an 11-yard run by John Simmons, and padded that to 38-20 early in the fourth when tailback Torrez Nesbit scored on a 30-yard dash with 10:04 remaining.

At that point, the Warriors looked as though they had everything under control.

**No time to waste**

Canton then started its ferocious rally, with Williams completing a laser over the middle to Boucher for a 66-yard touchdown that pulled the Chiefs to within 38-28.

Boucher got it done on defense, too, clobbering Bambarid in the backfield on third down to help the Chiefs get the ball right back.

Williams then completed five passes, each for double-digit yardage, to move the ball inside the 5-yard line and Turfe took it from there for his third score of the game.

Despite a missed extra point, the Warriors only led 38-34 and Canton recovered the ensuing onside kick near the 50-yard line with 3:45 to go.

Turfe's 30-yard gallop around right end started the series and it ended three plays later on a 23-yard pass from Williams to Boucher. Following Andrew Loehnis' extra point, the Chiefs led 41-38.

Unfortunately for Canton, there still was plenty of time left for Bambarid to do his thing.

"They just had so much time left. They're a great offense," Boucher said.

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