

# Late deuce lifts Canton over John Glenn, 22-21

BY ED WRIGHT 6:50 a.m. EDT September 28, 2014



(Photo: ED WRIGHT)

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Not long after Westland John Glenn's homecoming king and queen were announced Friday night, Canton's football team trumped the Rockets' special night with a late, high-stakes deuce.

Chief sophomore running back Marcus Sanders bolted up the middle for a 20-yard touchdown run with 5:21 play, cutting his team's deficit to 21-20.

Instead of opting for the more conventional point-after kick, Canton coach Tim Baechler rolled the dice on a do-or-die two-point conversion play and was rewarded when senior quarterback Greg Williams lofted a soft spiral into the right corner of the end zone to Nolan Gilo, who secured the ball to give the Chiefs a 22-21 victory.

Williams was Russell Wilson-esque on the game-winning possession as he twice completed fourth-and-5 passes – one to Gilo, the other to Jakob Wickens – to keep the drive alive.

Canton stuffed the Rockets' final drive of the night and walked off the field with a heart-pounding one-point victory to improve its record to 4-1 overall and 3-0 in the KLAAs South Division. John Glenn slipped to 3-2 and 1-2, respectively.

"I knew before that last drive even started that if we scored, we're going for two," asserted Baechler. "We had a few kicking and snapping problems in our last game and even though we were two-for-two tonight on extra points, I thought we were a little slow, a little shaky.

"I can live with me making a bad call. I can't live with them making a bad snap or a bad hold."

On the game-winning two, Williams faked an inside hand-off and rolled right with a pair of Rockets in hot pursuit.

"I love that play because it gives him the run-pass option," Baechler said.

The result was a bitter pill to swallow for the Rockets, who battled the Chiefs toe-to-toe from the opening kick-off.

"I'm extremely proud of our players," said John Glenn coach Tim Hardin. "They played great tonight. It came down to a two-point conversion play. We were one stop away, so this hurts bad."

The Rocket struck first when Jaylen Smith swept around right end for a 6-yard touchdown with 10:07 left in the second quarter. Stephen Hegenaur's first of three extra points gave the hosts a 7-0 lead.

Canton countered quickly, deadlocking the game at 7-7 on its next possession when Sanders capped a five-play, 66-yard drive with a 14-yard scoring sprint. Andrew Loehnis tacked on the point-after kick.

John Glenn regained a 14-7 advantage 3:59 before halftime when quarterback Brenden Wetmore hooked up with Jaron Flournoy on a 49-yard TD strike.

It took the Chiefs just one play the next time they touched the ball to score the equalizer thanks to Sanders' 64-yard TD run.

It appeared John Glenn senior captain Andre Brown was going to be the night's hero when he blocked Williams' punt with 11:52 left in the game, giving the Rockets the ball at the Chiefs' 14. Three plays later, Wetmore hit Brown with a 14-yard scoring pass to put the Rockets in front, 21-14.

But the Chiefs answered with one of their patented grind-it-out drives, with a couple fourth-down heroics to spice things up.

"They're a better football team than us," Baechler said following the game. "They're bigger, faster and strong than us, and their defensive scheme was very good against us tonight. This was a nice win for us."

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