

Football | Nebraska Playoffs Second Round

Storm Blows Through Hartington

D1: High Plains Ends Wildcats' Unbeaten Run With 50-14 Win

BY JEREMY HOECK

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HARTINGTON, Neb. — It was not totally a one-man show, but it may have felt that way for the Hartington Wildcats.

High Plains quarterback Tanner Fate figured prominently in a 456-yard outburst as the visiting Storm thundered past Hartington 50-14 in a Nebraska Class D1 second round playoff game Wednesday afternoon at Russ Hochstein Field.

The hometown Wildcats, who finish the season at 9-1, had their chances to follow up the school's first-ever playoff win with another, but it felt short against one of the state's top offenses.

"We knew we'd have to put points on the board because they're so explosive," Hartington coach Blair Kalin said. "When we didn't score on those few times, it was a let-down.

"That's a big credit to them (Storm), they responded."

Fate, a 170-pound senior, accounted for more yards (323) by himself than Hartington had the entire game (292). The quarterback rushed for 183 yards, with touchdown runs of 24, 1, 53 and 59 yards.

He put up a lot of numbers and wowed the crowd, but it was no surprise to his team.

"Every week it's the same thing with Tanner," High Plains coach Greg Wood said. "He's the leader, he's the guy we look to."

The Storm jumped out to an 8-0 lead after the first drive, recovered a Hartington fumble and responded with a touchdown to jump ahead 16-0. The cushion was 22-0 at halftime and 30-0 in the third quarter.

Each time the Wildcats scored in the second half, however, Hay Springs responded quickly.

"We knew they were fast and that they had an excellent passing game, but it was even better than we thought," Hartington senior running Alec Fuelberth said. "We set up some things to stop them, but they're just a great team."

Wildcats senior Nick Miller got his team on the scoreboard with a 1-yard touchdown run at the 2:59 mark of the third quarter. Fate needed just two plays to respond, breaking tackles on a 59-yard scoring run.

Miller again scored on a 1-yard run on the ensuing drive, cutting the High Plains lead to 36-14. The Storm, however, added



two more touchdowns and ran away with the win — frustrating Hartington along the way.

"We wanted to force them to do things they're not using to doing; to be out of sync," Wood said. "And that's what we did."

Miller, one of six seniors for Hartington, rushed for 177 yards and passed for 89. In all, the Wildcats rode their veterans to 188 yards on the ground and 104 through the air.

"Our seniors did a great job all year," Kalin said. "We were district champs, went unbeaten and won our first playoff game. We just ran into an awfully good team."

A year after advancing to the semifinals of the post-season, the Storm (9-1) are headed to the same spot this year.

"That was one of our goals, to get back here," Wood said. "We're excited about it."

On the other sideline, Hartington was left to reminisce on a record-breaking and highlight-filled season.

"It's an honor to play with these guys," Fuelberth said. "Hartington is a great town and we have awesome coaches. I wouldn't have wanted to play for anyone else."

You can follow Jeremy Hoeck on Twitter at twitter.com/jhoeck



HALLOWEEN TRICK

ABOVE: Kyle Beck, 78, and Cale Bolton, 2, lead a group of High Plains defenders who pounce on a Hartington fumble during their Class D1 second round game Wednesday afternoon in Hartington, Neb.

LEFT: High Plains linebacker Cale Bolton, left, knocks away a pass intended for Hartington receiver Eric Derickson during their Class D1 second round game Wednesday afternoon in Hartington, Neb.

JEREMY HOECK/P&D

Cardinals Overpower Crofton D2: Jets Soar Past Wausa 48-20

BY JAMES D. CIMBUREK

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CROFTON, Neb. — When coach Brent Breckner was preparing his Doniphan-Trumbull Cardinals for the three-hour trip to Crofton to face a perennial power in the Warriors, he told his team that they could wear the Warriors down.

The Cardinals did just that,

scoring on the game's opening drive and scoring on three possessions in a 49-33 victory over the Warriors in the Nebraska Class C2 football second round on Wednesday.

The victory advanced Doniphan-Trumbull (8-2) to a quarterfinal matchup with North Platte St. Patrick's, and ended Crofton's season with a 8-2 record.

"We knew Crofton was a great football team. We knew coming up here and getting a win is really tough," Breckner said after the victory. "We preached to our kids all week that we had to be physical. We needed to play hard."

"I felt like if we could get it going a little bit we might be able

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STERLING, Neb. — Chris Wenzel's four rushing touchdowns led the Sterling Jets past the Wausa Vikings on Wednesday night and into the quarterfinals of the Nebraska Class D2 football playoffs.

The Jets, who won 48-28, took a 20-0 first quarter lead before Wausa answered back in the second to close the gap to 28-20 at the half. Sterling proved to be too strong however as the Jets shut out the Vikings in the third quarter

and held on for the second-round victory.

Sterling, 8-2, saw Wenzel gain 194 yards on the ground while the Jets racked up 387 total rushing yards in the contest to go along with 43 passing yards.

Wausa senior quarterback Marcus Claussen completed 15 of 26 pass attempts for 186 yards and three touchdowns while also throwing one interception. Juniors Spencer Rosberg and Austin

Conn each ended the game with 72 receiving yards and one receiving touchdown.

Claussen also rushed for 80 yards on 17 carries and led the Vikings defensively with 21 tackles in his final high school contest. Wausa finishes the year 8-2.

Sterling will face Humphrey St. Francis on Tuesday in Humphrey with the winner of that game moving on to the semi-finals on Monday, November 12.

C2: No Revenge For Cedar Catholic Against Ponca



JEREMY HOECK/P&D

Hartington Cedar Catholic quarterback Taylor Kathol, 6, out-runs the tackle of Ponca defender Austin Schwes during their Class C2 second round game Wednesday night in Hartington, Neb.

Indians Pound Out 359 Yards Rushing In 38-29 Win

BY VANCE JANAK

P&D Correspondent

HARTINGTON, Neb. — Hartington Cedar Catholic couldn't get a stop.

Clinging to a seven-point half-time advantage Wednesday night in the second round of the Class C2 playoffs, the Trojans failed to slow down Ponca's potent flexbone rushing attack. The Indians steadily chunked off gains of 10 yards or more to keep the chains moving and the Trojans guessing who was going to run the ball next.

With quarterback Aaron Carlson, fullback Sam Burki, wing backs Wes Torson, Tanner Boyle and Michael Walsh all taking turns gashing the Trojans, Ponca marched the opening possession of the second half down field for a touchdown.

The Indians then forced Cedar Catholic into its first three-and-out before Ponca powered the ball down the field for another score. It was all part of a big third quarter that propelled the Indians to a 38-29 victory at Russ Hochstein Field.

During Ponca's 24-point second-half scoring spurt, the Indians ran 29 plays compared to just five for Cedar Catholic to erase the home team's 21-14 half-time lead.

"The first half, we ran 50 plays. That third quarter, we ran five plays," Cedar Catholic coach Chad Cattau said after his team ended the season 5-5. "We just could not get stops. They just basically drove it down our throats and we couldn't get our defense off the field. That's a tribute to whatever they changed at half-time. They definitely played harder in the second half, and we didn't play hard enough in the second half."

Ponca amassed 372 yards of total offense, with all but 13 of those yards coming on the ground. The Indians (6-4), who face Lutheran High Northeast on Tuesday in the quarterfinals, gained 213 yards on the ground in the second half. Carlson rushed for 150 yards and a touchdown, Torson added 92 yards and a score. Burki and Walsh each added touchdown runs.

While Ponca was cruising to

its second win of the second against the Trojans, Cedar Catholic's offense crumbled. After a three-and-out on their first possession of the second half, Trojans quarterback Taylor Kathol, who completed 15-of-23 passes for 271 yards and a touchdown and also ran for three scores, was intercepted by Zach Kvidera.

That was the first of two interceptions throw by Kathol, who was picked off by Carlson on the goal line while trying to cut into Ponca's 38-21 lead midway through the fourth quarter.

The game-shifting third quarter and the fourth-quarter deficit caused Cedar Catholic to scrap its running game of Ryan Becker and Frank Herbolsheimer, who combined to rush for 59 yards. Then when Kathol dropped back, he didn't find it nearly as easy to pick apart Ponca's zone coverage like he did in the first half when he completed 8-of-11 passes for 165 yards.

"We knew we didn't have a

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