

Catholic Central stops Canton for 21-14 Div. 1 football victory

The Canton offense that ran only six plays in the third quarter finally put five first downs together and moved to Novi Detroit Catholic Central's 16-yard line and faced a fourth-and-4 play with 2:46 left in the game.

Canton's Kevin Buford took a handoff and headed around right end and cut back.

"I saw the running back going to the far side of the field and I'm coming over across for the cut back in," said CC linebacker Michael Schultz. "He cut back and everybody did their job. Someone had him held up and I came in and hit him and made sure he didn't fall forward, I made sure he went backwards.

"I knew it would be close so I pushed him back."

Buford was indeed a yard short, but then everything was close Saturday as CC defeated Canton, 21-14, in a Division 1 district final game.

No. 1 CC now hosts Ann Arbor Pioneer Saturday at 1 in the regional final.

Canton (8-3) led 14-7 at halftime before CC (10-1) tied the game when Kyle Cooper fired a strike to Jon Malone for a 61-yard touchdown midway through the third quarter.

CC used 6 1/2 minutes on its next drive, which nearly stalled on Canton's 25 when it faced a fourth-and-8 situation and Cooper dropped back to pass.

"It's based on the fake to the running back and Dave Houle made a great fake with the ball and when I came off it saw Matt wide open on the field running and I just knew I had to get it to him," Cooper said. "It was not the prettiest ball, I just had to get it to him."

It looked like a thing of beauty to Doneth, who caught the ball in stride and turned it into a 20-yard gain to set up Houle's 2-yard go-ahead score with 8:34 left to play.

"It was right there, a little wobbly, but I caught it and just had to get the first down," Doneth said. "It's worked a lot this season. We had to get it, Coach (Tom) Mach called a great call and we got it."

It was a difficult way for Canton to end its season, especially because the pass play wasn't a surprise.

"We had that play scouted so well," said Canton coach Tim Baechler. "Our corner just rolled it back too deep and our linebacker didn't pick it up. We had two guys that were supposed to be sitting there and neither one of them was there.

Our defense has kind of been our Achilles heel all year, but those guys played well. They played well enough for us to win, that's for sure."

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