

# Midland edges Canton on OT gamble

- By David Goricki
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Canton running back Robert Daoud runs for yardage against Midland during first quarter action on Thursday, Aug. 23, 2012, at Canton High School in Canton. Midland won 29-28 with a two-point conversion in overtime. (Jose Juarez / Special to The Detroit News)

*Canton* — The opener between No. 13 Canton and No. 14 Midland had all the excitement of a state championship game, with a two-point conversion in overtime being the difference in Midland's 29-28 victory. Canton had the ball first in overtime and scored on Robert Daoud's 3-yard run. Connor Shennan's conversion gave the Chiefs a 28-21 lead.

Midland pulled within 28-27 when Austen Irrer pounced on a teammate's fumble in the end zone. Midland called timeout and decided to go for the win ... on a roll-out pass by Alec Johnson, who found Ryan Singer alone in the back of the end zone for the victory.

"We just designed that play," said Johnson, who finished 8-for-11 for 96 yards passing and a touchdown. "We never practiced it before. Coach (Eric Methner) had faith in us and we had faith in him. We wanted to get the ball to Singer in the back of the end zone and he made a great play, and (Travis) Patten made a great block, too."

Canton had a chance to win in the final seconds of regulation, but a botched snap prevented a 35-yard field goal attempt by Shennan. James Hall fielded the snap on a bounce, rolled right and his pass for Matt McKay was intercepted by Michael Wright in the end zone.

Midland looked to be in control when Travis Patten returned the second-half kickoff 92 yards to open a 21-7 lead. He had scored on a 57-yard run for the game's opening score and finished with more than 200 all-purpose yards, including 112 rushing on 15 carries.

Canton showed its character, scoring on drives of 83 and 80 yards to force overtime. Sophomore quarterback Greg Williams was 7-for-8 passing for 133 yards. Malcolm Hollingsworth rushed for 84 yards on 18 carries and scored on runs of 28 and 2. Canton piled up 204 yards rushing on 58 attempts.

"I'm just so proud of our kids for battling back," Canton coach Tim Baechler said. "They run the opening kickoff back to start the third quarter and our kids could have laid down and said, 'This isn't going to happen.' I hate the fact we lost, but our kids showed us something. It's something to build on."

The game featured two of the state's top offensive tackles in 6-foot-6, 310-pound Steve Elmer (Notre Dame) of Midland and 6-4, 290-pound right tackle Cameron Dillard (Florida) of Canton.

Canton played keepaway to start the game with Dillard going head-to-head with Elmer.

Canton, however, came up empty when Westen Price was stopped short on a fourth-and-two at Midland's 30. Not only did the 14-play, 9-minute drive end, but Canton also lost Price to an ankle injury after he rushed for 30 yards on seven carries.

Price was Canton's No. 2 tailback, filling in for starter Kendall Scott, who was already out with an ankle injury.

Canton also had a touchdown run by Hollingsworth called back on a holding penalty in the second quarter. He fumbled on the next play and Patten took advantage by scoring on his 57-yard run.

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