

*Canton powers its way to 42-25 victory over Fordson*



*Detroit* — Canton scored on its first four possessions and made a big fourth-down stop at the end of the first half to help power its way to a 42-25 win over Dearborn Fordson in a Prep Kickoff Classic game Friday night at Wayne State’s Adams Field.

Canton coach Tim Baechler’s plan was for junior Joel Foster to run the full-house attack so he could use 6-foot, 190-pound senior Jared Stephens in multiple ways. And the plan worked with Foster having a strong debut at quarterback and Stephens making the most of his seven touches.

Stephens, also a free safety, scored three touchdowns. He caught a 19-yard touchdown pass from Foster to open up a 14-0 first-quarter lead, then ran 1 yard for a touchdown and a 21-6 advantage and 2 yards for another score less than two minutes later for a 28-6 first-half cushion.

“We can’t get him hurt because he’s so valuable to us on defense,” Baechler said of Stephens, who had 23 yards rushing on six carries. “We try to use him and rest him and use him again. That’s exactly what we wanted to do (using Foster at quarterback).”

“We were able to put the plow down on offense and kind of grind it out and try and keep our defense off the field as much as possible. I felt we were ready to play.”

And don't forget about 5-7, 180-pound junior fullback Markus Sanders, who rushed for 2,000 yards last year. He predicted an even better 2015 season despite losing a few players from the offensive line which helped the Chiefs average 47 points during their last four games last season, including three playoff games.

Sanders rushed for 212 yards on 19 carries, setting up the first score with a 54-yard run and a 37-yard run to set up Canton's fifth TD. His biggest run came on a third-and-22 play when he busted loose for 25 yards to the Fordson 44, setting up yet another TD after Fordson had pulled within 35-25.

“It was really big,” Sanders said. “Big-time players make big-time plays in big-time games. I want to credit my line. They work harder than anybody in the state and that's why I have the success that I have. I felt our quarterback played like a veteran, too. He did a good job for us.”

Foster was 2-for-4 passing, the TD pass to Stephens and a 16-yard TD toss to Jakob Wickens on a fourth-and-3 play when he rolled left and found the 6-1, 200-pound fullback for a 35-13 lead.

Canton piled up 396 rushing yards on 54 attempts.

“That was critical,” Baechler said of Sanders' 25-yard run on the third-and-long play. “We were not throwing that ball then. We were going to run 42 (play) and he popped it.” “He had some big runs and he's a good back.”

Canton's defense came up big with a red-zone stop during the final minute of the half to go into the locker room with a 28-13 lead.

On third-and-six from the 20, junior defensive lineman Jake Warner hauled down Hassan Hachem for a loss on a screen pass, then played a part in sacking Hamze Elzayat on fourth down.

Elzayat (12-of-17, 213 yards, 2 TDs) and Fordson made things interesting near the end of the third quarter. Trailing 35-13 and having just 110 yards of total offense, Elzayat found Mohamad Sareini on a short pass over the middle that Sareini turned into a 65-yard TD. Then, after a Sanders fumble, Elzayat went up top on the first play, finding Hesham Alaidarous down the left sideline for a 65-yard TD to pull within 35-25 with 12 seconds left in the quarter. Fordson misfired on both conversion tries.