

Galesburg Football: Silver Streaks miss playoffs



Galesburg running back DeAndre Moren tries to get around a Canton, Mich. defender during Saturday's non-conference game at Van Dyke Field. The Silver Streaks' season ended with a record of 4-5 after a 35-14 loss to the Chiefs. STEVE DAVIS/The Register-Mail

GALESBURG - An out-of-state team from the north used a T-formation power running game to sweep away the football playoff hopes of the Galesburg Silver Streaks on Saturday.

The Canton (Mich.) Chiefs (7-2) - from a suburb of Detroit - rolled up 385 yards on the ground to beat Galesburg 35-14 and drop the Streaks to 4-5 for the season and out of the consideration for postseason play that 5-4 teams receive. The Streaks appeared to have the playoff points to qualify had they won.

Galesburg was trying to become the school's first back-to-back playoff qualifier in history.

"What they do, they do well," said Galesburg coach Tim Dougherty of the Chiefs. "They run a full T and everybody on the bus knows they can run it. They don't make mistakes and they don't fumble it.

"That was my fear. I felt we'd better score some points to have a chance to beat them."

Galesburg hung close early.

After junior fullback Markus Sanders scored on a 56-yard touchdown run to cap Canton's initial series lasting just four plays, the Streaks came right back.

Caleb Clay returned the kickoff 50 yards to set up Galesburg's eight-play scoring drive of 33 yards, Nick Miyler scoring from three yards out and Joe Anderson added the extra-point kick to make it 7-7 at the 5:59 mark of the first quarter.

But on the first play of the second quarter, another of Canton's talented backs - Jared Stephens - capped a 13-play scoring drive of 69 yards that saw five different Chiefs carry the ball.

From the 11:56 mark of the second quarter, Canton led the rest of the way. The Streaks drove to the Chiefs 5 on their next series but threw incomplete passes on third and fourth down. Clay's interception of one of the two passes Canton threw in the game on the Chiefs next series thwarted a Canton drive but produced no Streaks points.

The next Canton pass was a 56-yard completion for a TD with 25.9 left from Jake O'Donnell to Stephens to make it 21-7 at halftime and Galesburg's fate was sealed when Sanders ran back the second half kickoff 95 yards for a touchdown. He also rushed for 174 yards in the game.

Highlighting Galesburg's effort was DeAndre Moren's 105-yard rushing day which gave him 1,120 yards for his junior season.

"That's usually how we play, minus all the penalties (eight for 60 yards)," said Canton coach Tim Baechler of his team's performance. "Everything was like a final exam (for the playoffs) for us.

"The level of what they do is like some of the teams we play.

"They threw the ball more than we thought."

Galesburg's Jacob Ross completed 4 of 10 passes for 51 yards and had one intercepted.

The loss was the Streaks third straight to finish the season and their only loss of the year by more than a touchdown.

"The last three teams we played are in the playoffs," said Dougherty.

"Looking at our schedule, it's a grinder.

"Going into this game our margin of error was two, three or six points. We had a young team. We played a lot of juniors.

"Clearly we were a better team at the end of the year. I'm proud of our guys."