

# McCabe: Dearborn Fordson rallies, pulls out amazing victory vs. Canton



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## Dearborn Fordson 40, Canton 35

*The Tractors dug themselves a 28-7 at halftime, but fired back in season opener at Wayne State*

Trailing Canton, 28-7 at halftime, Dearborn Fordson quarterback Hamze Elzayat had a message for his teammates.

"I went in the locker room," he said, "and told them to keep their heads up. The game ain't over."

No, it wasn't. Not until Elzayat came up with a cramp.

Trailing by a point with just over a minute left, Fordson had the ball on its 41-yard line.

"I was rolling out right, and in the middle of the play I pulled a cramp in my right calf," Elzayat said. "I didn't know if I'd be able to throw that pass. But I saw my receiver wide open, and I trusted him, and I let it fly."

The receiver was Slay Shajrah.

When Shajrah landed, he turned and saw the prettiest sight he'd ever seen and raced into the end zone with 1:07 left to play.

"I saw end zone," he said. "I saw six and I saw game win."

Yes, he did.

Fordson capped a miraculous comeback Friday night to pull out an improbable, 40-35 victory over Canton in the season opener in the Prep Kickoff Classic at Wayne State.

Elzayat finished 15-for-28 for 310 yards and three touchdowns. He also gained 160 yards rushing on 11 carries and scored two TDs. In the first half, Canton was making it look easy. Markus Sanders took a handoff on the Chiefs' first play from scrimmage and sprinted 80 yards for a touchdown.

Canton followed Sanders' TD with a 11-play, 85-yard drive that featured a rare pair of pass completions totaling 38 yards to set up Steven Walker's 21-yard touchdown run late in the first quarter.

Fordson moved to Canton's 7-yard line, but its 27-yard field goal attempt was blocked. Five plays later, Jake O'Donnell threw a pass to a wide open Brennon Pelland, who had to wait for the pass and then rumbled 70 yards for a 21-0 lead with 6:40 left in the second quarter. Fordson showed signs of life by moving 80 yards in nine plays, with Ahmed Sabbagh scoring on a 3-yard run with 1:56 left in the first half. But Canton killed what momentum Fordson might have had by

scoring on a 5-yard TD pass from O'Donnell to Colin Troup for a 28-7 halftime advantage.

The Chiefs received the second-half kickoff, but on first down Shajrah intercepted a pass, and Elzayat followed with a 24-yard run to set up his 39-yard TD run to pull Fordson within 28-14.

Following a Canton punt, Elzayat completed a 32-yard fourth-down pass to Basel Musaed to cut Canton's lead to 28-20 with 4:20 left in the third quarter.

Sharjah's second interception set up Elzayat's 20-yard touchdown run to pull the Tractors within 28-26 leading into the fourth quarter.

A 40-yard TD pass to Musaed gave Fordson the lead midway through the fourth quarter, but Canton regained the lead with 2:27 left to play on Julian Thornton's 27-yard run.

That set up Fordson's unforgettable theatrics.