

Pioneers fall short in upset bid, 14-6

Written by Mike Kelly

Saturday, 18 September 2010 11:29

The Watauga High football team nearly pulled off a huge upset Friday night.

Unfortunately, the Pioneers came up short as No.4 A.C. Reynolds survived a 14-6 scare at Dalton Stadium. The Watauga offense was its best defense in Friday's matchup.

The Pioneers (2-3) held the ball for more than 29 minutes and shut down an explosive team that was averaging 35-points a game. "I thought our kids really played well enough to win this game," said WHS coach Tim Pruitt. "We had great preparation for this game, and we had a lot of people step up. Our guys left everything they had on this field."

The Rockets (3-1), defending Class 4A champions, were missing some of their key players. The biggest blemish in the lineup was linebacker/defensive end Ben Council, who has been offered a scholarship to play football at the University of Notre Dame next fall.

"They were missing some people and it's been an emotional week for coach (Shane) Laws (with the death of his father, Gary, on Monday)," Pruitt said. "But give them credit. They fought through the adversity and did just enough to win this game."

But the Rockets had WHS on its heels early in the game. Following a Joey Papay interception on Watauga's opening possession, the Rockets marched down the field--65 yards in five plays in less than 90 seconds--to take an early 7-0 lead. A.J. Marion, who ran for a game-high 209 yards, scored on a 25-yard run. But from that point on, the WHS defense kept the Rockets in check.

"I was very proud of our defense," Pruitt said. "The bulk of their injuries were on the defensive side. They had the majority of their weapons on offense, and to keep this team to 14 points speaks volume for our team."

The Pioneers also forced two turnovers and harassed quarterback Caleb Pressley all night. The senior, who racked up 400 yards of offense against Pisgah last week, was held to just 104 yards (117 through the air, and 13 yards in losses).

"Our front line did a great job putting pressure on him all night long," Pruitt said. "We never allowed him to get comfortable back there. There was always someone in his face."

The Pioneers finally got on the board in the third quarter. They put together an impressive 14-play, 58-yard drive and scored on Ethan Greene's two-yard run. The drive took 7:26 off the clock. WHS then gambled on the extra point try and went for two. But Robbie Sherrill was dropped for a loss on the play, allowing ACR to maintain a one-point lead, at 7-6.

"I felt if we took the lead, we might be able to maintain it," Pruitt said. "I had a lot of faith in my defense. We were playing very well. But it didn't work out that way. If we make it and it's 8-7, we look like the smartest people in the world. And if we don't, then we look like the dumbest."

The Rockets scored with 1:12 left to play in the game on Marion's 11-yard run, his second touchdown of the game. That made it 14-6. But the Pioneers marched their way to the Rockets' 38-yard-line before Papay picked off his second pass of the game with a 1.7 seconds left to seal the issue.

"We let them score on their final drive," Pruitt said. "We had to have the ball back. And we marched it down field, but like the majority of our drives tonight, we just couldn't punch it in. We had our chances tonight, we were inside their 20 numerous times, couldn't score."

Greene played quarterback the majority of the game because Caleb Watson was nursing a sore shoulder. And Greene had a strong performance. He was 14-27 for 163 yards. But he was picked off three times. In all, the Pioneers threw four interceptions.

"The guy that really grew up tonight was Caleb Watson," Pruitt said. "He came out the game early in the first quarter and said 'Coach, my shoulder's killing me, I can't play quarterback.' But he said he could play a back (running back), and he gave us a strong effort back there,

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espeically with Baker (Stanley) banged up (leg injury).

"Caleb said he couldn't help the team win playing quarterback tonight. He stepped up and said to play Ethan at the position. And Ethan did well; he has the tools to be successful. As coaches you try to put your team in a position to win every week, and I felt we did that tonight."

NOTES: The Rockets have won three in a row against WHS.....ACR leads the series 9-2 all-time.....But four of the last five games have been decided by 27 points.....This is most likely the final regular-season meeting between the schools, but they could hook up again in the state playoffs.....Jordan Pineda had a huge game defensively for WHS with nine tackles and a quarterback sack....Mo Gore had six punts and a 40-yard average; his longest kick traveled 48-yards.....The Pioneers have a bye next week. They travel to South Caldwell for their Northwestern 3A/4A opener on Friday, October 1. Our coverage begins at 6:30 pm on Oldies 100.7 FM. *****

Scoring Summary (Final)

Watauga Pioneer Football 2010

Watauga High vs #4 AC Reynolds High (Sep 17, 2010 at Asheville, N.C.) Watauga High (2-3) vs. AC Reynolds High (3-1)

Date: Sep 17, 2010 Site: Asheville, N.C. Stadium: R.L. Dalton

Attendance: 2871 Score by Quarters 1 2 3 4 Score

Watauga High..... 0 0 6 0 - 6

AC Reynolds High.... 7 0 0 7 - 14 Scoring Summary:

1st 08:28 ACR - A.J. Marion 25 yd run (Blake Metcalf kick)

5 plays, 65 yards, TOP 1:27, WHS 0 - ACR 7

3rd 03:34 WHS - Ethan Greene 2 yd run (Seth Sloan pass failed)

14 plays, 58 yards, TOP 7:26, WHS 6 - ACR 7

4th 01:12 ACR - A.J. Marion 11 yd run (Blake Metcalf kick)

7 plays, 78 yards, TOP 2:54, WHS 6 - ACR 14 *****

Team Statistics (Final)

Watauga Pioneer Football 2010

Watauga High vs #4 AC Reynolds High (Sep 17, 2010 at Asheville, N.C.) WHS ACR FIRS

T DOWNS.....	14	18
Rushing.....	5	12
Passing.....	9	5
Penalty.....	0	1
NET YARDS RUSHING.....	52	197
Rushing Attempts.....	35	29
Average Per Rush.....	1.5	6.8
Rushing Touchdowns.....	1	2
Yards Gained Rushing.....	76	224
Yards Lost Rushing.....	24	27
NET YARDS PASSING.....	163	117
Completions-Attempts-Int....	14-28-4	11-26-0
Average Per Attempt.....	5.8	4.5
Average Per Completion.....	11.6	10.6

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Passing Touchdowns.....	0	0	
TOTAL OFFENSE YARDS.....	215	314	
Total offense plays.....	63	55	
Average Gain Per Play.....	3.4	5.7	
Fumbles: Number-Lost.....	1-0	3-2	
Penalties: Number-Yards.....	3-20	5-36	
PUNTS-YARDS.....	6-237	4-140	
Average Yards Per Punt.....	39.5	35.0	
Net Yards Per Punt.....	36.2	35.5	
Inside 20.....	1	1	
50+ Yards.....	0	0	
Touchbacks.....	1	0	
Fair catch.....	1	1	
KICKOFFS-YARDS.....	2-50	3-180	
Average Yards Per Kickoff...	25.0	60.0	
Net Yards Per Kickoff.....	25.0	40.0	
Touchbacks.....	0	3	
Punt returns: Number-Yards-TD.	1--2-0	1-0-0	
Average Per Return.....	-2.0	0.0	
Kickoff returns: Number-Yds-TD	0-0-0	1-0-0	
Average Per Return.....	0.0	0.0	
Interceptions: Number-Yds-TD..	0-0-0	4-5-0	
Fumble Returns: Number-Yds-TD.	0-0-0	0-0-0	
Miscellaneous Yards.....	0	0	
Possession Time.....	29:12	18:48	
1st Quarter.....	9:49	2:11	
2nd Quarter.....	6:26	5:34	
3rd Quarter.....	7:34	4:26	
4th Quarter.....	5:23	6:37	
Third-Down Conversions.....	5 of 15	1 of 8	
Fourth-Down Conversions.....	3 of 4	0 of 2	
Red-Zone Scores-Chances.....	1-2	1-1	
Touchdowns.....	1-2	1-1	
Field goals.....	0-2	0-1	
Sacks By: Number-Yards.....	1-3	2-15	
PAT Kicks.....	0-0	2-2	
Field Goals.....	0-0	0-1	*****

Individual

Statistics

----- Individual Statistics (Final)

Watauga Pioneer Football 2010

Watauga High vs #4 AC Reynolds High (Sep 17, 2010 at Asheville, N.C.) -----

Watauga High Rushing No Gain Loss Net TD Lg Avg

Ethan Greene 15 43 20 23 1 14 1.5

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Caleb Watson	14	23	3	20	0	7	1.4		
Kyle Chambers	4	8	0	8	0	4	2.0		
Will Morgan	2	2	1	1	0	2	0.5		
Totals...	35	76	24	52	1	14	1.5	Passing	Cmp-Att-Int Yds TD Long Sack

Ethan Greene	14-27-3	163	0	22	2		
Caleb Watson	0-1-1	0	0	0	0		
Totals...	14-28-4	163	0	22	2	Receiving	No. Yds TD Long

Trey Kavanaugh	4	47	0	15		
Matt Scott	2	41	0	22		
Mo Gore	2	33	0	20		
Brian Bolster	2	17	0	11		
Will Morgan	1	8	0	8		
Kyle Chambers	1	7	0	7		
Seth Sloan	1	7	0	7		
Clint Trivette	1	3	0	3		
Totals...	14	163	0	22	Punting	No. Yds Avg Long In20 TB

Mo Gore	6	237	39.5	48	1	1	
Totals...	6	237	39.5	48	1	1	Punts Kickoffs Intercept
All Returns	No.Yds.Lg	No.Yds.Lg	No.Yds.Lg				

Seth Sloan	1	-2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals...	1	-2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
							Field goal attempts		
							Kickoffs	No. Yds TB OB Avg	

Cam Haas	2	50	0	1	25.0	
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AC Reynolds High	Rushing	No	Gain	Loss	Net	TD	Lg	Avg
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A.J. Marion	22	209	0	209	2	25	9.5	
Joey Papay	4	15	0	15	0	13	3.8	
Caleb Pressley	2	0	13	-13	0	0	-6.5	
TEAM	1	0	14	-14	0	0	-14.0	
Totals...	29	224	27	197	2	25	6.8	Passing
								Cmp-Att-Int Yds TD Long Sack

Caleb Pressley	11-26-0	117	0	24	1	
Totals...	11-26-0	117	0	24	1	Receiving
						No. Yds TD Long

Joey Papay	5	45	0	20		
Cody Owenby	2	25	0	19		
Paris Hall	2	22	0	14		
Jeffery Wallace	1	24	0	24		
Brett Lytle	1	1	0	1		
Totals...	11	117	0	24	Punting	No. Yds Avg Long In20 TB

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Blake Metcalf 4 140 35.0 42 1 0
Totals... 4 140 35.0 42 1 0 Punts Kickoffs Intercept
All Returns No.Yds.Lg No.Yds.Lg No.Yds.Lg

Joey Papay 0 0 0 0 0 0 3 0 0
Damian Martin 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
Justin St. Onge 0 0 0 1 0 0 1 5 5
Totals... 1 0 0 1 0 0 4 5 5 Field goal attempts

Blake Metcalf 3rd 00:08 42 yds - Missed Kickoffs No. Yds TB OB Avg

Blake Metcalf 3 180 3 0 60.0 FUMBLES: Watauga High-Seth Sloan 1-0. AC Reynolds
High-Caleb Pressley 1-0; Brett Lytle 1-1;
Damian Martin 1-1.