

Chiefs score 20 unanswered in 2nd half to beat Huntington 33-14

SHREVEPORT, La. – The Natchitoches Central Chiefs scored 20 unanswered points in the second half as they defeated the Huntington Raiders, 33-14, Thursday night in district 1-5A football action at Independence Stadium in Shreveport.

The Raiders (3-6, 3-4 in 1-5A) struck first as they scored on a 49-yard screen pass for a touchdown to Caden Starks less than minute into the game to take a 7-0 lead. The Chiefs (5-4, 3-4 in 1-5A) sputtered offensively for much of the first half as they turned it over four times in the half.

However, the Chiefs cashed in late in the first half as Owen Smith connected for 14 yards to sophomore Demarcus Nicholas (Amsden Pasche kicked the extra point) tying the game at 7-7 with 3:51 to go until halftime.

On the following possession, the Chiefs' defense came up big as senior Austin Sewell recovered a fumble inside the Huntington 35-yard line. The Chiefs took advantage of the short field as senior Kelton Howard scored on a four-yard touchdown run to give NCHS a 13-7 lead (PAT no good) with 1:54 to go in the first half. Howard finished the game with 126 yards rushing to go along with the touchdown.

The Raiders answered back scoring on a 23-yard touchdown reception by Starks again (PAT good) to regain a 14-13 lead with 53 seconds left until halftime.

In the third quarter, the Chiefs took advantage of a strange penalty assessed against Huntington. The Raiders' band was late getting off the field at halftime giving NCHS a short field after the kickoff. The Chiefs cashed in on the odd penalty as Smith scored on a 12-yard touchdown run to give NCHS a 19-14 lead with 9:45 to go in the third.

It remained a one-possession game until early in the fourth quarter. NCHS's Dallas Demery intercepted a pass and returned it 45 yards inside the Huntington three-yard line. Moments later, the Chiefs punched it in on a two-yard run by Smith to give NCHS a 26-14 lead (Pasche PAT is good) with 8:41 to go in the game.

NCHS added one more score late in the game. Kaden Kuykendoll ran one in from 14 yards out with 1:15 left for the final nail in the coffin as the Chiefs took a big step forward to the postseason.

The Chiefs' defense was remarkable as they held the Raiders scoreless in the second half as NCHS outscored the homestanding Raiders 20-0 in the half.

Coming up next, the Chiefs wrap up the regular season Friday, Nov. 7 in the regular season finale against Benton. NCHS entered Thursday's game ranked 29th in the Division I non-select power rankings with 28 teams making the playoffs.