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Border battle classic

Rivalry games can sometimes be a letdown. Friday night wasn't one of those times.

The 14th installment of the border battle between the Tigers and Pioneers went back and forth five times, with DeKalb County only assuring victory when it hauled in an interception at midfield in the final minute.

The win knotted the series at 7-7 each, something DeKalb County coach Steve Trapp probably knows by heart. His first game with the Tigers was when the series started in 2005, so he knows better than anybody what a win in this rivalry means.

"The first three years, they had our number. Then we had a few years in a row," said Trapp. "It's been back and forth since with some really good games. It's an exciting atmosphere and I'm really glad we came out on top this year."

It took everything the Tigers had.

Some coaches may not want to empty the cupboard in the first game. Trapp and Pioneer coach Tom Moore don't subscribe to that thought process.

Trapp showed immediate trust in sophomore quarterback Axel Aldino, who finished with 182 total yards and two touchdowns. Trapp allowed Aldino to make calls at the line, including the game's first score – a 46-yard touchdown pass where the sophomore saw a look he thought he could exploit.

Moore answered back with trickery.

The Pioneers had a 17-yard reverse early in the third quarter. They upped the ante in the fourth, having quarterback Clay Thompson shout out fake instructions at the line on a fourth down while the direct snap hit senior Eric Haywood.

Haywood turned right, then tossed to CJ Taylor, who ripped around the left edge for a 16-yard soaring touchdown on fourth down.

The Pioneers also tried a fake punt in the fourth quarter and a double-reverse pass, where Taylor ended up hitting Thompson after the quarterback worked his way upfield.

Warren County will need to continue to find ways to keep opponents off balance, but being simple seemed to work just as well.

At times, the Pioneers looked unstoppable on the ground. Moore said all off-season his line would be a strength. They lived up to their reputation.

Haywood and Taylor were able to gash the Tigers, each hitting 150 yards while doing it in different way.

The majority of Haywood's yard came on one play – an 85-yard sprint where he broke through a huge hole and never was touched. (A quick aside: Haywood ripped off a 20-yard run late in the fourth with the Pioneers trailing where I thought Warren County was destined to win. The senior was so intense when he was pushed into his teammates, I figured he'd do it himself. Alas.)

Taylor was every bit the thunder to Haywood's lightning, showing the ability to bust up the middle and bounce bodies backwards. Just a sophomore, Taylor has a chance to grow into something special.

Now it's time for another rivalry. It's on to Sparta.



Jeffery Simmons photo
Nothing was stopping CJ Taylor from getting into the endzone. Taylor rushed for 150 yards and scored on this fourth-quarter leap during Friday's loss in Smithville.

Soggy start

BY JEFFERY SIMMONS
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(McMinnville, Tennessee)

Clay Thompson scrambled around, ducking and dodging DeKalb County defenders while looking downfield. The sophomore finally stepped up and heaved the ball as far as he could, hoping for a fourth-down miracle in the waning seconds.

Tiger safety Isaac Knowles ended up on the other end.

The last-ditch interception helped DeKalb County hold off the Pioneers 19-14, a bitter loss for Warren County after piling up 320 yards on the ground and coming from behind twice.

"We took the lead and gave ourselves a chance," said Pioneer coach Tom Moore, now 1-3 against DeKalb County. "Hindsight is 20-20. Maybe we can look back and not do a field goal and go for a touchdown. Sometimes it works out, sometimes it doesn't.

"I told them before the game that I knew we would make some mistakes. I just wanted them to keep playing hard, and they did."

Warren County took the lead on the second play of the fourth quarter. The Pioneers dialed up a trick play on a fourth-and-six at the DeKalb County 16, going with a direct snap that fooled the Tigers.

CJ Taylor turned the corner and took flight from the five, diving inside the pylon and past a Tiger defender to score. Isaac Beasley added the extra point to make it 14-13 in favor of the visitors.

The Pioneers looked poised to get the ball back after stalling the ensuing Tiger drive near midfield, but a controversial call changed the game.

Facing fourth-and-seven, the Tigers decided to punt, hoping to pin the Pioneers deep in their own territory. The snapped skipped past punter Andrew Fuson, leaving him and Warren County defenders to give chase.

Continued on 2B



14

326 total yards

19

325 total yards

WCHS RUSHING

TEAM – 47 rushes for 320 yards

ERIC HAYWOOD – 14 for 156 yards, TD
CJ TAYLOR – 20 for 150 yards, TD
RAVEN LEWANDOWSKI– 2 for 16 yards
ISAAC BEASLEY – 1 for 2 yards
JORGE SIFUENTES– 1 for (-1) yards
CLAY THOMPSON – 9 for (-3) yards

DCHS RUSHING

TEAM – 31 rushes for 197 yards

DAVID BRADSHAW – 14 for 125 yards, TD
AXEL ALDINO – 13 for 54 yards
TRE LADET – 4 for 18 yards

WCHS PASSING

CLAY THOMPSON – 1 for 4 for 0 yards, 2 INT
CJ TAYLOR – 1 for 1 for 6 yards

DCHS PASSING

AXEL ALDINO – 6 for 9 for 128 yards, 2 TD

WCHS RECEIVING

CLAY THOMPSON – 1 for 6 yards
CJ TAYLOR – 1 for 0 yards

DCHS RECEIVING

ANDREW FUSTON – 1 for 46 yards, TD
TYZAUN LADET – 1 for 35 yards
ISAAC KNOWLES – 2 for 26 yards
ZACH DAY – 1 for 13 yards, TD
GRAYSON REDMON – 1 for 8 yards

WCHS PENALTIES

PENALTIES – 11 for 98 yards

DCHS PENALTIES

PENALTIES – 6 for 39 yards



Eric Haywood blew away DeKalb County defenders on an 85-yard touchdown run during the first half of Friday's game. The senior tailback finished with 156 yards in a tough 19-14 loss to the Tigers.