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Marion Presidents veto Little Giants

BY BOB PUTMAN
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MARION -- Fremont Ross coach Derek Kidwell refused to let the weather conditions be an excuse for a second straight Little Giant loss.

Marion Harding scored touchdowns on its first possession of each half and went on to a 21-0 rain-drenched Greater Buckeye Conference victory Friday night at Harding Stadium.

"Harding played in the same elements we did," Kidwell said. "Give Harding a ton of credit, defending their field and playing smart football."

A week ago in a 41-0 loss to Napoleon, Harding (3-4 overall, 1-1 GBC) turned the ball over five times. But the Presidents did not commit a turnover in much worse conditions and even collected two Fremont Ross miscues.

Kidwell felt pretty good about his team's situation at the end of the half, trailing 7-0.

But Harding took the second half kickoff and marched down the field. The Presidents overcame three penalties during a 72-yard drive that concluded with a six-yard run by Aaron Gabriel on the seventh play of the drive. Thomas Adamson kicked the point after and Harding led 14-0.

A big play in the drive was a short pass from Asher Rumble to Chris Ryle that turned into a 47-yard gain, aided by a block from Tyler Haas, that put the Presidents all the way down to the Fremont 17.

"I felt pretty good at the end of the half," Kidwell said. "But we couldn't get our defense off the field and let them score on the first possession of the second half. With the elements we knew it would be tough to get two scores. That score let them play more relaxed."

But Fremont (4-3, 0-2) came right back after the Harding score and held the ball for more than six minutes.

Running several times with wide receiver Greg Brown taking the snap in a Wildcat formation, the Little Giants went from their own 10 to the Harding 38.

Brown, who by a coaching decision was held out of the first half, bolted 13 yards to put the ball on the Presidents 38.

The Harding defense stiffened there, limiting Fremont to just six yards on the next four plays, giving the ball back to its offense.

Harding then scored the clincher four plays later as Dominique Ayers scampered 57 yards on a sweep to the right. Adamson was true with the PAT for a 21-0 cushion.

Fremont didn't get into Harding territory the rest of the game and Harding closed out the upset.

"We are going see what type of leaders we have the last three games," Kidwell said. "We expect them to come out and be excited to play every week."

Fremont rushed for 201 yards, led by James Spencer with 94 yards on 14 carries. But Cody Foos was just 4 of 18 passing for 39 yards.



Fremont Ross running back James Spencer sheds the tackle of Marion Harding President Tyler Haas during Friday's game at Harding High School. (Ed Borland | CentralOhio.com)