

Panthers win on last-second touchdown pass to Wittman

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JERSEYVILLE - Jon Adkins couldn't have asked for a better beginning than his 39-35 football victory over Granite City on Friday night at Jersey High School field.

Adkins, 29, has seemed to light a spark under the program since taking over for previous coach Dave Jacobs early in the summer.

Panther quarterback Drew Sauerwein tossed to Blake Wittman from nine yards out and a Wittman interception at the 2-yard-line preserved the Jersey win with only nine seconds left on the clock.

“Wittman is a fantastic player and the way he played shows why he is a captain and leader of our team,” Adkins said. “He comes to work every single day and it paid off tonight.”

Sauerwein has done an exceptional job leading the Panthers' offense, Adkins said and is “an awesome kid and great athlete.”

Other key touchdowns were a 40-yard reception by Logan Metzler, a kickoff return by Metzler and a 72-yard run by Brandon Baalman up the middle to the end zone.

Quarterback Kendrick Williba led Granite City in rushing with 15 carries for 47 yards. He was also nine for 17 for three touchdowns, 231 yards and two interceptions. Kyle Thompson had three catches for 79 yards.

“This is an unbelievable win,” Adkins said. “Granite City is loaded with athletes. For us to be in the ballgame competing and to win says a lot about our kids. I may be one of the youngest head coaches now, but I felt like one of the oldest coaches late in the game. I am very blessed and lucky to be around these kids.”