

# Hawks fall to Triopia in battle of WIVC giants

by John Hough, Sports Writer  
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CARROLLTON - Carrollton Hawks head coach Nick Flowers was worried about how his defensive line would hold up in the first couple weeks of the season.

Last night he got a mixed review, but ultimately a negative one.

Penalties missed opportunities, and a stable dose of Zach Thompson did the No. 5-ranked Class 1A Hawks in as they fell to the Triopia Trojans 22-14 in week one of the football season in Carrollton on Friday night.

“We had opportunities. I didn’t like the overall lack of discipline on the penalties. That’s very uncharacteristic of us,” Flowers said. “You don’t win close ball games when you have penalties. We had a couple of big-time pass plays brought back with penalties.”

“ are an improved football team. They made fewer mistakes than us tonight. Their defensive line really brought it on us. I think they did a good job of defending us,” Flowers said. “We’ll get better. We don’t like this feeling.”

On the other side of the spectrum, this is a victory the proud Triopia football program was dreaming about not just 365 days ago, but for years.

“It’s everything right now,” Triopia head coach Rich Thompson said. “It’s been a struggle the last four years. We just haven’t been living up to our expectations and getting where we want to. Nothing against the kids that have played , but we finally figured out how to finish a big game. I really feel that a victory like this could do unbelievable things for this program once again.”

Thompson’s son, Zach, scored all three touchdowns for Triopia on the ground and seemed to be everywhere on the field.

A week ago it seemed that Thompson wouldn’t be available for the Trojans due to an apparent broken wrist. He recovered, and although played through pain, the senior was never going to pass up an opportunity to get revenge on the Hawks a year ago, and he made the most of it.

Thompson rushed for 183 yards on 27 carries. Michael Burns rushed for 83 yards with 16 carries. As a team, the Trojans rushed for 279 yards.

“Nick and Rodney and those guys do a great job,” Thompson said. Their kids are terrific athletes. Their speed is so scary, but we were able to stick our game plan and pound the ball. It’s our bread and butter.”

After stopping the Hawks on a fourth down and one in the first quarter, Triopia’s offense went to work and ran off over eight minutes of game time. A six-yard rushing touchdown capped the drive by Thompson.

Carrollton had relatively little trouble driving down the field for most of the game, but Triopia would make some defensive stands in the red zone. That included an

interception from Thompson at the two-yard line on fourth down and goal. However, the Trojans would give the ball back inside the 20-yard line a couple of minutes later on a self-inflicted fumble during a handoff exchange.

Moments later Flowers connected with Nathan Walker for a 6-yard passing touchdown and the Hawks converted the two-point conversion to go up 8-7 with 3:12 to play in the first half. They took that lead into halftime.

Triopia calmy drove 60 yards in five minutes and 57 seconds to retake the lead on a five-yard touchdown run from Thompson who leaped into the corner of the end zone. On the extra point, Carrollton jumped offsides which gave the Trojans an excellent chance to go for two. Michael Burns took a handoff up the middle and got lost in a sea of bodies, and ultimately the side judge ruled he crossed broke the plane for a touchdown giving Triopia a vital 15-7 lead.

However, in typical Hawks fashion, they responded in less than two minutes with Flowers finding Walker again for a touchdown this time from 13 yards. Perhaps the most determining play of the game, Flowers was unable to find a receiver in the end zone on the two-point conversion, and the Hawks still trailed 15-14 with 4:12 left in the third quarter.

After forcing their second turnover on downs of the game, Carrollton was in Triopia territory with 8:46 to go, Flowers being chased out of bounds, threw a desperation pass that was intercepted at the 23-yard line. The Trojans proceeded to move the ball methodically and melt the clock.

With 2:11 left in the game and on a fourth and goal from the five, Thompson received a toss to the right side, cut inside and got tackled into the end zone by a Hawk defender to put the Trojans up 22-14.