

Homewood-Flossmoor holds off Edwardsville 42-35

November 8 2014 10:10 PM



Edwardsville and Homewood-Flossmoor players are tangled near the goal line in Saturday night's Class 8A second-round football playoff game at Edwardsville. Homewood-Flossmoor won 42-35.

[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO HIGHLIGHTS OF THE GAME](#)

EDWARDSVILLE – For Edwardsville's football team, having to deal with Homewood-Flossmoor's twin running backs, Deante and Devonte Harley-Hampton was almost like picking their poison.

The two teamed up for 51 carries for 294 yards and four touchdowns – three by Deante – as the Vikings held off the Tigers 42-35 in an entertaining IHSA Class 8A second-

round game at the Edwardsville Sports Complex Saturday night. The Vikings (9-2) will take on Bolingbrook (who eliminated Oswego 31-28 in overtime) in the quarterfinals next week; Edwardsville finished the season at 9-2.

The kind of game the Vikings brought to Edwardsville was one that the Tigers had problems handling earlier in the season, EHS coach Matt Martin admitted. “We struggled a couple of games when teams would line up and play smash mouth,” Martin said. “They (Homewood) figured it out, and hats off to them. They're a really good, talented team.

“The twins, I mean, if you had them, wouldn't you hand off to them? They just ran the ball better.”

The back-and-forth nature of the game reminded the Vikings of a couple of games earlier in the season when they had trouble holding on to leads. “We had a couple of games where we blew the lead,” Homewood coach Craig Buzea said. “We had three sets where we could use up some clock, so we took some chances and the kids really stepped it up. We showed we could compete.”

The Vikings opened the scoring when Deante Harley-Hampton took a give from Gray and scored from 16 yards out with 9:30 left in the opening term. Edwardsville quarterback Dan Marinko (21-of-30 for 276 yards) evened up the score with a 1-yard plunge with 2:44 left in the first, then found Isaiah Michel from 8 yards out early in the second to give the Tigers their first lead.

Back came the Vikings, who tied things up on a 9-yard TD strike from Gray to Jaylon Walton. Marinko answered back with a 1-yard pass to Nathan Crone to make it 21-14 in Edwardsville's favor. Deante Harley-Hampton forged another tie with a 9-yard run with 3:42 left, but just when it seemed as though both sides would be even heading into the long break, Marinko found Monty Sharpe, who took a pass, found a seam and ran into the end zone just as time ran out to make it 28-21 in Edwardsville's favor.

“Monty, I'm so proud of him,” Martin said. “He didn't play much last year, but kept with the program and had a great senior year. That was a big-time play by him.”

Early in the third term, the Vikings then found themselves with fourth-and-1 and the punting team on the field. But James Sheehan carried the ball 16 yards for a first down and a huge dose of momentum for Homewood.

“We didn't want to go down two scores at that point,” Buzea said. “We saw how they lined up and decided to give it a try and see what happens. At this point, it's win or go home, and it worked.”

The fake set up a 6-yard TD run by Gray to tie it up, and then the Vikings took the lead late in the quarter when Deante Harley-Hampton scored on a 28-yard pass from Gray. Devonte Harley-Hampton followed that with a score with 5:09 left in the final quarter to make it 42-28 in the Vikings' favor.

If the Vikings felt they had things wrapped up, they had to guess again when Marinko hit Fontez Davis with a 24-yard TD strike with 3:43 to go in regulation. Homewood, however, managed to bleed the clock dry and the Tigers never got a chance to send the game to overtime.

“Edwardsville's got a great team,” Buzea said. “They're really well-coached and we knew how good they were going in.”

“We have a special group of seniors here,” Martin said. “They're going to be missed.”

[CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO HIGHLIGHTS OF THE GAME](#)