

Jerrett Smith's heroic Hail Mary catch pushes Hawks past Mendon-Unity 28-21

by John Hough, Sports Writer
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CARROLLTON - Jerrett Smith couldn't hear anything. He was completely immune to all of his surroundings: His opponents, the steamy heat, and most importantly the pressure of the moment. All of his attention was focused on the football floating down toward him.

"I didn't hear a sound. Absolutely nothing. Just focused on catching the ball and getting into the end zone," Smith said.

He leaped up and hauled in a 25-yard touchdown pass from Wade Prough on a 4th and 10 with 4.6 seconds left to play in the game. In doing so the Carrollton Hawks stunned the Mendon Unity Mustangs 28-21 on a hot Saturday afternoon in Carrollton.

"It was a great play," Carrollton head coach Nick Flowers said. "The offensive line gave Wade time on that play, they (Unity) had good coverage. Jerrett just went up and was strong with the ball and pulled it in."

Smith himself was confident when the football was coming near him that he could make the play.

"We run plays like that every day and it just came natural like second hand," Smith said.

The catch wouldn't have been possible if it wasn't for the initial drive, which lasted 3 minutes and 26.4 seconds. The Hawks started all the way back on their own 9-yard line.

They recovered a fumble and converted on three fourth downs including the touchdown pass.

“When we got the ball back we put a heck of a drive on there,” Flowers said. That’s our offense being able to spike the ball two or three times, being able to pick up first downs running, and still not quit there at the end,”

Carrollton could have mentally quit when Unity took over after getting an interception with 7:47 left. On the ensuing possession the Mustangs killed off 3:17 of time, but it could’ve been more had they not thrown 4 incomplete passes that stopped the clock and saved the Hawks from burning timeouts.

“That’s the best thing that could’ve happened to us to stop the clock for us,” Flowers said. “What I’m most proud about is the composure that our boys had.”

Despite going winless last year, Unity (1-1) has been one of the several up and coming teams in the WIVC this season. They showed why by competing with Carrollton all game long and was one play away from knocking off the Hawks on the road.

“We knew that this Unity team was a heck of a football team, without a doubt they’re going to compete in the North,” Flowers said.

“Immediately when we saw their film we said their running a lot of the spread stuff we’re running.” We said this game is not going to be over until the final seconds of the game, did not think it was going to be literally the final seconds of the game like that,” Flowers said with a laugh.

Carrollton was ahead 14-0 from touchdown passes by Wade Prough to Jayce Arnett and Cole Brannan. Unity scored two straight touchdowns to make it 14-13 before halftime. In the third quarter Prough made it 20-13 when he plunged into the end zone on a 1-yard run, but the Mustangs answered back on a 20-yard touchdown pass and converted the 2-point version on a fake field goal passing touchdown.

Carrollton (1-1) will welcome their old rivals, the Greenfield-Northwestern Tigers to town next week at 7 p.m. to kickoff WIVC South conference play.



[Dan Brannan also contributed to this story.](#)

