

Carrollton posts eighth win 38-14 over Triopia, awaits playoff pairings today

by John Hough, Sports Writer
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CONCORD - Whenever the **Carrollton Hawks** enter sky blue Trojan country, **Triopia** always seems to give the Hawks the best game they can play and get the community behind them in the process.

“This was do or die for them and we knew that we were going to get their A game,” **Carrollton head coach Nick Flowers** said.

“They brought pressure on us and when you play with that mentality you take chances and more times than not you’ll make something good happen.”

When it comes down to it they most likely do it because the title “Carrollton Hawks” a big name in Western and Central Illinois nowadays with the overall success in the last four years.

Carrollton defeated Triopia 38-14 on Friday night in Concord and finished the regular season at 8-1.

Yesterday was one of the most, if not the most physical game the Hawks have participated in this season, but that’s what they usually receive whenever they visit Don Kemp Field.

“They play us tough,” Flowers said.

“This is probably about as physical we’ve played in a lot of weeks as far as hard hitting.”

Carrollton scored on their first possession on a fourth and goal from the 4-yard line as **Cole Brannan** took it to paydirt on an end around route.

Triopia struck back as quick as the Empire did in Star Wars.

On the first play of the ensuing possession, Blake Lawson broke through a big pile of players at the line of scrimmage and ran for a 65-yard score.

It was 8-all after the first quarter.

Thirty-five seconds into the second quarter the Hawks went back on top by converting on yet another fourth down.

This time quarterback **Wade Prough** hit **Jerrett Smith** in the end zone for a 5-yard strike to put the Hawks up 16-8.

Smith would add another tally of his own on a 7-yard rushing touchdown to bolster the Carrollton lead to 22-8 right before halftime.

Coming out of the intermission, the Trojans came out fighting.

Kaleb Brogdon reeled off another long touchdown run, this time from 37-yards out to make the deficit 22-14.

Things really got interesting as Triopia recovered an onside kick at Carrollton's 45-yard line.

"We knew they were going to onside kick it, we had our hands to team out there, they had a heck of an onside kick and came in and got the ball," Flowers said.

The Trojans then converted on a 4th and 1 and moved the ball down to Carrollton's 11-yard line and were then in pole position to tie the game, but then they shot themselves in the foot with a personal foul.

The ball was moved to the 26-yard line and that's when the Hawks defense answered the bell.

"I did like the way our defense stepped on the field and if anything it (the onside kick) upset our defense coming back onto the field," Flowers said.

Triopia failed to move the chains and the drive was snuffed out as Brody Howard sacked Trojan quarterback Isaac Werries on 4th down to end the threat.

The Hawks took over and committed penalty after penalty on their ensuing possession. In fact they were backed up so much that it was 1st and 33.

Carrollton failed to convert the first down and it was 4th and 12, but a roughing the kicker penalty was called on the Trojans, thus bailing out the Hawks.

Later on the same possession, on a 4th and 12 from the 30-yard line, Prough evaded a Triopia linebacker in the pocket, then he slinged the ball to Smith and he caught it at the 5-yard line, thus bailing out the Hawks once again.

Brannan scored on the next play on a rushing touchdown to put the Hawks up 30-14 with nine minutes to go.

Smith added one more score as he ran in from 4 yards out.

The players and staff will find out tomorrow afternoon on which school they will host in the first round of the IHSA Class 1A Playoffs.

This has been a four-year tradition for the Hawks as they use it as a time for celebration in reflection of their successful seasons.

"We celebrate as a coaching staff and as families and bring some stat guys and some parents.

The boys do their own thing, they don't think it's real cool to hang out with us coaches on a Saturday night," Flowers said with a laugh.