

Mustangs take control in Battle of the Bell

by Greg Oshust



KENNESAW - Not only did Kennesaw Mountain get its first win of the season Friday, it got it against its biggest rival.

In the annual Battle of the Bell contest, matching the Due West rivals against each other, the Mustangs scored a 17-14 upset of Harrison at Cobleigh Stadium.

Devon Jones' 3-yard touchdown run late in the fourth quarter turned out to be the game-winner for Kennesaw Mountain (1-4, 1-3).

"It was a good, hard-fought game," Kennesaw Mountain coach Scott Jones said. "Everybody played hard. It was a total team effort. I know the kids didn't like being 0-4 and they were determined to get that first win."

It was only Kennesaw Mountain's second win over Harrison in the eight games the teams have played against each other. The Mustangs

won, 24-21, in 2006 for their only other win against the Hoyas.

"This was a big win for us," said senior Devon Jones. "The seniors were on the last team that beat Harrison and we wanted to get one more win over them."

Diamond Stewart rushed for 167 yards and a touchdown on 15 carries, while Jones ran for 94 yards and his game-winning TD on 16 carries.

Harrison got off to a strong start on the first play of the game when Austin Cain threw a 21-yard pass to Brendan Mlincsek, which moved the ball from the Hoyas' 38-yard line to the Kennesaw Mountain 41.

The Hoyas went on to move the ball to the Mustangs' 31, but the drive ended when Harrison fumbled the ball away at the 22.

Harrison forced Kennesaw Mountain to punt, but the Hoyas lost the ball again when Cain fumbled the snap. The Mustangs pounced on the ball once again at their own 47.

That turnover proved to be more costly for Harrison as Stewart broke through the defenders and ran 53 yards for the touchdown. Devon Stookey added the extra point to give Kennesaw Mountain a 7-0 lead midway through the first quarter.

Harrison (3-2, 3-1) bounced right back on its next offensive series as D.J. Reed ran 63 yards to take the ball from the Hoyas' 27 down to the Kennesaw Mountain 10. Three plays later, Cain scored on a quarterback-keeper from 1 yard out and Darren Parkinson added the extra point to tie the game 7-7.

The Hoyas took the lead on the first play of the second quarter when David Dupaty ran the ball 8 yards into the end zone. Parkinson booted another extra point for a 14-7 advantage.

Kennesaw Mountain responded with a 16-play, 69-yard drive that culminated with Stookey's 34-yard field goal, helping the Mustangs cut Harrison's lead to 14-10.

Kennesaw Mountain had a chance to narrow the gap even more at the end of the first half, but Stookey's 36-yard field goal attempt fell short and the Hoyas retained their four-point advantage at halftime.

It appeared as if the Mustangs were on the verge of taking the lead on the first series of the second half, using a long drive to take the ball all the way to the Harrison 1.

But the Hoyas stopped the Mustangs cold after that the Kennesaw Mountain gave the ball up on downs.

It was in the Mustangs' final offensive series of the game late in the fourth quarter when they broke through. Starting at his own 25, Stewart ran 39 yards to move the ball to the Harrison 36. Jones' 17-yard run then took the Mustangs even further, down to the Hoyas' 19.

A 5-yard quarterback-keeper by Will Campbell, and an 11-yard run by Jones, took the ball to the Harrison 3, setting up Jones' game-winning run.