

Iola-Scandinavia finds answer to Amherst's defense in win

By Scott Williams

Journal Staff

scott.williams@cwnews.net August 25, 2007

IOLA -- Amherst football coach Brian Toelle challenged Iola-Scandinavia to a game of "Truth or Dare" on Friday night.

Intent on not letting fullback Michael Griffin beat his team, Toelle dared the Thunderbirds to show that someone else was capable of moving the football against the Falcons' defense.

The truth of the matter is the T-Birds are much more than a one-man show. Dustin McAloon, Colton Zimmerman, Kody Morgan and Jordan Mortenson can be pretty darn productive.

McAloon rushed for 110 yards on 22 carries and a touchdown and Zimmerman threw for 89 yards and a score as the T-Birds knocked off the Falcons 18-7 in the nonconference season opener for both teams Friday night.

"This is always a good rivalry game when you have two close towns playing against each other," I-S coach Scott Erickson said. "I was pleased with our effort and how we were mentally ready to play."

With nine and 10 men in the box, Amherst made it clear from the opening snap that pounding the 6-foot-2, 200-pound Griffin would be next to impossible.

So the T-Birds decided to take what was left -- namely McAloon left and right off the corners, or Zimmerman gaining big chunks on keepers or scrambles.

"That is a good team. They have some athletes over there, and those athletes made some plays when they needed to keep drives going," Toelle said. "It came down to executing when you needed to."

McAloon opened the scoring with a 1-yard touchdown run in the first quarter and Zimmerman hooked up with Griffin for a 16-yard scoring strike as the T-Birds built a 12-0 lead.

Amherst had trouble getting anything going on offense in the opening half as Griffin and Josh Bauer spent as much time in the backfield as the Falcon running backs.

This was a case where the score reflected the statistics as I-S held a dominating 169-5 edge in total yards over the opening 24 minutes.

"We think we have the potential to play that type of defense all season. And we think we can get a lot better," Erickson said.

A 27-yard completion from Zimmerman to Morgan and a 17-yard jaunt by McAloon set up Griffin for a 2-yard scoring run as the T-Birds increased the margin to 18-0.

Amherst finally found the big play it was looking for in the final period when Jeff Lutz turned a short pass from Nate Martin into a 56-yard gain. Two plays later, Martin snuck over from 2 yards out to end the shutout. Lutz added the extra point.

But it was too little, too late.

"We're disappointed. We really thought we could come back a little further," said Toelle. "A play here and a play there, and the game could have been a different story."

Thunderbirds 18, Falcons 7

Amherst 0 0 0 7 -- 7

Iola-Scandinavia 6 6 6 0 -- 18

First Quarter

I-S--Dustin McAloon 1 run (kick failed)

Second Quarter

I-S--Michael Griffin 16 pass from Colton Zimmerman (pass failed)

Third Quarter

I-S--Griffin 2 run (kick failed)

Fourth Quarter

A--Nate Martin 2 run (Jeff Lutz kick)

A I-S

First downs 5 17

Total yards 136 269

Rushes-yards 19-5 50-180

Passing yards 131 89

Comp.-Att.-INT 16-27-2 6-12-0

Fumbles-lost 4-0 5-0

Individual leaders

Rushing - Iola-Scandinavia: Dustin McAloon 22-110. Amherst: Skylar Trzebiatowski 10-31.

Receiving - Iola-Scandinavia: Kody Morgan 3-41. Amherst: Jeff Lutz 3-70.

Passing - Iola-Scandinavia: Colton Zimmerman 6-12-0-89. Amherst: Nate Martin 15-26-2-131.