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Jenks/Union 2000 - One for the Ages

By Kevin Farr - Coaches Aid

There have been a lot of great high school football games over the years in the state of Oklahoma. Every one of them, however, will have to take a backseat to the display Class 6A megapowers Jenks and Tulsa Union put on Thursday night at Skeggs Stadium. One truly for the ages.

Call it the Greatest Game in the glorious history of Oklahoma high school football. The only people that might argue are the ones who undoubtedly missed it.

Think of the nearly 32,000 or so fans in attendance and the thousands more watching on television. Or ask the media masses about the national publications, in attendance.

The game had it all, and then some. It left nearly everyone breathless.

Who wouldn't be surprised if Cox Cable got a call next week from ESPN, looking for a copy of the broadcast for their Classic Network. The game was to be seen by every football fan around.

The unbiased observer in the end zone so eloquently put it in the fourth quarter "There aren't any losers in this game. Time to run out on somebody."

The game ended up running out on Tulsa Union despite a Valliant effort, as Jenks forged a drama-filled 41-37 victory in the annual battle between the two neighborhood rivals.

The final shining moment in a game filled with highlight film plays started innocently enough as Jenks runningback Kejuan Jones caught a swing pass from Scott McCoy at his own 20 yardline with just 21 seconds remaining.

McCoy kept going...and going...and going...and going. Eighty yards later, the standout senior hit the end zone to snatch a Trojan victory from the jaws of defeat in one fell swoop.

s the most amazing thing I've ever taken part in," McCoy said afterward. "I'll remember this forever."

nts earlier, Union fans were jubilant themselves, as it appeared the Redskins had wrapped up the win, capping an incredible drive with 13-yard touchdown pass from a scrambling Tyler Gooch to Jerome Janet.

han two minutes prior to that Jenks looked have things in hand as Jones juke two defenders and rumbled 13 yards to possibly finish a wild Trojan comeback.

far from over, though.

ould be said for most of the night, as nearly every time one team would produce a big play, the other would come up with a counter. It was a roller coaster ride that would not end until the final whistle.

38 points on the scoreboard, some people might be asking where was the defense. Well, to tell the truth there was plenty of defensive stops but also couldn't help but give up a few big plays to the other's powerful offense.

in the game, it appeared as if the Redskins had the upper hand, especially in the first half when they built a 10-0 lead thanks to a series of special team miscues by Jenks.

, who was continually coming up with huge plays for the Union offense all night long, got the Redskins on the board first with a powerful 24-yard strike to Janet only five minutes into the contest.

ving a fine goalline stand by the Trojans and ensuing 21-yard field goal from Jake Gibbons, the Jenks offense finally got rolling.

was bottling up the running of Jones extremely well so that left McCoy to go to the air, igniting the attack with 15- and 18-yard passes to Jones. Bobby Klinck then produced in his first carry of the night with a nifty 29-yard scamper that set the Trojan offense on a five-yard scoring burst by Jones late in the second quarter.

vo teams really got their offenses in high gear after intermission as Union came out smoking, needing just five plays before hitting Jonathon Chisholm for a 23-yard touchdown.

a shanked Jenks punt, the Redskins went to their trick bag with a lateral from Gooch to Chisholm and then 35-yard bomb to Chisholm. That helped set up a Gooch touchdown run to make it 23-7 Union.

hen it looked like the Redskins might be taking control with outstanding play by the defensive line foursome of Bear Naylor, Rooney, Derek Rice and Chris Barnes, Jenks came to life with the spark of a 41-yard touchdown burst by Jones in which he ran the ball all the way across the field to paydirt.

answered right back with a methodical, 12-play, 70-yard drive that culminated on a two-yard run by Gooch and put the Redskins on a 10-13 hole just before the end of the third period.

again, Jenks responded with a 39-yard bomb from McCoy to Jason Carter and 35-yard scoring run by Klinck to use just 30 seconds on its two-play drive.

put the Redskins offense in motion again, calmly connecting with Trinity Dawson for a pair of key third down conversions. However, Dawson fumble at the Jenks 23 with nine minutes to play that left the door wide open.

rojans needed only three plays to capitalize on the miscue as Jones broke free for a 65-yard touchdown run against a tired Union defense to help cut the Redskins advantage to only 30-27.

defense then fed off the momentum stuffing the Union offense in three plays, including a monster sack from Bryan Pickens.

g over at their own 20, the Trojans marched out to their 43 when they faced their first call with the game on the line at 4:00. Just two and a half minutes remaining.

Allen Trimble called for a pass and McCoy calmly found Garrett Mills wide open on a quick out for a 13-yard gain. The next play, McCoy threw a 31 yards on another beautifully executed pass from McCoy to tight end Eric Lindaman to set up Jones' 13-yard run with 1:00 minutes left.

McCoy wasn't finished, however, doing his best John Elway impersonation, driving the Redskins 65 yards in only a minute and 30 seconds. He finished with 207 yards passing by hitting 12 of 17 attempts.

The celebration was only brief for the Redskins, however, as the clock struck midnight for this game.

Good news for Union is that unlike its past two losses to Jenks, this one doesn't end their season and they have another 10 weeks to prepare and take another crack at the Trojans.

McCoy thinks it's business as usual as the four-time defending champions take another step toward an unprecedented fifth straight championship. McCoy had a stellar night with 306 total yards offensively, including 190 rushing on just 19 carries. He scored five touchdowns.

For the rest of the 32,000 people, it's 10 more weeks of anticipation for what undoubtedly could be another classic battle - Trojans vs. Union with the gold ball on the line.

"It's definitely the best \$6 entertainment around, isn't it," Union coach Bill Blankenship understated afterward.



09/09/05

Jenks edges Union

Jenks wide receiver gives Trojans a heart-stopping win over Union with touchdown grab.

Senior wide receiver Isaac Norman was at Skelly Stadium in 2000 when Kejuan Jones raced to glory on a game-winning 8-yard touchdown catch against Union with eight seconds left. "I dreamed about doing something like that, but I never thought it would happen," Norman said.

Norman realized his dream on Thursday. He scored on a 64-yard pass from Jake Strain with 18 seconds remaining to give Class 6A Jenks a 48-44 victory over top-ranked 6A Union in the Backyard Bowl before a crowd of 15,110 at Skelly Stadium.

"Kejuan is the fastest on our team, and that's who we wanted to get the ball to," Strain said. "He ran a great route, and I knew I had to trust that he would score."

Norman ran behind the secondary, made the catch and won a dash to the end zone.

"It was a perfect ball," said Norman, who had two catches for two yards during the first 47 1/2 minutes. "Our quarterback and the defense did what they had to do."

Union, which had seen a 37-20 lead erased earlier in the quarter, had taken a 44-41 lead on a 10-yard touchdown pass from Coach Strain to Keron Beers with 34 seconds left.

Jenks made a fair catch of the ensuing kickoff at the 26, Strain passed 10 yards to Brandon McLaurin. Then came the winning

s a miracle," Norman said.

ten seconds earlier, the Beers touchdown appeared to have spoiled an incredible Trojans rally after they had scored three touchdowns in less than three minutes.

Union began the comeback when he fired a 21-yard TD pass to McLaurin with 6:32 left to reduce the Union lead to 37-27. That was the only play after a 21-yard punt gave Jenks possession at the Union 26.

Three seconds later, a McLaurin fumble recovery set up a 19-yard TD pass from Strain to a wide-open Stephen Campbell for a 37-34.

Union's first fumble set up a 15-yard TD run by Chris Adkins as Jenks (2-0) took a 41-37 lead with 3:36 left. That was the same game as the 2000 regular-season game after Jones provided his heroics.

Strain, who entered midway through the third quarter in relief of injured Mark Ginther, finished 5-of-8 for 119 yards and three touchdowns. Strain was the preseason starter before sustaining a broken finger on his throwing hand four weeks ago. Ginther was 10-of-17 for 72 yards and two TDs.

Union was 14-of-27 for 197 yards and four TDs. Three went to Jake Borgsmiller, who had 11 catches for 163 yards.

David Johnson of Union was the leading rusher, with 192 yards and a TD against his former teammates. Adkins had 20 carries for 100 yards and two TDs.

Union jumped out to a 14-0 lead. But in the final 6:22 of the first half, the Redskins (1-1) rallied for 15 points on a safety and two Borgsmiller TDs to take a 15-14 lead going into intermission.

Union, however, opened the second half with a 10-play, 80-yard drive that was capped by a 6-yard TD pass from Ginther to Taylor, who made the catch in the left flat and stretched the ball just inside the pylon while in the arms of cornerback Dominique Rodgers-Cromartie.

Strain, however, intercepted the conversion pass to keep the Union deficit at 20-15 with 7:47 left in the third.

On the ensuing kickoff, Franks provided more fireworks with a 96-yard kickoff return for a TD. Whorton completed a two-point conversion for a 23-20 lead.

The Redskins increased their lead to 30-20 when Borgsmiller caught a 14-yard lob from Whorton in the left corner of the end zone with 1:04 left in the third quarter.

Union scored on a 3-yard run with 10:32 remaining to stretch the Union lead to 37-20. But the 17-point advantage was wiped out by a 10-yard TD pass from Strain to McLaurin.

"We give (Jenks) them credit," Union coach Bill Blankenship said. "This is one of these classic games (in the Union-Jenks rivalry)."

The teams have split the last six games. Union beat Jenks in last year's 6A state final.

Union went ahead 14-0 in the first eight minutes before Union came back late in the first half.

"We didn't play a clean game, but we played good enough to win," Jenks coach Allan Trimble said.