Peoria vs. Duluth

May 21, 1999

FINAL	1ST	2ND	3RD	4TH	TOTAL
Peoria	12	3	14	16	45
Duluth	7	14	13	7	41

SCORING SUMMARY

P -- Brandon Stewart 40 field goal
P -- Jeremy Calhoun 27 pass from Johnny Johnson (kick failed)
D -- Ricardo Jones 6 pass from Bob DeMeyer (Alex Stricker kick)
P -- Stewart 37 field goal
D -- Jamie Lee 4 run (Stricker kick)
P -- Stewart 19 field goal
D -- Tod Paige 9 pass from DeMeyer (Stricker kick)
D -- Lee 2 run (kick failed)
P -- Johnson 3 run (Stewart kick)
D -- Frank Jackson 22 pass from DeMeyer (Stricker kick)
P -- Joel Rosborough 8 pass from Johnson (Stewart kick)
D -- Lee 1 run (Stricker kick)
P -- Johnson 1 run (Stewart kick)
P -- Stewart 19 field goal
P -- Eldren Milton 14 pass from Johnson (pass failed)

PLAYER STATISTICS

Peoria rushing: Coe Bonner 4-0, Johnny Johnson 8-16, Sedrick Robinson 1-(-2)

Duluth rushing: Jamie Lee 8-19, Bob DeMeyer 3-(-14), Ricardo Jones 4-6.

Peoria passing: Johnson 27-39-0, 220

Duluth passing: DeMeyer 41-22-0 196.

Peoria receiving: Joel Rosborough 8-65, Bonner 1-8, Jeremy Calhoun 5-40, Eldren Milton 10-76, Robinson 3-31

Duluth receiving: Frank Jackson 9-96, Tod Paige 5-40, Jones 2-19, Jo Jo Justice 6-41.

Game Summary

DULUTH, MN-- Peoria quarterback Johnny Johnson had too many moves, too strong an arm, and kicker Brandon Stewart had a foot that was too accurate. The Pirates shook off Duluth's Indoor Football League upset bid with a no-huddle offense that Johnson ran nearly to perfection, producing 30 second-half points and a 45-41 victory before an estimated 1,000 fans Friday night at the DECC. The Pirates remained undefeated at 7-0. The Lumberjacks (1-6) lost their sixth straight game, despite playing perhaps their best game of the season.

``We never had any doubt we were the team that was going to win the football game," Johnson said. ``Duluth is an excellent football team. They play hard, but I think they got overwhelmed because we have a little something special. Thank God we do." Johnson is that little some thing. The former University of Illinois quarterback ran for two second-half touchdowns and threw two more, including a 14-yarder to wide receiver Eldren Milton with 54 seconds left that gave the Pirates a 45-41 lead. The no-huddle, which the Pirates began running two weeks ago, helped keep the Lumberjacks from substituting. That wore down a defense that Johnson continually kept off-guard with his improvisations. Peoria scored the game's final 16 points.

``We have a lot of confidence in (the no-huddle) and I think it helped us out tonight," Johnson said. That the Lumberjacks looked nothing like the team that was drilled 69-32 in Peoria, Ill., two weeks ago was of little consolation. ``We had this game," Duluth defensive back Mike Griffith said. ``We should have pulled it off and we didn't. We pretty much had them contained until the end." A defense that allowed an average of 70 points the previous three games limited Peoria to 15 first-half points. A Duluth offense that was potent some games and almost non-existent in others put up 21 first-half points and added another three touchdowns in the second. But that wasn't enough to offset Johnson's passing and running, or the leg of Stewart, who kicked four field goals and made 3 of 4 extra points.

``Our offense was clicking, but we've got to put four quarters together," Duluth wide receiver Jo Jo Justice said. ``We started off well, we just didn't finish well and we ended up with a loss." The Lumberjacks cooked up a possible upset with their best half of football since their April 2

opener, and new defensive players made important contributions. The defense limited the Pirates to one pass-and-catch, broken-field touchdown and three Stewart field goals. Linebacker Frank Carter made several big hits, though he had never even practiced indoor football before suiting up Friday night. Griffith halted a second-quarter drive by stripping Peoria's Milton at the Duluth 6-yard line and returning it to the 12.

The Lumberjacks offense scored on a Bob DeMeyer-to-Tod Paige touchdown five plays later for a 21-15 lead with 32 seconds left. Duluth linebacker Will Collins forced Peoria's Sedrick Robinson to fumble again on the kickoff return, but Alex Stricker missed a 20-yard field goal attempt as the half ended. DeMeyer played a solid first half, hitting 11 of 21 passes for 93 yards and two touchdowns. A 27-yard completion to wide receiver Frank Jackson on a third-and-11 play set up the go-ahead touchdown on a 9-yard bullet to Paige. Peoria hurt itself with penalties. The Pirates committed personal fouls on three Duluth scoring drives that moved the ball inside the Peoria 10.

Other nickel-and-dime plays helped the Lumberjacks offense keep moving. But all the missed opportunities and mistakes couldn't stop Johnson. The Lumberjacks are in a position where moral victories are OK, and they hope this is a precursor to better results in the final five games. ``Now we know we can play,'' DeMeyer said. ``We hadn't felt that since the first game. This is the best team in the league and we played with them. They have a solid team, but we know we do, too.''