**Athens defeats Sayre, 42-13, retains Rusty Rail**

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SAYRE — With the coveted Rusty Rail on the line, Athens dominated again with a 42-13-343 final tally.

Confusing? Those who watched Zack Jayne carry the rock for 343 yards know what that score is all about. Call him Runaway Jayne or the Zack Attack, but whatever you call him, you call him from long distance.

Going into the contest at the Lockhart Street Bowl, Jayne needed 46 yards to break the Wildcats single season mark set by Ken Haggerty in 1987. Mission accomplished.

He needed 36 yards to eclipse 4,000 yards for his career. Mission accomplished.

He needed 240 for 2,000 yards in the season. Mission accomplished.

“It’s great,” Jayne said after the game, “but once again it’s a team effort. I couldn’t do it without my offensive line and the other guys on the team.”

Oh, by the way, Jayne also scored five touchdowns.

Many thought the game would be a blowout from the start, but the Redskins had other thoughts. They recovered an onside kick, but fumbled the ball on the next play.

Athens failed to capitalize on the turnover after the Sayre defense sacked quarterback Kaden Rude for a 15-yard loss and then nearly blocked the punt.

Sayre took over on the Wildcats’ 42. After a two-yard run by Isaiah Firestine, Brown connected with Gage Carnrike for nine yards. Firestine added a nine-yard run and three plays later Brown went to the air again. He hit Ethan Miller in the corner of the end zone for a 23-yard score.

Nathan Garrity booted the extra point for a 7-0 lead giving hope to the home crowd and stunning the heavily favored Wildcats.

“It was a good old-fashioned rivalry game,” Athens head coach Jack Young said. “Hats off to them. We started out a little sloppy, but they took advantage of some situations and put some points on the board. The bottom line there is that we have to either wake up and react or it’s going to be a long night. Our philosophy coming in was that we were going to get Zack rolling and see what happened with the game.”

Philosophy 101. Put the train on the tracks.

On the next series, Jayne carried the ball eight of 10 plays for 48 yards with last accounting for a 12-yard score to tie the game.

The Redskins again moved the ball with a heavy dose of Firestine, but the big play came on a 23-yard pass play from Brown to Carnrike. The possession stalled on the Wildcats’ 42 yard line. Sayre punted pinning Athens at the seven.

The Wildcats climbed aboard the Jayne Train. Jayne had five runs for 61 yards, but the touchdown came on a 20-yard run from Nick Watkins. AricWestbrook added the extra point again for a 14-7 margin.

After Sayre failed to move the ball on the ensuing possession, Athens went to the Runaway Train on five consecutive plays for 48 yards and a touchdown for a 21-7 halftime lead.

On the Wildcats’ opening possession of the second half — you guessed — no messing around.

Eight straight handoffs to Jayne left the Redskins singing the Folsom City Blues. Eight carries. Sixty-one yards. One touchdown.

“It’s a rush,” Jayne said of hitting holes his line opens for him. “You see open field and you just want to get through it.”

After a 21-yard run from Firestine, the Redskins stalled after the Wildcats sacked Brown for 13 yards on fourth down.

Jayne showed he was human on Athens’ next series. He fumbled a pitch from Rude and Arin Bennett recovered.

The Wildcat defense held tough again and forced Sayre to turn the ball over on downs. Athens took over.

Two carries. Fifty-three yards. One touchdown.

Jayne rumbled down the right side of the field and stiff-armed Garrity before pulling away on the 51-yard score.

“I picked that up watching college football,” Jayne said of the stiff arm. “I think (Jalen) Hurd from Tennessee did it a couple weeks ago.”

Jayne played the next series — his last before Coach Young pulled him — had five carries for 41 yards and finished with a 14-yard touchdown.

The Redskins had more fight in them. With just under three minutes left, Brown connected with Carnrike for a 73-yard touchdown for the 42-13 final tally.

And 343 yards for Jayne.

“What we did with him — and I’m not a stats — but what we did was crazy special,” Young added. “The single yardage that he got, over 2,000 yards, he’s one of the best in the state this year.