

# WILDCATS WIN AN OT THRILLER - JIM MARKS TOSSES FIVE TDS AND RUNS FOR ANOTHER AS WG KNOCKS OUT LIVERPOOL. WG 41 LIVERPOOL 34

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Trailing by seven and facing fourth-and-goal from the 8-yard line in overtime, West Genesee needed a big play to keep its season alive. Once again, it turned to standout senior quarterback Jim Marks.

Marks rolled out and connected with Jake Fietkewicz in the corner of the end zone to tie the score at 34, giving the Wildcats new life going into double overtime. The West Genesee sideline breathed a sigh of relief and Marks pointed to the sky in exaltation.

"It was a sprint out protection so we didn't really have to worry about the blitzes coming from the inside," Marks said. "Fietkewicz ran a great route and I found him in the corner of the end zone. I'll tell you what, it's a great feeling."

Marks threw a 20-yard touchdown pass to John Glesener to start the second overtime and the Wildcats held on defense to defeat Liverpool 41-34 in a Class AA semifinal at Cicero-North Syracuse High School. Marks finished the game with five passing touchdowns and a rushing TD.

No. 2 West Genesee (8-1) will play No. 1 Henninger (8-1) in the Section III final Saturday at the Carrier Dome.

The defeat was crushing for Liverpool, a team that fought through the entire season without a home stadium. The Warriors led 20-7 at halftime and held the Wildcats' high-octane offense in check. In the end, too many penalties crippled Liverpool's chances to run away with the game.

"I told (my team) I love them and I'm very proud of what they did," Liverpool coach Dave Mancuso said. "We talk about going to a sectional championship and we just fell short to a very good football team."

"It definitely hurt. The team that makes the fewest mistakes wins. Those penalties were very costly."

Liverpool was dominant in the first quarter, starting the game on a 10-play, 81-yard drive that concluded on a 10-yard touchdown run from quarterback Tyler Kamide. On the next possession, the Warriors blocked a West Genesee punt, giving them great field position at the 22-yard line. Three plays later, Kamide found fullback Mike Donitzen on a 15-yard bootleg pass to extend the Liverpool lead to 14.

Two plays into West Genesee's next drive, Shawn Chayban intercepted a tipped screen pass and the Warriors took over on the Wildcats' 14-yard line. Three penalties and a

missed field goal prevented Liverpool from taking a commanding lead.

But the Warriors' defense would come through once again. Late in the second quarter, a lateral pass from Marks hit the turf and was picked up by Liverpool's Greg Bell, who ran it into the end zone to put his team up 20-0.

The Wildcats' ability to strike quick finally surfaced after the fumble return. Following an unsportsmanlike penalty on Liverpool, West Genesee took over on the Warriors' 37-yard line and Marks found receiver Joe Fazio on the first play for a touchdown.

The second half was a different story as the Wildcats came out strong with a 5-play, 60-yard drive that ended in an 8-yard pass from Marks to Fazio. Liverpool would extend its advantage to two scores, but West Genesee was able to tie it at 27 midway through the fourth quarter.

That's where the score stood until the overtime period began. Liverpool started with the ball and scored immediately on a 20-yard pass from Kamide to Justin Albro. But the touchdown for the Wildcats on fourth down in overtime stole the momentum right back.

"This is a testament to their character, getting the job done when you've got to get it done," West Genesee coach Joe Corley said. "I'm so proud of our guys. I've got to give Liverpool credit, they played a hell of a game and they fought through a lot of adversity. But in the end our guys just wanted it more and they went out there and earned it."

The heart-stopping win for the Wildcats is sure to give them confidence going into next week's championship game against top-seeded Henninger. The top two teams in Class AA haven't played this season.

"We can count on our guys to come out with a big play at the end," Marks said. "Even though we haven't seen (Henninger) play we still feel confident we can come out with it in the end."

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