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## Eagles Take the Falcons in Homecoming Nail-Biter

October 15, 2011 by [Michael Dowling \(Edit\)](#)

The Clarke County Eagles delivered a dramatic homecoming performance that kept fans in their seats till the final seconds of the game Friday as they defeated the Falcons of Central High School 10-7. A game closing drive with a fake punt and a 4th down pass was capped off with a last minute field goal as kicker Conner Shendow booted a chip shot through the uprights to seal the deal.

"There was a lot of drama in that game. Our guys fought hard." Coach Parker said after the win. "We had chances in the red zone offensively and we didn't capitalize on them but our defense did a great job of bailing us out."

Back and forth series dominated the first half as both teams struggled to mount scoring drives. The Eagles moved the ball well against the Falcons but were unable to capitalize until late in the second quarter. With 7:16 remaining in the half the Eagles launched into a 92 yard drive, capped off by a 2 yard touchdown run by #3 Jesse Smoot. With the PAT, the Eagles went into the half up 7-0.

But the real drama was just beginning. Trailing 7-0 with ten minutes left in the game, Central turned a punt reception that almost slipped by them into a reverse to #9 Sean Semones who ran it back 31 yards to put the Falcons in scoring range at the Eagles 18 yard line. Three plays later Falcon QB Justin Bauserman connected with Semones in the end zone to tie the score 7-7 with 8:55 remaining the game.

Senior Captain for the Eagles Alex Sefton said "People sort of dropped their heads after Semones got the touchdown but I told them 'This is OUR homecoming, and seniors this is our LAST homecoming.'"

It would turn out to be a homecoming memory they will carry with them the rest of their lives.

With 8:53 on the clock The Falcons kicked off and pinned the Eagles on their own 12 yard line. The Smoot, Hardesty, Paice, backfield would grind the ball forward to their own 40 yard line but were shut down facing fourth and five. Coach Parker sent the punt team out and they lined up to kick it away. But in a spontaneous moment of field awareness punter Alex Sefton decided to go for the fake.

"It wasn't a call, it was supposed to be a punt but I went to senior linebacker Colby Keating and said, 'Should we go for the fake?' and he said, 'It's up to you.'" At that point Sefton decided to go for it. "I had noticed in earlier punts that whenever I started to drop the ball to kick it the defenders would all turn their backs to get down field. So as I dropped the ball and they all turned I saw a wide open seam and took off."

Sefton ran the fake for nineteen yards to resuscitate the drive and give the Eagles a first down on the Falcon 40 yard line.

But three plays later the Eagles were in jail again with a fourth and six at the 36 yard line. With 2:25 left in the game #4 Drew Paice dropped back and connected with #3 Jesse Smoot at the 30 yard line to keep the drive alive with another 4th down conversion. The offense buckled down and pounded the ball to the 2 yard line but the Falcon defense held them to fourth and goal and with 11 seconds left, the game hung in the balance.



#3 Jesse Smoot tries to turn the corner - Photo Tanya Barton



#4 Drew Paice drops back to connect with #32 Alex Sefton - Photo Tanya Barton


Eagle kicker Connor Shendow has made several field goals this season but never a clutch kick like the 18 yard attempt he faced. The snap was clean and Shendow nailed it through the uprights to put the Eagles up 10-7.

But there was still room for more drama. With 7 seconds on the clock Clarke County squibbed a kick to the Falcons who broke it free and were headed up the sidelines. The last man, kicker Connor Shendow, knocked the Falcon runner out of bounds to close out the game and give the Eagles their Homecoming victory.

Coach Parker said after the game, "I'm proud of our guys, they fought hard and kept us in the game. it was a great homecoming win."

The win throws the Eagles into a three way tie for the Bull run district lead. When asked about the new standings Senior Alex Sefton said, "It feels good that it's an open field in the district now and that we have a chance to bring home a fifth straight title."

The Eagles face Manassas Park next week in an away game. Kickoff is at 7:30 PM.

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