

# Holy Heartbreak!

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## Jays Leave It All on the Field in Double OT, Skinned by the Tigers in a Rivalry Nail-biter, 28-21



Kalija Lipscomb fumbles on the first series, and it's recovered by the Tigers, ending a promising drive by the Jays.

When it was all said and done between Jesuit and Holy Cross on Friday night (Oct. 2) , the 96<sup>th</sup> meeting between this pair of crosstown Catholic rivals — truly two Great

American rivals — would be etched into memories and history books as one of the most exciting football games played at Tad Gormley Stadium.

That one team had to take home a bitter loss, well that's prep football, and a slice of life. Unfortunately for the Jays, the outcome of Friday night's nail-biter was perhaps more gut-wrenching for Jesuit than the Tigers' lopsided 56-14 loss in last season's Rivalry game.

The defending state champion Blue Jays are 2-3 overall after Week 5, and a dismal 0-2 in the Catholic League following their stunning double overtime loss to Holy Cross, 28-21, in this year's Rivalry game, coupled with the unexpected defeat, 26-20, by St. Augustine in Week 4.



Connor Prouet scored three TDs and ran well all night.

It's a little bit of a miracle that among the estimated 12,000 fans in the stadium, many of whom were parents, grandparents, and alumni, no one suffered a heart attack. But there are plenty of sore throats. The game was televised live on WHNO (Cox Channel 20/1020) with Ken Berthelot and former Jesuit head coach Wayde Keiser calling the action, much of it breathlessly over a three-hour span.

“We had all sorts of opportunities, but we kept shooting ourselves in the foot,” said one astute observer on Jesuit’s sideline. “We just made too many mistakes. I really feel bad for our players. They played their hearts out and left them on the field.”

Mistakes, karma, turnovers, lucky, or a combo thereof. Consider the following:



With the score tied at 14-14, the Jays move the ball into Tiger territory. On third and six, Hontas connects with Zach Young for a huge first down at the Tigers’ 29-yard line.

- In five games this season, this was the first one in which the Blue Jays won the coin toss, electing to receive.
- On the second play, Jesuit’s senior center, John Sewell, injured his knee. Although he limped off the field unaided, he didn’t return (junior Nick Gauthé filled in admirably). By the end of the game, Sewell was on crutches.
- On their first possession, the Jays gave Connor Prouet, their workhorse, the ball four times. He picked up about 25 yards.
- On third and eight from the Tigers’ 35-yard line, quarterback Peter Hontas hit wide receiver Kalija Lipscomb with a quick pass near the line of scrimmage. Lipscomb tacked on several yards, but the ball looked like it was cradled precariously. Lipscomb was tackled from behind and stripped of the ball, which bounced once and fell into the hands of a Tiger.

- Holy Cross proceeded to consume more than seven minutes off the clock in driving all the way down the field to score a touchdown with three minutes left in the first quarter.
- Senior kicker Crew Jacobs attempted a 40-yard field goal with a stiff wind to his back in the second quarter, but it was blocked and the Tigers had a 7-0 lead at halftime.
- In the third quarter, Jesuit took the lead, 14-7, when Connor Prouet scored two touchdowns five minutes apart on runs of five yards and two yards. Jacobs kicked the PATs through the middle of the uprights.
- Holy Cross ties the game at 14 apiece with just over four minutes left in the game, aided by a penalty on a missed field goal. The Jays were flagged for roughing the center after he snapped the ball. The Tigers got a first down and were suddenly in business on the 10-yard line.



The Blue Jays listen to Coach Mark Songy address them after a nail-biter of a game. The Jays play John Curtis on Friday, Oct. 9 at Joe Yenni Stadium.

- After the Tigers score, the Jays march down the field as the minutes tick off. Prouet picks up 20 yards on a carry and Hontas hits a wide-open Zach Young at the Tigers' 20-yard line.
- With the ball on the Holy Cross four-yard line, Jesuit runs the clock down to three seconds and calls a time out. What will be little more than a chip shot for Jacobs, about a 21-yard field goal attempt, is against a stiff wind. The kick will win the game

for Jesuit, if it's good. But the ball ricochets off his right foot at a crazy 45-degree angle and sails wide left.

"That young man is totally dejected," said Berthelot. As teammates patted Jacobs on the helmet, Keiser explained the miss. "It looks like his plant foot was not in the right direction," he said. "It looks like he planted his plant foot a little bit more to the left, so thus he hooked the ball to his left."

In overtime, the ball is placed on the 10-yard line and each team has four downs to score. Prouet scored on Jesuit's first possession and Jacobs kicked the PAT. Jesuit led 21-14. Holy Cross now had its chance and could do nothing on the first three downs. Facing fourth and 11, the Tiger quarterback rolls right and looks in the end zone. Jesuit defensive back Matt McMahon blitzes and gets an arm around the Tiger QB, who slips out of the jam. He tosses the ball... and it's caught in the far reach of the end zone. With the PAT, the score is 21-21.

The teams go into double overtime with the Tigers on offense first. On first down, another pass into the end zone is caught for a TD. The PAT is good and Holy Cross is out front, 28-21. Jesuit has four downs to tie it. The Jays rely on Prouet, who battles to get the Jays down to the three-yard line. But it's fourth down. The Jays have one last shot. Prouet takes the hand-off from Hontas and there is daylight on the left side. Hontas jumps up and must have felt that Prouet would score easily. But daylight quickly turns to darkness as the Tigers' defense swarms Prouet at the one-yard line. He is shoved back to the five or six yard line. As Berthelot puts it: "In a rugby scrum, Connor Prouet is stuffed."