



Koyotes advance to title game

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The Kansas Koyotes opened Saturday's playoff game strong, quickly proving Springfield wouldn't be the team to keep Kansas out of its seventh straight American Professional Football League championship game.

The Koyotes scored the first two touchdowns of the game and opened up a 20-point lead at half en route to a 41-19 win at Landon Arena in their last home game of the season.

The Koyotes advance to play July 25 at Iowa, marking the first time an APFL championship will be played outside away from Landon Arena.

"We played really hard and I couldn't be more proud of these guys, heading to a seventh championship game," Koyotes coach Jim Green said. "We had a lot of energy coming in. They know it's playoff time. All they know right now is energy, energy, energy and to get the job done."

Koyotes' running back Mike Steen ran for a 7-yard touchdown on the first possession. Then linebacker Matt Price picked off a deflected pass and returned for a 6-yard score, giving the Koyotes control early.

Springfield showed some life late in the first when quarterback Anthony Vibbard hit Archie Trevor for 38 yard, which set up a 1-yard touchdown plunge by Shawn Nevills.

However, the Koyotes grabbed the momentum for good in the second with Dwayne Allen and Donnell Smith each catching touchdowns from quarterback Carlos Kelly.

Vibbard completed just 1 of 13 passes in the first half for the Wolfpack and was replaced by Brett Lovekamp in the second half.

Springfield twice came within two touchdowns of tying the game in the second half, but each time Kansas answered with a Justin Wrecke touchdown reception from Kelly.

Green said it is important for the Koyotes, who have been relying on rushing for most of the season, to find some more success through the air.

"We know we can run the ball, but we need to get our routes and our timing down," he said. "We know in that championship game we just can't beat them by running alone. It's very important to get this timing down."

Green said the Koyotes are excited about the opportunity to win a seventh title while playing on the road.

Kelly completed 9 of 24 passes for 87 yards and four touchdowns with one interception. Wrecke was the Koyotes' leading receiver with three catches for 45 yards.

Archie Trevor was the Wolf Pack's primary offensive weapon, catching three passes for 87 yards and a touchdown.

Springfield 7 0 12 0 — 19

Kansas 15 12 14 0 — 41

Kansas — Steen 7 run (Thompson kick)

Kansas — Price 6 interception return (Thompson run)

Springfield — Nevills 1 run (Whistle kick)

Kansas — Allen 4 pass from Kelly (kick failed)

Kansas — Smith 5 pass from Kelly (kick failed)

Springfield — Lovekamp 1 run (kick failed)

Kansas — Wrecke 21 pass from Kelly (Thompson kick)

Springfield — Trevor 46 pass from Lovekamp (kick failed)

Kansas — Wrecke 13 pass from Kelly (Thompson kick)

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

Rushing — Springfield Lovekamp 10-19, Nevills 2-3, Vibbard 1-(minus) 8. Kansas: Kelly 3-42, Steen 6-28, DuBois 5-25, Smith 5-21.

Passing — Springfield Vibbard 1-13-1 38 yards, Lovekamp 4-13-0 74 yards; Kansas: Kelly 9-24 87 yards.

Receiving — Springfield Trevor 3-87, Harris 1-24, Johnson 1-1; Kansas: Wrecke 3-45, Allen 2-11, Freeman 1-13, Smith 1-5, Tucker 1-5, Steen 1-4.