

## Upper Arlington squeaks by Gahanna in OT By BRIAN McLEAN

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Both Upper Arlington football coach Mike Golden and Gahanna Lincoln skipper Mike Lanza prepared their teams to expect a "playoff atmosphere" when the Golden Bears traveled to Gahanna Friday, Aug. 30.

Neither the fans, nor the play disappointed those predictions.

In a dramatic finish, senior Jared Sylvester nailed a 28-yard field goal in overtime to lift UA to a 24-21 sudden-victory.

"I can't tell you how proud I am of our kids for hanging in there to win that game," Golden said. "In the second half it seemed like everything went wrong at a critical moment and it would have been easy to lose our spirit, but that didn't happen."

The scene following Sylvester's kick was more reminiscent of Week 11 than Week 2 -- the Bears' cup was overflowing with joy; the Golden Lions' was left in pieces on the turf.

Among the Arlington players, coaches and fans gorging on the thrill of victory, none got fatter than junior running back Tommy Farwick.

Rapidly establishing himself as one of the top backs in Central Ohio, Farwick's three touchdowns put UA (2-0) in a position to win one of the area's key Week 2 matchups.

On his first touch, the Bears' junior broke a tackle, cut back to find a seam, then burst through the Golden Lions' secondary for a 51-yard TD.

He scored again on a 6-yard run at the end of the first quarter -- his third came on an 11-yard sweep after Lincoln (1-1) had pulled to within 14-7.

Despite his heroics (Farwick finished with 137 yards on 22 carries), his two second-half fumbles were a contributing factor in keeping the Lions in the game.

Those miscues were washed away when Sylvester's kick sailed through the uprights.

"We made a few mistakes, but we hung together -- that's what good teams do," Farwick said. "Gahanna's a great team, but we knew we could win if we went back to playing Upper Arlington football.

"To come back and win a game like this in overtime -- I can't really put it into words -- awesome!"

Despite feeling the agony of defeat moments after the game, Lanza said his team took a big step forward Friday.

"Our team did a lot of growing up tonight," Lanza said. "We've got a new quarterback (Blake Hickey) and I thought he ran the option pretty well.

"I told our kids in the locker room that we'll learn from this and get better in the long run."

Here's how the Lions got back into the game after trailing 14-0 at halftime.

UA took possession on its own 23, but on the first play of the second half, Farwick lost the ball after a 3-yard gain and Gahanna took over on the Bears' 29.

Two plays later, running back Darius Reeves burst around right tackle and scored a 28-yard TD.

UA responded quickly. Sparked by quarterback Braden Layer's 36-yard completion to a wide open Blake Annen to the Lions' 12, Farwick scored his third TD to give the Bears a momentary 21-7 lead.

After Layer was intercepted by Kevin Guthrie, Gahanna was in business on the Bears' 37.

After a six-play drive, Hickey threw a 15-yard bullet to Guthrie in the end zone -- cutting the Arlington lead to 21-14 with a minute remaining in the quarter.

After receiver Elliott Williams' circus catch of a 25-yard toss from Hickey, Reeves scored on a 2-yard run to tie the score 21-21.

UA followed with a 14-play drive to the Gahanna 11 with less than a minute remaining, but Farwick's second fumble postponed Sylvester's winning field goal attempt.

In OT, Gahanna drove to the UA 14, but on a third-and-4 play, Reeves was stuffed by Mikel Berry and Anthony Finissi for a five-yard loss. Trevor Stewart's 36-yard field goal attempt sailed wide left.

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