

Lions outdo Outlaws

Cottage Grove football defeats Sisters in road test

By Zach Silva
zsilva@cgsentinel.com

After a slow first half on the road, the Cottage Grove football team resumed their winning ways in the second half as they dusted off the Sisters Outlaws 44-14 last Friday to improve to 6-0 on the season.

"Sisters... is going to be a huge challenge," said head coach Gary Roberts heading into the game. "It's a tough place to play, it's a road game, it's on grass. It's just a different environment for us. I challenge our kids to prepare like champions and get ready to go over there and take on a team that usually matches up with us pretty well."

Sisters opened up the game marching down the field and getting first and goal on the Cottage Grove six yard line only to be stopped on four consecutive run plays. The Lions rallied back with a methodical drive downfield that resulted in a 17 yard Hayden Glenn touchdown reception from Dylan Graves.

Sisters answered the score with a 36 yard touchdown pass and a missed point after attempt that brought them to 7-6. The Lions struck back with a Chad Bottorff touchdown run and Cottage Grove squeaked out a field goal before the half to go up 17-6 in what was their lowest scoring first half of the season.

The second half saw a steady diet of Woods and Bottorff to lead the Lions. It started when Woods scored on a 29 yard rush and on an interception while Bottorff ran in for a 16 yard rush. Bottorff also ran for a touchdown in the fourth quarter as the Lions outmatched and outdid the Outlaws in the second half.

With the victory, Cottage Grove has now won 16 straight regular season games spanning the last three seasons. More importantly for the Lions, the game at Sisters marked their last road game of the regular season and what could potentially be the last time they play on the road until the state semifinals. Going into the last two games of the season – both of which are homes games – the Lions are currently ranked number one in 4A. If that ranking holds, the Lions would play on at home until a neutral site semifinal game.

But before the Lions make playoff plans, next on schedule for them is Junction City on Friday at home. The Tigers are currently 2-4 on the season and lost to Sweet Home, a team Cottage Grove beat 53-12, last week 39-0.

North Douglas powers past Yoncalla



North Douglas running back Caleb Parks looks to break out a run during the Warriors victory Friday.

PHOTO BY ZACH SILVA

Using a second half surge, the Warriors defeat the Eagles in an 8-man football rivalry game

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zsilva@cgsentinel.com

With both teams undefeated in league play coming into the game, the rivalry was only intensified as Yoncalla travelled to North Douglas for their game last Friday.

In a back and forth struggle, it was the Warriors that ultimately prevailed. Behind a second half that saw North Douglas put up 22 straight points, they defeated Yoncalla 42-22.

"It always feels good to win a rivalry game so we're feeling very good right now," said North Douglas head coach JJ Mast after the victory.

While the Warriors ran away with the game in the second half, it was the Eagles who came out firing early.

On the first series of the game, a Yoncalla pick-six put the Eagles up 6-0 after a missed two-point try. With a 14-play drive that lasted eight minutes, the Warriors came back on offense and marched down the field and convert on the two point conversion to go up 8-6 at the end of the first quarter.

"I think we played great, especially from the first half to the second half. That's one of the best improvements I've seen from us, especially defensively, since last year," said wide receiver Caleb Parks referencing last year's team that won 11 straight games and place second in state. "It's just been forever since we've seen a big jump in intensity from one half to the next."

Parks finished the game with 110 yards and two touchdowns.

After North Douglas took a 20-14 lead at the half, Yoncalla began with the ball. They opened up the half behind the speed of Dominic Aguilar who last year went to North Douglas. On a particularly impressive 37 yard run, Aguilar raced down the sideline, stopping and starting along the way, as he made defenders miss. Aguilar finished the game with 137 rushing yards and two touchdowns. Quarterback Ted Wickman capped off the drive with a rushing touchdown to give the Eagles a 22-20 lead.

They were held scoreless for the rest of the game. "You give Teddy [Wickman] time and he will burn you, he's good. He's a fantastic player. And we knew, if you give him time, we probably weren't coming out on the winning side of the scoreboard," said Mast. "Halftime we wanted to put more pressure on him, keep him out of rhythm, you know get to him a little bit earlier and we were able to do that pretty consistently. And that you know, they had trouble dealing with that."

"Our kids did great. You make adjustments at half-

ment," said Rundell. "We focused, we practiced hard we'll like the result. So just keeping that one game at a time mentality the rest of the way is what we have to get back to."

Rundell continued to guide the offense as they scored twice more in the fourth quarter, a Parks reception and a Rundell rush, to seal the victory.

North Douglas, ranked 11th in 1A, now sits at second place in their district with the top four automatic qualifying for the playoffs. With just two games remaining, against Mohawk (2-4) and McKenzie (0-4),



Yoncalla running back Dominic Aguilar slips by the defense on the way to a touchdown.

time, you go out hoping they are going to execute them and they were pretty flawless in the second half. They looked very good."

After going down to start the second half, the Warriors answered on the next drive. Quarterback Brandon Rundell found Justin Smith for a 33-yard gain and a Wyatt McDaniel touchdown rush put North Douglas up 28-22. Rundell finished the night with two touchdown passes.

"It feels beyond great. Coming off a tough loss last week we refocused, we worked hard at practice all week because we knew Yoncalla was a good oppo-

the Warriors like where they are at.

"We're in a good position to win the next two games," said Mast. "I think these guys learned last week to not put one foot too far in front of the other or bad things can happen to you. They stay focused and play like this and they will be alright."

Yoncalla is now in the fourth position of the district and clinging to their playoff chances. Their biggest test will come next week when they play on the road at Falls City (4-1). The Eagles then finish off the regular season at Mohawk.

Athletes of the Week



This week's athletes of the week are the girls of the Cottage Grove soccer team. After a rocky start, the team has won back-to-back games as they move on to the second half of league play. To read more about the team, turn to B4.



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