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By JASON EPP

Leader & Times

BEAVER, Okla.-Two key plays in a closely contested first half, and mental miscues by the Beaver Dusters proved to be too costly to overcome as the Okeene Whippets outscored Beaver 28-7 in the second half on their way to a 42-14 win.

"You can't make that many bonehead plays against a good team," Dusters head coach Mike McVay said. "I told the kids we played as well as we could for 23 minutes and 30 seconds, with the exception of the blocked punt. I'm proud of our effort but we need to play like that for 48 minutes."

The first half started and ended about as bad as it could for the Dusters.

After a quick three-and-out on the Dusters first possession, Beaver's punter bobbled the snap, giving Okeene rushers just enough time to get in position to block the punt. The Whippets recovered at the Beaver 8-yard line, and after an offsides penalty by Beaver, scored on their first play from scrimmage to take a 7-0 lead less than a minute-and-a-half into the game.

But Beaver got on track after that. Beaver held Okeene to a three-and-out on their next possession, then went on a 13-play, 61-yard touchdown drive that tied the game in the final minute of the first quarter. The almost seven-minute drive was helped along when Okeene was called for roughing the passer, giving the Dusters a first down at the Whippets 12. It had been 3rd-and-9 and Beaver had thrown an incomplete pass.

Quarterback Dylan Cain capped the drive with a one-yard plunge into the endzone.

Okeene regained the lead with a 7-yard TD pass with 5:30 left in the half.

Beaver looked poised to answer again when they drove from their own 27, and after three straight first down plays had the ball at the Whippet 24. But a sack on first down put the Dusters in a 2nd-and-19. The drive ended with another sack back to the 41 on fourth down with 1:01 left until half.

Two straight completions gave the Whippets a first down at the Duster 35 with less than 30 seconds left in the half. Okeene's quarterback scored on the next play with a 35-yard scramble with just 9.1 seconds left before half, putting Beaver down by two touchdowns at half, 21-7.

"We fought hard, but just went to sleep with 30 seconds left until half," McVay. "Then it got away from us."

Okeene scored on their first two possessions of the second half to go up 35-7 with 4:03 left in the third.

Beaver did not fold their tent. The Dusters answered with an 11-play, 76-yard touchdown drive capped by Hadley Skaggs run around the left side from 20 yards out.

Beaver then got the ball back by recovering an onside kick at mid-field. But the comeback threat was ended three plays later when Okeene intercepted Cain's pass.

Okeene scored on the ensuing drive, and then added another when they returned a fumble recovery for a touchdown.

"We did some good things tonight, and showed we could move the ball against those guys," McVay said. "We just didn't have enough good go our way. I think our line did a good job of controlling them, especially on those two scoring drives, and Hadley Skaggs has been carrying the load for us all season, and tonight was no different."

Skaggs finished with 24 carries for 139 yards and a TD, and 13 yards receiving on one catch.

Beaver (1-7, 0-5) will have a tough road test Friday when they travel to take on Fairview.

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