By JASON EPP

• Daily Leader

Taylor Headrick dove across the goal line on 4th and goal as time expired on the first half, closing the gap between perennial power Smith Center and Meade to 22-14. But the Redmen would not be denied their place in Kansas high school football history when they exploded to score 38 unanswered points in the second half to run their record- tying win streak to 66.

Meade went into this game knowing they were taking on a powerful team, but fought valiantly and gave the home crowd reason to believe.

Smith Center struck first after forcing the Buffaloes to punt on their opening drive when Joe Osburn ran 39 yards on the Redmen's first offensive play of the game to set Smith Center up at the Meade 30 yardline. Five plays later Colt Rogers ran it in from four yards out, and Joe Osburn added the two-point conversion to make the score 8-0 in favor of Smith Center. Meade answered with a methodical 10 plays touchdown drive alternating runs by Headrick, Eddie Beachy, and Dakota Benear. Benear also had a critical first down throw when he completed a 3rd and 9 from the 29 to Brian Deighton to give the Buffaloes a first down at the 12. Three plays later Headrick scored from the one and also ran in the two-point conversion to even the score at 8 with 1:28 left in the first quarter.

It took Smith Center 3 plays and 1:07 of clock time to retake the lead. Roger scored on a 58 yard run, but the Buffaloes were able to stop the two-point conversion to keep the score at 14-8.

Meade moved the ball on their next drive to mid-field,but had to punt. Taylor Headrick executed the punt to perfection, as his 46-yard punt rolled out-of-bounds just inside the pile-on to force the Redmen to have to travel 99 yards. Unfortunately for Meade, the Redmen were happy to oblige. Four plays later Osburn went 69 yards around the right side for the touchdown. Travis Rempe converted the two-point play to make the score 22-8 with 7:28 left in the first half.

It was the last time Smith Center would have the ball in the first half. Meade did exactly what they had to do to give themselves a chance against the Redmen. Keep the explosive Smith Center offense off the field, and score.

Meade took over after a short kickoff return at their own 36. Taylor Headrick carried the majority of the load, while mixing in runs by Jaden Friesen, Eddie Beachy, and a catch and run by Brian Dieghton.

Three times on the drive the Buffaloes converted on 4th down and numerous 3rd downs. Headrick carried the ball on the final seven plays, including the 1-yard plunge as time expired in the first half.

The drive 20 plays, 64 yards, and 7:28 off the clock. The two point conversion failed, but the Buffaloes went to the locker room trailing

22-14 having proved they could play with the best.

Coach Moshier knew his defense was struggling to stop the Redmen's offense, and decided to gamble to start the second half with an onside kick. Meade recovered at the Smith Center 48, but Taylor Headrick was sacked on 4 & 5 and the ball went back to Smith Center.

And the rout was on.

Smith Center scored touchdowns on all five of their second half possessions, and did not allow Meade a point. Meade's only other threat was thwarted when Rogers intercepted Headrick's pass at the Smith Center 16 with 10:41 left in the game.

Smith Center finished the game with 511 yards on only 37 plays with Joe Osburn leading the way with 206 yards on only 7 carries. Rogers and Rempe also added over 100 yards each. The Buffaloes totaled 262 yards of offense, and finish the season with a record of 10-2. Smith Center will attempt to win their 5th consecutive state title next Saturday against Olpe, and try to set a new record for consecutive wins at 67.