

By EARL WAT T

• Daily Leader

If the Liberal Redskins had any thoughts of the previous four games with Ulysses, it was hard to see.

Liberal dominated the game from the beginning, and for the first time in seven seasons the Liberal Redskins won the first game of the year with a 40-8 rout of the Tigers.

The night clearly belonged to Jade Cathey. The senior standout caught three touchdown passes, returned a punt for a touchdown and recovered a Ulysses punt.

Cathey's punt return was Liberal's first touch of the ball for 2010, and after he made the first Tiger miss, he darted upfield, juked two more Tigers, swept to the left sideline, and followed a convoy of blockers into the end zone.

"I wanted to score to set the tone," Cathey said.

The rest of the night, Cathey hauled in deep passes from Slader McVey and three times reached the red turf of the end zone.

"I have to give big ups to my receiving coach," Cathey said. "He's been working on my release, and it worked."

Cathey caught eight passes for 151 yards and three touchdowns in an offensive show. McVey ended the night throwing three touchdown passes and completing 14 passes for 243 yards. He threw a meaningless interception on a Hail Mary seconds before halftime and ran for the final touchdown of the night.

In the backfield, Isaac Gallegos and Archie Mills handled the bulk of the duties, and the front line provided big holes up the middle.

But the biggest question heading into the season opener was the defensive front, and while Tiger standout Josh Jarnigan had some gains, the Tigers could not string together any sustained success against the young Angry Red line.

That forced the Tigers into a passing game, and the Redskin safeties and corners denied the Tigers any big plays.

The defense highlighted the evening after a Cathey punt landed on the Tiger 1 foot line. Jarnigan was dropped in the end zone for a safety early in the fourth quarter.

The starting defense pitched a shutout. It wasn't until the waning moments of the game against the back-up squad did the Tigers finally reach the end zone.

For Wade Standley, who started his second season at the helm of the Redskin program Friday, it was the beginning to the 2010 season that he wanted.

"We talked about a fast start, he said. "Win that first game, and each week take another step on the ladder. Tonight we took care of business."

Liberal lost four straight games to Ulysses from 2005 to 2008 to open those seasons.

“People around the community talked about that,” Standley said. “But I told these guys that the streak didn’t matter because none of these guys were on those teams. We started a new streak tonight.”

For Standley, the new edition of Redskins are exhibiting the style of play he wanted to see on the clean carpet at the Burial Grounds.

“We have a bunch of fighter,” he said. “We’re growing, and we have some things to take care of, but it was a great first game.”

Liberal (1-0) will continue the Tiger Tour next week when the Redskins head to Guymon (0-1).