

By CHRIS YEARICK

- Daily Leader

Sublette — The outcome of the football game between the Southwestern Heights Mustangs and the Sublette Larks on Friday night had to surprise the bird callers who expected an easy win like last year. The Larks however were caged by the Mustangs with a 30-14 final score.

The Mustangs didn't wait long to prove to Sublette that it wasn't business as usual. After kicking off to the Larks in the first quarter, the Mustangs squelched the song of the Larks with two downs held for no gain. The third down resulted in an amazing scoring interception by Mustang Taylor Collins with a two-point conversion completed by Ruben Chavez.

The first quarter good fortune didn't end there for the Mustangs. During the Larks' second possession of the first quarter, Rogelio Martinez forced a fumble that was picked up by Jake Amerin making the way for another touchdown by Taylor Collins. The two-point conversion attempt failed bringing the score at the end of the first to 14-0.

Defensive coordinator Coach Bobby Murphy triumphed with his players yelling, "You held them scoreless for the first twelve minutes! Do you have the heart to hold them for twelve more?" His Mustangs answered with a resounding, "Yes!"

The second half started with some nail-biting plays that sent the Larks clear to the Mustang two-yard line with a first down. Murphy's defense held strong with Dillon Tracy holding the offensive drive to a no gain play. Mustang Jeff Dutton then tackled the Larks for a loss of three yards. Remarkably, the Larks drive ended with an interception by Ben Johnsrud at the three. Johnsrud would finish a long drive for the Mustangs with a huge 45-yard run for a touchdown finished with a successful two-point conversion.

The Mustangs weren't able to hold the Larks scoreless in the second. With only 51 seconds left, the Larks ran in a touchdown to end the half with a Mustang lead of 22-6.

The Mustangs came out again strong in the third quarter with another stampede of success. The drive from their own 32-yard line resulted in another touchdown by Johnsrud and a successful two-point conversion by Collins taking the score to 30-6 at 8:22 left in the third. After trading unsuccessful possessions, the Larks ended up in the red zone with another failed attempt due to the Custard-like stand of Jeff Dutton and the tenacious defensive line. The Mustang offense however could not take advantage and ended the third ahead 30-6.

At the start of the fourth, the Larks again moved into Mustang territory only to be intercepted once again by Johnsrud. The Mustangs' fortune was not to be utilized at the Larks' 26-yard line as a fumble gave the ball back to the Larks. The Larks drive faltered only once with a quarterback sack by Mustang senior James Ablu. Sublette didn't give in though and took the football into the end zone with 9:28 left in the fourth with a successful two-point conversion.

At 30-14 and undaunted, Coach Matt Scripsick yelled at his players to "man up and put together a big drive." Though no big drive came, the Southwestern Heights Mustangs were able to hold onto their mighty 30-14 lead and squelch the song of the Sublette Larks.

In the interview, Coach Scripsick confessed, "As a coach, I am always critical, but the kids really played with passion and emotion on every drive. No matter what, Sublette could not deny us anything. I really want to stress the tenacity and heart that the boys played with. We strive to be a team – to be one unit."

The Southwestern Heights Mustangs will meet Elkhart next Friday night with home field advantage. With both teams coming in with a 1-0 record, Coach Scripsick commented, "It will be a quite a match."