



Liberal's Syris Dunlap (9) breaks around the edge of the Wichita Southeast defense Friday night. Dunlap reaches end zone three times in the second half to spark a 42-20 come-from-behind win. L&T photo/Earl Watt

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The winds of change blew across Redskin Field Friday night, shifting late in the first half, and with the change in the wind came a change in the fortunes of the Redskins. Liberal trailed 6-0 at halftime, but they erupted for 42 second-half points in a 42-20 rout.

Wichita Southeast had the rare advantage of having a strong wind at their backs in the first and second quarters when the strong wind changed from the south to north, and Southeast quarterback Tarik Adkins connected with Zaytez Dunn for a 44-yard touchdown pass early in the second quarter to take a 6-0 lead.

But the Redskins struggled to sustain drives in the first half, having to punt twice, being stopped on fourth down twice and fumbling twice.

As the time was running out in the second quarter, the winds picked up, and the soccer goal rolled onto the field and had to be removed for play to continue.

The strong wind continued early in the second half, pinning Southeast deep in its own territory, and with the Buffaloes backed up against their own end zone, they punted only eight yards to the 18 yard line.

Two plays later, Syris Dunlap galloped into the end zone for a 13-yard touchdown, and after the two-point conversion, Liberal led, 8-6.

After a 30-minute lightning delay, Southeast responded with a 50-yard drive to take a 14-8 lead with a 38-yard touchdown pass from Adkins.

Southeast had the ball at midfield after Liberal was stopped on its next drive, but Jesse Alvarado intercepted Adkins at the 46 yard line and returned it to the Buffalo 14 yard line.

Two plays later, Cesar Burciaga shot over the goal line to tie the game, 14-14.

Alvarado intercepted Adkins again at midfield, and Dunlap broke free for a 57-yard touchdown run to give the Redskins a 21-14 lead.

The Redskins defense forced a third straight turnover by Southeast with a fumble on the sidelines, and Dunlap scored on the first play with a 37-yard touchdown run, and the Redskins led 28-14.

Southeast couldn't get a first down on the next drive, and Liberal took over at the Buffalo 29 yard line.

Five plays later, Isaiah Witherspoon crossed the goal line, and Liberal had a 35-14 lead.

Liberal's back-ups took over, and Alejandro Esparza tacked on a touchdown later in the fourth quarter for a 42-14 lead.

Southeast tacked on a final minute touchdown for the 42-20 final.

Dunlap rushed for 236 yards in the win.

But Liberal coach Jason Dunlap wasn't willing to say his team was overlooking Southeast.

"They had to see the athletes on film," he said. "If you didn't, you saw them today. It was a special first half for them. We played hard, but they played harder."

Syris Dunlap sparked the huge comeback in the second half, and his resurgence came after a late hit call on the Buffaloes.

"Maybe it woke him up a little bit," Dunlap said. "Sometimes you poke the bear."

Alvarado's two interceptions also keyed the comeback and blowout.

"Jesse is starting to get healthy," Dunlap said. "He has been hurting since Week 1 of practice, but he lays his body on the line for this team."

Liberal was able to shut down the Buffalo offense in the second half, and Dunlap said his young players are learning how to adjust.

“We trusted ourselves,” he said. “We have to do a better job of getting a rush, but that will come. We have a lot of young kids out there, and they have to develop a second move, a third move. Their quarterback was an athlete, and we will face two more just like him in the next two weeks.”

After the one-point loss to Garden City last week, Dunlap credited Southeast.

“We played a quality team tonight,” he said. “You wish your schedule said go to next WAC game. But we had a quality opponent tonight. They had great athletes on the field tonight.”