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Homecoming Heartbreaker for OPSU

Aggies Lose Nail-Biter —By Daulton Perry on 10/28/2012 *Goodwell, Okla.*—Homecoming finally arrived at Oklahoma Panhandle State University, and all across the campus, students and fans enjoyed festivities that took place before the main event—Aggie football.

Kickoff was set for 1:00 p.m., but before the game, the baseball team was out on the field as the crowd observed a moment of silence in honor of Aggie baseball player Kasey Higgins, who passed away on Thursday night following a car crash on Wednesday night.

The Lions of Southwestern Assemblies of God came to Goodwell with a 2-5 record, while OPSU came in with a 3-4 record and both teams needed a victory to help turn their seasons around.

The first quarter was a defensive battle as both teams were shutout for the first 12 minutes of the ball game until SAGU's Landry Martinez put the Lions on the board first with a 44-yard touchdown run with 3:31 left on the first quarter clock. James Gish's extra point was good and SWAGU led 7-0 at the end of the first quarter.

OPSU struggled offensively during the first half, and their struggles showed when quarterback Caleb Holbrook's pass attempt was tipped at the line and Mohammed Mansray picked it off and returned it 10 yards for the TD, pushing the SWAGU lead up to 14-0. The only bright spot for the Aggies in the first half was by wide receiver Nick Collins who returned the ensuing kickoff 95 yards into the end zone. SWAGU added to their lead with a 7-yard TD run by quarterback Reid Golson just before halftime and the Lions led 21-7 going into the second half.

Since the offense was struggling and Holbrook was not having his best day, backup QB Justin Billiot started the second half and also started the comeback. He led OPSU on an 8-play, 77-yard scoring drive that ended with his 15-yard TD run and the lead shrunk to 21-14 going into the 4th quarter.

The Aggie defense played great throughout the entire game and helped their offense out and with 1:15 left on the game clock, Billiot ran it in from 3 yards out and OPSU tied it up 21-21. The final minute of regulation was a crazy minute as SAGU had a minute to put a drive together to win the ball game. Thanks to a ghost pass interference call, the Lions were set up for a game winning field goal with 0.8 seconds remaining. James Gish missed it wide left with his 40-yard attempt; however, the Aggies were called for running into the kicker that gave Gish another chance. This time it was from 25 yards out and again he missed, but this time he missed wide right, so the game headed into overtime with the score 21-21.

On OPSU's first possession of OT, Justice Patterson ran it in from 4-yards out, but the extra point attempt was botched and their lead was just 27-21. It was SAGU's opportunity and they did not waste any time as Golson again found running room and the end zone for a 25-yard TD. Because the Aggies failed on their extra point attempt, all that was left to win the game was a PAT from Gish, who was 0-3 for FG on the day. His kick was up and it was good and with that the Lions won the nail-biter 28-27. With the loss, the Aggies record fell to 3-5.

Up next for OPSU is another home game against Wayland Baptist University this Saturday at 2 p.m. The Aggies will celebrate Military Appreciation Day and activities are being sponsored by Rivercity Sportswear.

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