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Redskins Win Roller Coaster Ride in Ulysses

Big, big, and more big. That's how Liberal head football coach Cliff Abbott described his team's 56-41 victory at Ulysses Friday night. Consider it's only the second season opening win since Gary Cornelsen left town after the 2003 season. It is the Redskins' first opening win since 2010. And most importantly, the Redskins had to grind to win this one.

The Redskins bolted out of the locker room to take leads of 20-0 and 28-7 before settling for a 28-13 halftime lead. Ulysses rallied to lead 41-34 with 11:34 to play in the game. But the Redskins scored the last 22 points to win.

LHS senior quarterback Britton Abbott was 34-50 with 420 yards and four touchdowns along with 165 rushing yards and three scores. Trenton Hammond caught four TD passes and intercepted a pass and returned it 70 yards. LHS had 606 yards while Ulysses had 351.

LHS scored first when Abbott found Hammond for a six yard scored with 4:14 to play. Liberal went for two on that play and every time they had the chance Friday night. It was 8-0 after the two. Then Abbott found Hammond for a 50 yard strike to make it 14-0 at the 1:43 mark. Liberal's Mershek Wiltshire then recovered an onside kick from Alan Fraire. Liberal drove down the field but Abbott fumbled inside the five with a chance to go up three scores.

But the LHS defense which was dominant in the first quarter was able to hold Ulysses. When the Skins got the ball back, they had a trick up their sleeve. Nolan Larkin, a state qualifying javelin competitor, tossed a 50 yard TD to Hammond on a reverse pass to make it 20-0 with 8:23 to play in the first half.

Ulysses running back Zach Romero ran up the middle 34 yards for a score to make the scored 20-7 with 7:16 to play. A one yard Abbott run game LHS a 28-7 lead with 3:13 to play. Ulysses put together an impressive drive to make it 28-13 with 1:24 to play before half. Liberal had a touchdown taken off the board due to an illegal procedure penalty so it was 28-13 LHS at the half.

Ulysses owned the third as Ian Rudzik ran it in from 11 yards out at the 11:11 mark and five yards at the 5:24 mark. Liberal put together a 99 yard drive capped off by Abbott to Hammond for six yards to make it 34-26 LHS with 2:06 to play in the third. But a Rudzik three yard run and a two point conversion tied the game at 34 at the end of three.

The Tigers, who had won seven of the last eight against LHS, took the lead with a 17 yard Romero TD to lead 41-34 with 11:34 to play. But Ulysses would not score again.

An Abbott two yard run with 8:16 to play and a subsequent two point conversion game LHS a 42-41 lead. Abbott floated a pass over the middle to Payton Grant for a 14 yard score and the two point conversion gave the Skins a 50-41 lead with 6:35 to play.

On 4th and 9, UHS quarterback floated a pass toward the end zone which safety Trenton Hammond and took it 70 yards to the Ulysses 30. Abbott would finish off that drive with a one yard score with 1:44 to play. Dustin Friederich recovered a fumble.

Liberal hosts Guymon Friday night at 7 at the Cornelsen Sports Complex. National Beef bought out the game so admission is free. The game will air on 1270 and kscbnews.net beginning with Redskin Pre-game at 6. The Rowdy Crowd Show at Billy's is Thursday night at 5:30 on 1270 and kscbnews.net.

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