

WAC Losing Streak Reaches 10 in Homecoming Rout

The cliches all still apply. It's a new season and everybody is 0-0. But Liberal's football players and coaches know they have a long way to go if they are to become a playoff team after a solid but unspectacular Great Bend team handled Liberal 42-16. The Panthers amassed a dizzying 516 yards in the win. Quarterback Greg Hildabrand passed for 224 yards in the first half and 283 total in Great Bend's seventh straight win over Liberal and fifth straight win at Redskin Field. Liberal loses their 10th straight Western Athletic Conference game but this year's games, unlike last year, weren't even close. Liberal lost to Hays 30-7, Dodge City 41-20, Garden City 38-14, and Great Bend 42-16. After dismissing three players from the team before the Garden City game and losing three starters to injuries the past two weeks, the Redskins have struggled defensively. Head coach Wade Standley says there were too many breakdowns. "Obviously we made a lot of mistakes tonight and they capitalized on those," the second year head coach said. "We got to go back and work fundamentals. Right now our record is 0-0 because we're going into district play. We're going to go play those games and we're going to get better and we'll tally those up at the end."

Liberal actually scored first. After Jade Cathey stripped a ball away, Pedro Marquez pounced on the loose ball. Liberal would have to settle for a 27 yard Jesse Quintero field goal. Liberal appeared to have held Great Bend on third down deep in Great Bend territory, but a face mask penalty kept the drive alive and Hildabrand would sneak in a one yard score at the 4:23 mark of the first quarter to make it 7-3. A Great Bend blocked punt gave Great Bend the ball at the LHS 22 with 2:47 to play. Hildebrand would find Jace Bowman on 4th and 21 for a 33 yard TD to make it 14-3 with 1:57 to play in the quarter. In the second quarter, Hildebrand scored a five yard touchdown with 3:45 to play before the homecoming queen would receive her crown but the Panthers weren't finished.

Hildebrand found Bowman for a 32 yard touchdown with 4.5 second to play before halftime to make it 28-3 at halftime. Liberal's Justin McPhail capped of Liberal best drive to begin the second half with a two yard TD run at the 7:40 mark. The snap for the extra point was low and Slader McVey scrambled but was stopped short. Great Bend came right back and Jeremy Sigler scored on a three yard run with 4:03 to play in the third. Liberal's ensuing drive took them to a first and goal from the three but Great Bend's Conner Sell intercepted a pass in a double team to Jade Cathey. Hildebrand added a two yard TD and McPhail scored a three yard touchdown. Liberal would recover a perfect onside kick but fumble on the next play. Liberal had two turnovers and Great Bend had one. Slader McVey rushed for 137 yards and was 15-24 for 166 yards.

Great Bend is 2-3 overall and 2-1 in the WAC while Liberal falls to 2-4 overall and finishes 0-4 in the WAC for the second consecutive year. Liberal travels to Wichita to face 5-1 Bishop Carroll Friday at 7 p.m.