Wind beneath Colby's wings



R.B. HEADLEY Colby Free Press

Goodland Cowboys The could not stop this Colby Eagle (above) until he gained good yardage during third and fourth-grade football action at Dennen Field on Saturday. Colby did make a late fourth-quarter defensive stand and eventually celebrated the 12-7 victory in this Colby Little League Football Assocation season finale. Loyal fans (at right) also didn't let the cool, breezy conditions stop them from welcoming Colby's fifth and sixth graders into their final football game of 2013. Watch for more results from Saturday later this week.



Longhorns leap ahead, fight off Eagles 35-14

By R.B. Headlev

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Watching the referees' flags blow away on at least one key play would have been a welcome sight for Colby High fans Friday night.

Though the Eagles were already trailing Holcomb 21-6, they'd just delivered their strongest touchdown-scoring drive all season.

Momentum really turned two plays later when Colby junior Josh Matchell intercepted a Holcomb pass into those 40-mile-perhour wind gusts.

The Eagles were ready to threaten again until — an ugly yellow marker was spotted on Holcomb's home grass.

Pass interference against Colby. First down for Holcomb and another two plays later, Michael Roth ran around right 32 yards to a touchdown.

The Longhorns never lost control again during their 35-14 win.

"I thought the offensive played well and seem to be getting better with the consistency of their blocks," Colby coach Chris Gardner said. "The interference call is what it is ... those things happen in games."

The Eagles slipped to 0-5 this season but did deliver their first two-touchdown offensive game.

Junior quarterback Josh Matchell connected with senior Adam Giersch for both scores through the air covering nine and 48 yards.

Senior Adam Taylor's two-point conversion run capped a second half where Colby outscored the hosts 8-0. The Eagles also played Holcomb closer than arch-rival Goodland did one week earlier Holcomb gave Colby first down (34-12 Longhorns victory).

Without a doubt, Colby'sbest highlight was its rushing attack. Taylor consistently powered through creases and "yee-hah!"



Colby High junior Josh Matchell threw two touchdown passes against the Holcomb Longhorns Friday night.

past Longhorns for positive yardage.

"I thought it was most consistent the offense has been this year with driving the football," Gardner confirmed.

Coach's comments were proven during the 73-yard second-quarter touchdown march that answered a wind-aided 21-0 Holcomb first quarter.

The journey to sweet success began with Taylor blasting offtackle for seven. Colby promptly faced fourth-and-one at its own 36, but a confident "what have we got to lose?" attitude resulted in fumble inside their own 15. Taylor delivering those necessary chain-movers.

A pass interference call against

across midfield. Now it was sophomore Matt

Piper's turn to shake up Longhorn nation. He dashed through one huge opening and might have rumbled 35 yards to his first varsity TD.

Only one Eagle teammate with his back turned slowed Pieper enough for Holcomb tacklers to catch up.

"Andrew Taylor ran the ball well, and I though Matt Pieper came in and did a nice job as well," Gardner observed.

Colby's O-line control was shown again on a third-down quarterback sneak where Matchell gained almost five yards. Those plays are normally don't gain more than one or two.

An excellent quarterback bootleg run from Matchell gave Colby another first down at Holcomb's 13. Finally — after Pieper plowed inside the 10 - Matchell unleashed a pass toward Holcomb's end zone.

The ball was tipped, but Giersch secured it just inside that end-zone pylon. His 48-yard, fourth-quarter catch-and-run later became the senior's fourth TD this season.

Unfortunately, Holcomb 6'2" quarterback Heath Tucker was involved in five scores before intermission. He ran 75 yards, returned a punt 30 yards and either handed or pitched the pigskin to start the other three Longhorn touchdown plays.

'Tucker is an extremely good athlete, and he showed that," Gardner said.

The Eagles did force two turnovers, recovering a Longhorn

Colby's other takeaway earned its own drama points as junior Josh Brown picked off a Holcomb second-half pass in the end zone.

The Eagles host Norton in their next varsity game on Friday.

Public Notice

Crusaders clobber Wichita By R.B. Headley



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Heartland Christian's Michael Maurath and Shawn Sullivant brought the perfect gameplan for conquering windy weather conditions Friday night.

Block, block and block some more while junior Blaine Wertz breezes past everyone to seven rushing touchdowns.

Yes, you read it right: seven TDs in a 58-12 triumph over the Wichita Warriors.

"We had really good blocking with our ends (Maurath and Sullivant)," coach Steve Ziegelmeier said about the Crusaders' fourth win in five games this season. "And when Blaine gets outside, you're not going to catch him."

Wertz's latest devastating effort featured more than a first down on every rush as he carried 22 times for 251 yards (11.4 per attempt).

Yet first downs meant little during dashes of 70, 60, 45, 16, 13, 12 and three yards to the end zone.

Another 108 rushing yards from sophomore Corey Wertz made sure the Crusaders rarely need to test those tricky wind gusts with a forward pass.

When they did throw, Corey Wertz found sophomore Matt Wertz for a 59-yard six-point play. Matt Wertz's 10 tackles and two quarterback sacks also led a powerful Crusader defensive effort.

"They (Wichita) tried to throw over the top, but our defensive backs did a nice job," Ziegelmeier said. "They completed very few passes."

Corey Wertz intercepted one Wichita pass and Taylor Miller recovered a Warrior fumble.

Other Heartland Christian highlights were sophomore Caleb Morris' 35-yard kickoff return and one more touchdown run from Brennan Ziegelmeier (two yards).

About the only disappontment was Heartland's two-for-eight effort on two-point conversion tries. "We'll work on that in practice," coach Ziegelmeier concluded.

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