

Broncos move on to semifinals with 31-14 win over Cody-Kilgore

Written by Wauneta Breeze
Thursday, 01 November 2012 18:29 -



Diane Stamm | The Wauneta Breeze

The Bronco defense gang tackles Cody-Kilgore's Taryn Ostransky. In on the play are Logan Bischoff (16), Wes Anderjaska (9), Jack McGraw, Connor Kayton (4), Weylin Davis (31) and Jacob Maris (18).

By Diane Stamm

The Wauneta Breeze

Despite a different look Friday night, the results were still the same for the Wauneta-Palisade Broncos football team. Wearing pink socks and other pink accessories in support of Breast Cancer Awareness month, the Broncos downed Cody-Kilgore 31-14 in the opening round of playoffs.

The game started in a fashion typical for this year's team. After a touchback on the opening kickoff, Wauneta-Palisade scored on a six-play drive behind the running of Connor Kayton and Jack McGraw. McGraw ran the ball in from 11 yards out, and after the Logan Bischoff kick, the Broncos had an 8-0 lead with less than three minutes gone in the game.

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Cody-Kilgore had the answer. The Cowboys moved the ball from its own 25 down the field in small chunks. Cody-Kilgore converted two fourth downs on the drive and scored on a 10-yard pass from Austin Wobig to Chance Vackiner. The 14-play drive took six minutes off the clock and tied the game.

Unable to make a first down on its second possession, the Broncos punted to the Cowboys and pinned Cody-Kilgore on its own four. Following three short runs the Cowboys also lined up to punt only to see McGraw break through the Cowboy line and block the punt. The ball rolled out the back of the end zone for a safety.

Kayton fumbled the ensuing free kick setting Cody-Kilgore up on its own 38. The Bronco defense forced another three-and-out and the Cowboy punt was ruled dead at the WP seven-yard line. Wauneta-Palisade's struggles continued when quarterback Jacob Maris couldn't make the connection with McGraw on the handoff. The fumble set the Cowboys up with first-and-goal. Cody-Kilgore scored three plays later on another Wobig to Vackiner pass.

Down 14-10, the Broncos responded. After a 25-yard Kayton kickoff return and a five-yard run by Kayton, McGraw took off for 43 yards. With first-and-goal from the Cody-Kilgore six, Kayton's five-yard run set up a one-yard McGraw touchdown to pull the Broncos back into the lead, 18-14.

The Cowboys opened its ensuing drive with negative plays. A sack by Bischoff moved Cody-Kilgore back five and then the defense stuffed Taryn Ostransky for a three yard loss. The Broncos kept up the pressure, chasing Wobig around the pocket until the Cowboys somehow managed to complete a pass to the WP 8. Officials ruled the Cowboys completed two forward passes on the play and brought the ball back to the Cody-Kilgore eight yard line. After a run of six yards by Ostransky, Cody-Kilgore was forced to punt.

Despite a horrible punt which set the Broncos up on the Cody-Kilgore 25-yard line, the Broncos couldn't move the ball. A false start and four incomplete passes gave the ball back to the Cowboys with 1:34 left in the half.

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Cody-Kilgore couldn't do much better. In a drive that included offside, holding and delay of game penalties, the Cowboys managed to complete passes of 28 and 20 yards to move to the WP 10. Poor game management, Cody-Kilgore spiked the ball on fourth down to kill the clock, ending the drive.

"We did make a couple of mistakes in the first half that allowed Cody-Kilgore to take a lead in the second quarter, but Coach Geier and I were proud of how our boys handled that adversity once again," said coach Joseph Frecks. "We talk a lot about responding and staying positive even when things go wrong, and that is exactly what the boys did."

The Broncos responded at the start of the second half. After the Cowboys failed to move the ball to open the half, the Broncos put points on the board. With runs of nine yards by McGraw and 12 and eight yards by Kayton, McGraw scored from 12 yards out to pull the Broncos to a 24-14 lead.

Both teams struggled following the touchdown. Cody-Kilgore had two possessions when it failed to make a first down. Wauneta-Palisade drove into Cowboy territory twice, but couldn't put points on the board.

When Cody-Kilgore finally did get its offense going, a sack by Weylin Davis ended the Cowboys' threat on the WP 18. Wauneta-Palisade used the momentum to seal the game. After a four-yard run by McGraw, Kayton took off for 58 yards down the right side and the touchdown to put the Broncos up 31-14 with 4:24 left in the game.

Cody-Kilgore's final drive of the game stalled at the Broncos' 36- yard line where the Cowboys punted with 1:51 remaining.

Starting at its own 10, the Broncos moved out of the shadow of its goal posts with a 36-yard run by Kayton. Wauneta-Palisade knelt for two plays to end the game.

Kayton led the Broncos with 209 yards. McGraw finished with 162.

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The Bronco passing game struggled, with Maris and Katon combining to go 0-for-7.

“Even though we didn’t have much success in our passing game, Coach Geier had a great offensive game plan and we were able to really wear Cody-Kilgore down with our running game,” said Frecks. “The line had another exceptionable night blocking, and our backs did a good job of hitting the holes and running hard.”

The Broncos were led defensively by Wes Anderjaska. Anderjaska finished with eight unassisted tackles and 20 total. McGraw had nine unassisted tackles.

Bischoff had 12 tackles, including two sacks. Bischoff also blocked an extra point.

Frecks said, “After the first drive, the defense really stepped up and played sound football. As coaches we were very happy with the way we tackled Friday night.”

The Broncos will take on Elkhorn Valley at home Friday at 2:00 p.m. MT/3:00 CT.

The Falcons are 7-2 on the season with losses to Sioux County (66-50) and Silver Lake (58-42).

Elkhorn Valley narrowly edged St. Edward 25-20 in its first round game. St. Edward dropped a pass in the end zone as time expired.

It is Elkhorn Valley’s third consecutive year in the semifinals.

Senior Alex Ellison was named all state defensive end last season for the Falcons. Fellow senior Jacob Heldt led the Elkhorn Valley defensively in the game against St. Edward, while

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Taylor Hanson carried the offensive load.

Silver Lake and Sioux County will face off in the other semifinal. Winners will play for the six-man state championship next week in Kearney.