

Wolves Roll Past Southern Oregon

Oct. 3, 2009

WOU Sports Information

MONMOUTH, Ore. - Western Oregon's defense was suffocating from start to finish as it earned a 23-0 shutout over Southern Oregon Saturday.

The Wolves' (3-2, 2-0 Great Northwest Athletic Conference) held the Raiders (1-4) to only 131 yards of total offense and just over three yards per play. It also forced three SOU turnovers including a strip on the one yard line as the Raiders' running back Brandon Baldwin attempted to dive over the top for a score.

This was also the only red-zone opportunity SOU would receive as Western Oregon earned its first shutout at home over Southern Oregon since 1986 (36-0).

"Anytime you get a shutout especially when stopping (the opponent) from inside the one yard line, it shows the defense is taking pride in protecting the end-zone," Western Oregon head coach and defensive coordinator Arne Ferguson explained. "We tried to keep pressure on their quarterback all game and get things to go our way."

Caleb Singleton and Gavin Romanick led the defensive effort for WOU registering eight tackles apiece as eight members of the unit had four or more stops. It held the Southern Oregon, which had averaged 144.2 rushing yards per game, to only 44 yards on 32 carries and to just 3-of-16 on third down conversions.

Despite the strong effort by the defense, this was not one of the better days for the Wolves' offense which posted 296 yards of total offense, 60 less than its season average. Josh Riddell extended his touchdown passing streak to 16 games when he found Sean Fullerton for a 34-yard bomb near the end the second quarter. Riddell ended the game 17-of-32 for 173 yards and the score. Fullerton grabbed six passes for 73 yards to lead the squad while running back DJ Jackson paced the Wolves on the ground with 18 carries for 75 yards.

The Wolves were their own worst enemy on the day and the most productive offensive force for the Raiders, as they were penalized 17 times for 180 yards, 49 yards more than the entire SOU offensive output.

"There are many things we need to work on after this game but especially the penalties," Ferguson noted. "We must improve our self-discipline if we want to win consistently."

The Wolves biggest offensive play came on their first possession as Jon Dowd took a punt back 49 yards for the score. Upon fielding the punt, the ball was stripped from Dowd, who then scooped up the loose ball, reversed his footing and scooted around the left side 49 yards for the Wolves' first special teams' touchdown of the season.

"Dowd made a great play," Ferguson said. "He had an opportunity to take the ball around the end and he did for a touchdown to give us the momentum early in the game."

The Wolves would tack on two more scores before the half, the 34-yard touchdown pass to Fullerton and a 20-yard field goal by Morgan to take a 17-0 lead into the locker room.

The only scoring in the second half was provided by Kelly Morgan which made field goals of 33 and 42 to extend the Wolves' lead to 23-0.

"The defense played very good and we were able to make plays on special teams," Ferguson continued. "It was also nice to see Kelly (Morgan) step up big with three field goals."

This was Western Oregon's first shutout since 2007 when it defeated Humboldt State 64-0 and was its first shutout of SOU since a 42-0 decision at Ashland in 2006.

Southern Oregon	0	0	0	0	--	0
Western Oregon	7	10	3	3	--	23

WOU – Dowd 49 punt return (Morgan kick)

WOU – Morgan 20 Field Goal

WOU – Fullerton 34 pass from Riddell (Morgan kick)

WOU – Morgan 42 Field Goal

WOU – Morgan 33 Field Goal