

Western Oregon Loses In Final Minute

SEATTLE, Wash. (Oct. 17) - For 59:28 Western Oregon never trailed in the Battle in Seattle to No. 3 Central Washington but a Garrett Rolsma 44-yard field goal with 00:32 remaining capped off 23 unanswered points by CWU and helped the Wildcats to avoid the upset against WOU, 23-21.

CWU improved its season record to 8-0 and 3-0 in the Great Northwest Athletic Conference. The loss dropped the Wolves to under .500 (3-4, 2-2 GNAC) for the first time since the season opener.

Western Oregon took a 21-0 lead into halftime in front of 5,374 fans but could not put any more points on the board in the final 30 minutes of the game, which included two missed field goals. Central Washington replaced its quarterback at the half and Cole Morgan came out firing in the second half. He quickly led the Wildcats down 71 yards down the field in six plays and then followed it with a field goal drive on its next possession to bring the score to 21-10.

After a three-and-out by the Wolves' offense the defense came through as John Breza intercepted Morgan at the CWU 11 yardline setting up the short field for WOU. On the next play Jerome Williams picked off Western Oregon quarterback Josh Riddell at the pylon and weaved his way through traffic to the pylon on the other side of the field 100 yards away for the score (21-17).

The Wolves then marched right back down the field but missed the first of two field goals in the second half. CWU rallied and mounted a 7:30 drive (17-play, 76-yards) capped off 22-yard field goal from Rolsma to pull to within one at 21-20. The Wildcats had a chance to take a lead on the drive, but Western Oregon's defense kept them out of the endzone after starting with first-and-goal on the one-yardline.

WOU then went three-and-out on its next two possessions setting up the game-winning drive for CWU. The Wildcats got the ball on the CWU 47 with 2:27 remaining and marched 31 yards downfield to set Rolsma up for his third field goal of the game. The key play in the drive was a WOU defensive holding call away from the ball which gave CWU a first down instead of a 4th-and-10 situation.

Even with the field goal, the game was not over as the WOU offense got the ball back with 00:26 seconds remaining. On the first play of the drive, Riddell found Shaun Kauleinamoku down the sidelines for 29 yards putting the ball at the CWU 28 with just 00:18 left on the clock. After two incomplete passes by Riddell the Wolves lined-up for the field goal from the 45-yardline but a delay of game by the offense pushed it back five yards to the 50 and Morgan's attempt fell short.

Western Oregon managed only 112 yards of total offense (11 rushing), with five first downs in the second half. CWU nearly doubled its yardage production in the second half, accumulating 218 of its 366 yards of total offense.

The defensive unit for WOU played well through the game as it helped the Wolves win the turnover battle 3-1. Gavin Romanick had a 60-yard interception return for a touchdown in the first half, which put WOU up 21-0, to go along with five stops. Caleb Singleton was the team-leader in tackles with 12 (seven solo) and also had a pick at the WOU 5. Linebackers Prince Hall and Adam Bighill were the top tacklers for the Wildcats with 13 and 10 stops, respectively.

On offense, Sean Fullerton had eight catches for 83 yards for the Wolves while DJ Jackson led the team with 40 yards rushing and two scores. Josh Riddell saw his 17-consecutive games with a touchdown pass end today. He completed 18-of-32 passes for 165 yards but did not find paydirt.

CWU had three receivers with 70-plus yards led by preseason All-American Johnny Spevak who had six catches for 104 yards. After taking over in the second half, Morgan put up 219 yards on 12-of-29 passing and the Wildcats' only offensive touchdown of the game.