

Cowboys play Beavers tonight in 3A playoff

By Tom Betz
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Cowboys and fans 'out for the cure' decked out in pink gathered Thursday to watch Goodland defeat the Thomas More Prep Monarchs, 35-19, to advance to the bi-divisional playoffs tonight at 6 p.m. against Scott City.

This is the second year the Cowboys have defeated the Monarchs to advance into the playoffs, and the second year the Cowboys will face the Beavers in the bi-divisional round.

Cowboys Coach Kent Teeter said after the big win on Thursday to get into the playoffs the Cowboys will have to go down to Scott City and knows it will be a tough game, but thinks the Beavers may be looking past Goodland and that gives the Cowboys an advantage.

"Scott City may look past us with five straight win," he said. "It will be a short week as the boys will practice on Friday, Saturday and Sunday to get ready to play."

"We have to go down there and we know we have to have sustained drives, and we need a turnover."

"I feel we are learning some things. We know what we have to do. We need to get first downs and get a turnover to give us the edge."

"We have to get over the mindset about Scott City, and we can gain confidence and play a good game."

The Cowboys lost to Scott City 50-3 in the fourth week of the season, but Goodland has improved since then and has developed quite a running game.

The Beavers defeated the Cimarron Bluejays 50-0 to advance to the playoffs with a 9-0 record and ranked No. 1 in Class 3A by MaxPreps. Scott City won the Great Western Activity Conference with a 5-0 record.

The pre-game tonight can be heard on KKCI 102.5 FM at 5:30p.m. for those who cannot attend the game in Scott City.

Getting to the playoffs was the Cowboys goal last year, and this year Coach Teeter said they wanted to get back to the playoffs, and get beyond the first playoff game. Facing the Beavers will make that tough, but Teeter said if the Cowboys can play well as they have been in the past few weeks they certainly do have a chance.

The night was chilly on Thursday, but lots of pink was visible around Cowboys Stadium as part of the Cowboys out for the cure program to highlight Breast Cancer Awareness and raise money for research.

The Cowboys had pink socks and the band had pink stocking hats and lots of pink t-shirts could be seen under the fans coats at the beginning of the game. Pink banners were around the stadium and a special breast cancer symbol had been painted in the street as part of the effort sponsored by the Goodland Regional Medical Center.

The Cowboys won the coin toss, and Coach Teeter said they had decided before the game to take the ball if they won the toss. He said several times this season the Cowboys have won the coin toss and had deferred, but he said the feeling on Thursday was the Cowboys did not want to let the Monarchs get a quick start.

It worked in the Cowboys favor as they took the opening kickoff and drove down for a touchdown with Cy Paxton scoring on a three-yard run. The extra point by Austin Avelar was no good making it 6-0.

The Cowboys would score twice more in the quarter taking advantage of a Monarchs fumble recovered by Avelar setting up a one-play run by Dax Ruhs for his first touchdown. The Cowboys went for two and the pass to Ruhs from Reed Bellamy

was good to make it 14-0. The Cowboys weren't done scoring again in the first quarter on a five-play 83 yard drive with Ruhs running 35 yards for his second touchdown, and with the extra point it was 21-0 at the end of the first quarter.

In the quarter the Cowboys rotated Paxton and Ruhs with the plays and running to keep them fresh. In the game Ruhs carried 18 times for 251 yards and three touchdowns. His longest for 94 yards in the third quarter after the Cowboys had stopped the Monarchs. Paxton had 11 carries for 85 yards and two touchdowns. His longest was 35 yards on a run in the fourth quarter.

In the second quarter the Monarchs found success throwing the ball scoring their first touchdown midway through the first to make it 21-6. The extra point by Drew O'Brien was good and the ball brought by the Monarchs went sailing on top of the Goodland High School building making it 21-7.

Steve Duell, one of the sideline crew said that was the first time in the years he had been on the crew he had ever seen a ball kicked on top of the high school building. He said he had seen balls bounce of and break windows in the building, but this was a first to watch it sail onto the roof.

In the last minutes of the quarter Monarchs quarterback Nick Hammeke combined his running ability and picking the Cowboys apart with his passing to drive down for another Monarchs touchdown to make it 21-13. However, this time Avelar blocked the extra point try by O'Brien to leave it at 21-13 at halftime.

The Cowboys went into the locker room with a lead, and Coach Teeter said he told the seniors it was up to them to decide what they wanted out of the rest of the season. He said they made some adjustments at halftime and the offense and defense played well in the second half.

There were few penalties in the game, but in the first half a long run by the Cowboys ended with a face mask penalty on the Monarchs, but there was a holding penalty on the Cowboys bringing it all back to replay the down.

In the second half the Monarchs started at midfield, but were unable to move and punted with the ball being downed at the Cowboys six yard line.

On first down Ruhs got out to the 10 and broke free running all the way for his ninth touchdown of the season. The extra point was good by Avelar making it 28-13 with 9:20 left in the quarter.

The Monarchs were using a no huddle offense and again started near midfield, but were unable to move and had to punt. The Cowboys could not move and Taylen Smith had to punt. Again the Cowboys defense with plays by Laine Herl, Dallas DeLaRosa, Tyler Fisher and Tyler Gastineau were able to stop the Monarchs who had to punt.

Ryan Hillmer received the punt at the Cowboys 30 and ran 50 yards making at least two guy miss and down to the Monarchs 20 where the kicker O'Brien tackled him.

The Cowboys had a holding penalty show down the drive, but Bellamy threw a pass to Hillmer on fourth and 15 for a first down at the Monarchs seven putting Hillmer over 1,000 all purpose yards for his career. The Cowboys failed to score and Bellamy threw an interception on third down at the five.

The Monarchs moved the ball out to midfield, but the drive stalled there as the Cowboys were getting pressure on Hammeke and good coverage of his receivers. Sloan Ruhs knocked one pass down and Jason Cowan tackled him for a



Cowboy Dax Ruhs runs for his first touchdown on Thursday against the Thomas More Prep Monarchs. Ruhs ran for 251 yards in the game and three touchdowns as the Cowboys won 35-19 to win a spot in the Class 3A playoffs.



Cowboy Cy Paxton (above) scored the first touchdown on Thursday and went on to score again in the fourth quarter on a 35 yard run. Cowboy Tyler Gastineau (right) tackled Monarchs quarterback Nick Hammeke for a loss in the first half. The Cowboys won 35-19.

Photos by Tom Betz/The Goodland Star-News



three-yard loss and on fourth and seven Herl got a sack at the 50 helped by Cowan and DeLaRosa.

The Cowboys got the ball at the 48, and Paxton and Ruhs continued to rotate with Paxton getting the ball at the 35 and ran through a big hole made by the offensive line for his second touchdown of the night and fourth of the season to give the Cowboys a 35-13 lead with the extra point kick by Avelar good.

On the next Monarchs drive the Cowboys stopped them again and Herl got his second sack. The Cowboys got the ball at the Monarchs 21, and Riley Oharah carried for a first down at the eight. However, on the next play Oharah lost the ball and the Monarchs recovered at their 10.

With the clock running the Monarchs drove 90 yards on 15 plays with Hammeke throwing 15 yards to Taylor Pfeifer for the touchdown with less than a minute left. The Monarchs went for two, but Hillmer batted away the pass to make it 35-19.

The Monarchs had to try an on-side kick, but Avelar recovered at the 49.

Coach Teeter wanted to get all the seniors in so he took a time out with 42 seconds to get Chris Burchfield, Justin Cates, Mikail Freeman, Blaine Luther in the game with Cowan, Fisher, DeLaRosa, Bellamy Oharah, Avelar, Sloan Ruhs and Hillmer. Hillmer got a carry for one yard. Coach Teeter asked Herl if he wanted to carry the ball and on the last play Herl carried for four yards.

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FUN BY THE NUMBERS

7	9		2		3	6
6		5				8
					1	
9	2	5				
4	7	1				
	8		3	6	2	
			9		5	
	4	8		9		
		7				

Level: Intermediate

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Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!