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**Roos' comeback saves district opener, 35-28**

**Greg Webb**  
 sports@weatherforddemocrat.com

FORT WORTH — The Weatherford Kangaroos held their heads Thursday, while the Paschal Panthers were losing theirs amidst penalties and fumbles, as the Roos scored 21 unanswered points in the fourth quarter, 14 in the last minute, to win, 35-28.

The District 3-5A opening tilt at Farrington Field saw a late Weatherford charge, capped by a 30-yard Michael Rucker touchdown run with 28 seconds left in the game, giving the Roos their first lead on the night.

Three WHS players, slotback Colton Kamper, quarterback Rucker and fullback Jaren Gentry topped 100 yards rushing on the night, most of that production coming in the second half. The Roos finished the night with more than 350 yards on the ground.

Down 28-14 entering the final period after a Paschal touchdown pass with 17 seconds left in the third, Weatherford answered with a 10-play, 73-yard drive to pull within a touchdown. The drive took 4:39 off the clock, as the time element became an issue for the Roos.

On their ensuing possession, the Panthers marched downfield, much like they had done through most of the contest. The drive was highlighted by a 24-yard run from Paschal running back Emmanuel Smith. Smith ended the night as Paschal's leading rusher, gaining 134 yards on 29 carries. On a second and six play, resulting in three penalties, two on Paschal and one on Weatherford, two of them offset each other and the remaining infraction backed the Panthers up to their own 37-yard line with a third and long.

With Paschal forced to punt, after a pass play left them short, the Roos took over at their own 11-yard line, but made quick work of the real estate they needed to cover, traveling the 89 yards in just nine snaps.

Trooper Reynolds' run of 28 yards took the biggest chunk toward the goal line and Jeran Gentry's six-yard scamper with 50 seconds left on the game clock, with Josh Blanton's extra-point kick, knotted the score at 28.

With under a minute and expecting to resolve the decision in overtime, the fourth-quarter woes were not over for the Panthers.

On the Blanton kick-off, the Roos wrestled the ball from Paschal's return man, giving Weatherford another shot at the Panthers' 30 with 40 ticks left on the clock.

Weatherford just needed five seconds, as Rucker kept the ball off right tackle and broke two tackles to reach the end zone.

Weatherford 35, Paschal 28

WHS 7 0 7 21 — 35

PHS 7 7 14 0 — 28

**Scoring Summary:**

First quarter

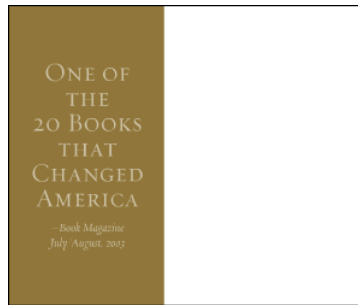
P - Emmanuel Smith 2 run (Chris Smith kick) 7:23

W - Colton Kamper 25 pass from Michael Rucker (Josh Blanton kick) 0:00

Second quarter

P - Rochell Johnson 25 pass from Brian Gallagher (Smith kick) 0:55

Third quarter



**Photos**



Weatherford's Colton Kamper catches a 25-yard touchdown pass from Michael Rucker as time expires in the first quarter, Thursday night. The score tied the game at 7-7. The Roos scored late twice, to beat Paschal, 35-28. **KAY BIGGS/DEMOCRAT PHOTO/** (Click for larger image)

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P - Johnson 27 pass from Travoy McCarver (Smith kick) 0:17  
 Fourth quarter  
 W - Rucker 1 run (Blanton kick) 7:41  
 W - Jaren Gentry 6 run (Blanton kick) 0:50  
 W - Rucker 30 run (Blanton kick) 0:28

Team Stats:

WHS PHS

First downs 17 19

Rushes-yards 41-369 33-139

Passing Yards 25 260

Passes(comp-att-int) 1-5-2 20-31-1

Punts 1-38 2-32

Fumbles-lost 3-2 1-1

Penalties-yards 5-55 6-70

Individual Stat leaders:

Rushing - WHS: Colton Kamper 7-127, Mitchael Rucker 14-118, Jaren Gentry 17-100, Trooper Reynolds 3-23; PHS: Emmanuel Smith 29-134, Brian Gallagher 4-5.

Passing - WHS: Rucker 1-5-2-2-25; PHS: Gallagher 19-31-1-233, Travoy McCarver 1-1-0-27.

Receiving - WHS: Kamper 1-25; PHS: Rochelle Johnson 8-95, McCarver 7-111, Angel Argueta 2-21, Smith 1-9.



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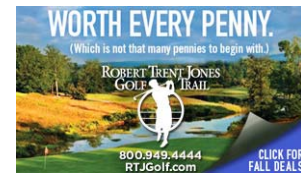
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