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Wednesday, Sep. 02, 2009

Weatherford starts football season with dramatic road win

By BRENT SHIRLEY
bshirley@star-telegram.com

Weatherford slot back Tyler Henderson only carried the football once in Friday night's game at The Colony High School, but his single rush was the biggest play of the game.



Weatherford quarterback Mitchael Rucker holds off a Cougar defender in Friday's 34-31 win at The Colony. (Photo by Brent Shirley)

Henderson took a pitch from quarterback Mitchael Rucker, cut up field, and dove into the end zone for a game-winning 15-yard touchdown with eight seconds left in the fourth quarter. The play gave Weatherford a 34-31 win – the only comeback in Kenny Wheaton's three years as head coach.

"I'm happy for the guys to feel what I've felt as a coach in the past," Wheaton said. "To come back from behind is the greatest feeling. We fight to have confidence. At [the Stephenville scrimmage] we had some confidence. Tonight put a stamp on it."

Weatherford showed signs of improvement in its win against the Cougars, but the Roos also made critical mistakes reminiscent of last season when the Roos won only one game.

The good

The Roos rushing attack was as strong as ever, as Weatherford picked up 317 yards on the ground. Fullback Jaren Gentry led the way with 114 yards. Rucker and Colton Kamper each ran for 69 yards.

Before the season started, Wheaton said the Roos needed work on their passing game. While Rucker didn't throw for a high yardage total – he finished the game with 47 yards in the air – both of his completions were touchdowns.

Weatherford showed a determination after the Roos allowed The Colony to come back from a 28-12 deficit. Instead of hanging their heads, the Weatherford players made a comeback of their own.

"We have a saying this year, 'so what, next play,'" Rucker said. "We are a team this year. When we go out there, we care about the guys next to us, not ourselves."

The bad

Weatherford struggled to hold on to the football, losing the ball four times on five fumbles.

"I felt like we were moving the ball well on them all night," Wheaton said. "We just kept making mistakes. We either got a holding penalty or turned the ball over."

The fumbles allowed The Colony to get back in the game. After trailing 14-0 in the first quarter, and 28-12 in the third, the Cougars took a 31-28 lead into the fourth quarter.

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BRENT SHIRLEY, 817-594-6732

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