

Reale's touchdown lifts Cobras

By STAN CHRISTIANSON
Enterprise Correspondent

MIDDLEBORO — The Middleboro Cobras of the Eastern Football League showed once again why they are a perennial contender for the league crown as they defeated the Brockton Oilers, 7-3, at Batts Field Friday night in a defensive struggle.

The Cobras, 14-0 losers of their opener to Hyde Park last week, came up with the big play when they needed it — a 63-yard return of a pass interception by Mark Reale with 3:41 remaining in the fourth quarter.

Brockton had controlled the ball most of the third and fourth periods (Middleboro getting just one first down) and seemed well on its way to a 3-0 win, thanks to a 46-yard Jim Cotter field goal in the opening stanza.

In the fourth period with six minutes left, the Oilers were in complete control with a first-and-10 at the Middleboro 37 after a Jay McGee pick up of 10 yards off left tackle.

All Brockton had to do was grind it out and use up the clock, but suddenly the Oilers came out throwing and this maneuver backfired thanks to Reale.

On the big, game-winning play, Brockton quarterback Fred Beissner threw into the right flat where Reale picked it off at his own 37 and raced the ball into the end zone for the winning score.

"I blew it. I let him (Beissner) throw," stated a very dejected Brockton coach Tom Pileski at midfield after the final gun had sounded. "We were running the ball down their throats and definitely should have kept the ball on the ground but I decided to put it up."

The Brockton-Middleboro rivalry has got to be the best one in the EFL due to the close proximity of the two teams and both clubs played the game as if it were for all the

marbles with a heavy accent on defense.

The way the teams were playing, it was obvious that the club which could come up with the big play would pull it out.

Brockton had 30 yards net offense in the first half and Middleboro with slightly more as Jeff Rodman netted 32.

In the second half, Arthur Brown and McGee broke through for good gains from scrimmage and twice the Oilers drove inside the Middleboro 40.

Winning coach Norm Tardiff was obviously pleased to have this go into the "W" column, but he was far from overjoyed with his team's total offensive showing. In two outings, Middleboro's offense has yet to put a point on the scoreboard.

The Brockton defense had a lot to do with the lack of Middleboro offense in this one as it had six sacks in the game for minus 56 Cobra yards.

The sacks went to Jim Brodie (two), Bill Turner, the 225-pound Oiler tackle (two), John DeSisto and Steve Venckus.

Uncharacteristically, Brockton had put a little oomph and a little trickery into its offense for this key game, alternating Bob Hanlon (of Stonehill College) and Beissner at quarterback.

In the fourth quarter, the Oilers even had Cotter run on a fourth down punt attempt with short yardage needed near midfield and Brockton still leading the game, 3-0.

This was a game that the Oilers probably should have won.

It was a game that Middleboro probably should have lost, but didn't.

Next week, the Cobras travel to Warren, R.I. on Friday night while the Oilers host Marlboro on Saturday night.