

Cobras roll to easy EFL victory

By Mark Ducharme

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MIDDLEBORO— The Randolph Oilers got caught in the Cobra clutch.

The Middleboro defense slowly but surely squeezed the life out of Randolph in defeating them Sunday, 28-7.

The loss was a costly one for Randolph in more ways than just on the the scoreboard.

The Oilers, down 14-7 midway through the second quarter, lost the services of quarterback Bobby Witt when he tried to scramble away from the Middleboro pass rush, was tackled and suffered a knee injury.

Witt was unable to return to the game and was replaced by third-string quarterback Mike Mathisen, whose only experience playing quarterback was a few games in his senior year of high school at Weymouth North, and fourth-string quarter-

back Mark Harding, who is listed as a wide receiver on the roster.

"It hurt losing Bobby, but I am proud of the way we battled to the end," said Randolph coach Bob Turner. "Our backup quarterback John Pina hurt himself at work and when Bobby went down we were in trouble having to use an inexperienced quarterback and a wide receiver to throw the football."

From the point when Witt went down, Middleboro was able to focus their energies on stopping the explosive Randolph running game which up until that point, the Cobras held in check.

The Cobras knew all about Randolph's dilemma. In the opening game against Randolph a year ago Middleboro suffered the same fate in losing their starting quarterback and having to go against the Oilers with an inexperienced backup.

"I know how they feel," lamented Middleboro coach Norm Tardiff. "We had the

same thing happen to us last year when we played them in the opening game.

"I'm not saying that with Witt out of there, it made a difference. Our defense played a great game and we did score 28 points. I think even if Witt had played, they would not have scored 28 points in this game."

The Middleboro defense, which forced seven Randolph turnovers, has been outstanding in its three games so far. The Cobras have allowed just one touchdown and that was to Marlboro a week ago.

The only points which the Oilers were able to score came early in the second quarter, when defensive linemen Bob Burr picked off a pass and waltzed two yards for the only Randolph score which tied the game, 7-7.

Middleboro quarterback Todd Levine, who went 9-for-17 in the first half (12-for-27 overall, with 3 TD tosses) marched his

Worry over the Oilers

team 74 yards with his right arm doing most of the work. Levine completed passes to Bobby Ferriera and John Montalbano to move the team down field, and finished the scoring march with a 4-yard touchdown flip to Jeff McCoy to put the Cobras ahead for good.

Middleboro put the game away with Randolph's help in the third quarter. After Chris Gulliani recovered a fumble on the Randolph 30, the Cobras appeared to have only gotten a Mike Gonsalves 23-yard field goal out of the Randolph mistake.

The Oilers, however, were caught roughing Gonsalves giving the Cobras another chance to cash in, and they did, with a Tony DeRosa 3-yard touchdown run, pushing the lead to 21-7.

A Gulliani interception set up the final Middleboro touchdown early in the fourth quarter.

Three plays after the Cobra linebacker's pickoff, Levine threw his third and most

dazzling touchdown pass of the day. A screen pass that Kelly Brooks caught with his left hand grabbing the ball against the top of his shoulder pads. After getting control of the ball, the Cobra running back exploded through the Randolph defense 32 yards for the score.

In the first quarter, which was played 48 hours before-hand, when a severe thunder and lightning storm forced the game to be halted, the Cobras scored their first touchdown on a Levine to Ferriera 4-yard touchdown pass.

Chuck Monte, a long time volunteer of the Middleboro Cobras football team and the Eastern Football League, was honored with a plaque for his years of service between the third and fourth quarters.

A 39-year member of the Mitchell Memorial Club, Monte played for the Bridgewater Vets Semi-Pro, a forerunner of the Eastern Football League.