

Oilers face tough test

By Liam Colleran
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RANDOLPH — The Randolph Oilers are finally on the plus side of things.

Although they're not 5-0, as they were a year ago at this time, the Oilers possess a respectable 3-2 record heading into week six of the Eastern Football League season.

By edging the Ocean State Buccaneers last week, 25-13, Randolph has shown that it hasn't fallen completely asleep at the wheel. However, the Oilers will face a mighty test tonight when they square off against the Worcester County Tigers at Randolph High School (7:30).

"I truly believe that it's going to be a war," said Randolph coach Bob Turner, whose team beat Worcester, 28-3, last season. "The team which makes the fewest amount of mistakes will win the game."

On paper, the two teams are as evenly matched as their positioning in the standings (tied for fourth). The Tiger offense has produced 18 points (142, most in the league) more than Randolph, while the Oiler defense has allowed two points fewer (62) than Worcester.

Worcester has proven that it can play with the top teams in the league. In fact, after falling behind Middleboro, 17-5, at the half last week, the Tigers staged a near comeback in the second half, only to drop a 17-15 decision. The key was a botched 17-yard field goal with one minute left.

"That was really a heartbreaker," Tiger coach Al Desper said. "I think the guys will try to put it behind them and focus on Randolph."

Desper believes his squad will have to contain the Oilers' special teams in order to win.

"Last year they killed us with their special teams in the second half," he said. "They have great special teams and can break a game wide open that way."

Offensively, Worcester will try to vary things in the true multiple offense it runs. The potent attack, which has already accumulated more than 2,000 yards, will be led by Tracy Kohler, the EFL's top rated passer. Kohler has completed 41 of 75 passes for 908 yards and 10 touchdowns.

When he airs it out, Kohler's favorite targets have been receivers Mario Boric (nine catches, 314 yards, three TDs), Chris Matosic (12, 243, one), Mike Jenkins and tight end Marc Armstrong.

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Oilers Mark Harding, John Pina, Ricky Witt and Mike Turner received EFL Player of the Week honorable mention for their efforts against Ocean State ... Randolph place kicker Ray Almeida is leading the league's kickers with 18 points