

# Oilers pull out dramatic, last-second victory

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RANDOLPH - The Randolph Oilers had been looking forward to Sunday night's Eastern Football League opener since being knocked out of the playoffs by the Boston Panthers last year.

And although Randolph jumped out to a quick 14-0 lead, for most of the game, it looked as though it would have to wait for this season's playoffs to exact its revenge.

The Oilers, however, mounted a wild comeback after falling back, recovering two onside kicks and scoring 21 points in the game's final 2:16 to pull out an amazing 42-41 win over Boston at Memorial Field and make the payback that much sweeter.

"We were looking forward to this game," Randolph coach Ed Penn said with an ear-to-ear smile. "Once we saw Boston was first on our schedule, we said, 'Good.'"

"It was a great motivational tool for me as a head coach. I used the, 'This is the team that knocked you out.'"

"I won an Eastern Football League championship as a player, but as a coach, this is the most excited I've been. I'm just so excited I can't even get my words straight right now."

Boston scored on a 60-yard touchdown pass from George Munroe to Jeremy Collins with 7:32 remaining in the game to give the Panthers a 41-21 lead.

On Randolph's ensuing possession, Lenny Lopez picked off quarterback Ryan Myers inside the Boston 5-yard line, seemingly closing the door on the Oilers.

Larry Tagger immediately opened it back up with his second interception of the game, setting up Randolph at the 4-yard line. Two plays later, Charles Thomas (13 carries, 78 yards) rumbled in from the 1.

Myers then took in the 2-point conversion to cut the deficit to 41-29.

That is when Oilers veteran kicker Dave Canavan made his presence felt.

Canavan's onside kick took a perfect hop over the Boston front line, allowing John Martel to recover it with 2:10 left.

After three unsuccessful plays, the Oilers faced a fourth-and-12. Myers, who had completed just 5-of-16 passes up to that point, connected with Chris Williams for a 25-yard gain to the Panthers 29.

Myers and Williams (four catches, 94 yards) hooked up again later in the drive for a 16-yard score with 31 seconds left. Canavan's extra point made it 41-36.

Canavan's right foot worked its magic one more time, as Matt Stanton was able to fall on the onside kick at the Randolph 46 and set up the game-ending dramatics.

"One thing we do is we practice our special teams, no matter what," Penn said. "We go over special teams situation. Dave Canavan has been practicing those onside kicks."

Myers first hit Brook Payne with a 30-yard completion before connecting with Joe Callahan for the game-winning 24-yard score. Callahan found a hole in the deep middle of the Boston defense and Myers found him just before a Panthers defender could get there.

"It was just a matter of getting our offense back out there," Penn said. "Hopefully, our defense could stop them and get Ryan out there. Every play that was called near the end of the game, Ryan was making them."

In the final two drives Myers was 4-for-4 for 95 yards.

The Randolph heroics were necessary due in large part to its own sloppy play. After jumping out to the 14-0 lead, Randolph allowed Boston to march down the field on its next possession. On the drive, the Oilers committed three penalties before fullback Todd Mathies plunged in from a yard out to get Boston on the scoreboard.

Frank Gaudette fumbled on the Randolph 23 to set up Boston's second score. Kieve Robinson hauled in a 17-yard touchdown pass from Tony Ravenell, who later left the game with an injury, to even the score.

Randolph also had a chance to put points on the board before the half, but without a timeout left, the Oilers let the clock run out on them at the 8-yard line.

"We came back near the end, " said Penn. "We ran out of timeouts and I kind of lost control. I got mixed up with the clock. We probably could have kicked a field goal."

The momentum Boston gained in the first half carried over into the second half. After a three-and-out for Randolph, Boston put together a 52-yard drive culminating with a 2-yard Calvin Bryant (13 carries, 65 yards) run to take its first lead of the night.

James Schuler added to the lead with a 55-yard punt return for a touchdown. Bryant added his second score of the game after a bad snap on a Randolph punt set the Panthers up at the Oilers two. That sent a majority of the Randolph fans headed for the exits, missing the classic comeback.

The Oilers play the Brockton Buccaneers at Marciano Stadium Friday night.