

COLUMBIA, Ky. – Broc Loveless rushed three straight times for a touchdown in overtime before Lindsey Wilson scored but missed their third extra point of the game and 23rd-ranked Cumberland survived 33-32 over Lindsey Wilson Saturday at Blue Raider Stadium. The Bulldogs (8-3) posted just the fourth eight-win campaign since the program was revived in 1990 and second in three years while defeating the Blue Raiders (3-8) for the third consecutive time.

Cumberland played all but the first drive of the game without starting quarterback Reed Gurchiek and even had to use third-stringer Daley Sallis on one series after an equipment issue with Loveless.

CU led the contest 26-13 after a 23-yard TD pass to BJ Stewart on the final play of the third quarter and then held LWC twice on fourth down in the final period, but the Bulldogs were unable to put the contest away, punting on both possessions after the fourth down stops.

That gave life to the Blue Raiders, who marched 80 yards on nine plays in just less than two minutes, with Rome Cotton running the final three yards for the score. Backup kicker Caleb Keeton missed the point after and CU led 26-19 with 3:35 left.

The Bulldogs punted again after LWC used a pair of timeouts to stop the clock and Cotton carried for 20 yards to start the game-tying drive. The Blue Raiders moved quickly to the CU 5 before the defense held on three straight plays, but on fourth down Brandon Cresap tossed a perfect corner flag route to Ben Madon. Keeton booted through the extra point with 58 seconds left and the teams were headed for overtime after Loveless tossed an interception on a Hail Mary on the final play of regulation.

In the extra period the Bulldogs got the ball first and started poorly with a false start penalty, but Loveless rushed for 11, six and 13 yards on consecutive plays for the score. Jared White's point after gave CU a 33-26 advantage.

Bulldogs win in OT 33-32

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Cotton ran twice for a first down before Cresap found Matt Powers in the back corner of the end zone for a 14-yard score, but Keeton's extra point hit the right upright, the second time an LWC kicker did that in the contest, giving the Bulldogs an emotional victory.

Loveless was the leading rusher for CU, carrying 16 times for 86 yards and one score. Lemeco Miller rushed 17 times for 75 yards and one TD as well, while Michael Hagewood provided the other Bulldog score with a 42-yard interception return for a touchdown. Riley Cathey's strip-sack and fumble return by Connor McChurch setup a touchdown to Stewart at the end of the third quarter and Cody McCallister blocked his fifth career kick in the first half.

Cresap completed 24-of-38 passes for 210 yards and three touchdowns while Cotton finished with 12 carries for 99 yards and one score. Josh Haney also carried 18 times for 63 yards and another score for the Blue Raiders.

The Bulldogs took the opening drive of the game and marched 67 yards on 13 plays, including 40 yards on the first three plays from scrimmage. But the drive stalled after the Blue Raiders defense stiffened inside their own 15 and White booted a 25-yard field goal for a quick 3-0 edge.

LWC answered with a seven-play, 52-yard drive that included a 30-yard catch-and-run to Madon. Cresap then hit Madon again from 12 yards out and the Blue Raiders led 7-3 midway through the opening period.

Cumberland gained just 51 yards on its next 11 offensive plays after the opening drive, but Hagewood helped the Bulldog cause with a 42-yard interception return for a TD, giving CU a 10-7 advantage. Again the Blue Raiders came back with a scoring drive thanks to a 26-yard kickoff return and a 15-yard late hit penalty on Cumberland, putting LWC in business at the CU 37.

Haney carried the final eight yards for the score but the PAT hit the right upright and Lindsey Wilson led 13-10 at 13:17 of the second quarter.

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CU moved to the Blue Raiders 34 on its next possession before Kelsea Fordham fumbled on third down and LWC's Griffin Clark recovered. But the defense forced a punt and after another exchange of punts, McCallister blocked a Mark Corbett punt, knocking the kicker out of the game for the remainder of the contest, and McCallister recovered the ball at the LWC 25.

Loveless hit Blake DeBoard for 12 yards to set up 1st-and-goal and Miller carried the final two yards for the score, his 19th touchdown of the year, breaking the single-season record for rushing TDs previously held by Andrew Yarbrough. White also missed the point after and CU led 16-13 at the half.

The Bulldogs pinned LWC at their own one yard line midway through the third quarter, forced a punt and Daniel Dayton's 22-yard return on the short kick put CU at the LWC 26. Two false start penalties pushed the ball back but White kicked a career-best 42-yard field goal for a 19-13 lead.

The sack and strip by Cathey and McChurch's 21-yard return set-up the 23-yard TD pass to Stewart for the 26-13 lead with one second left in the final period.