Bears Down Kenai 19-14, Remain Ranked 3rd

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Jay Barrett/KMXT

The Kodiak High School Bears continued their winning ways Saturday with a close 19-to-14 away game victory over the Kenai Kardinals.

The Bears and the Kards traded touchdowns and penalties all day, with Kodiak scoring three TDs but only one point-after.

Both teams traded touchdowns late in the first quarter. Kodiak's came on an 8-yard Tuck VanMatre run. The Bears added one more late in the second on a Kevin Lepola run to go into the half leading 13-to-7. Kenai briefly took the lead in the third with their second TD. The Bears then marched 67 yards on seven plays, including a fourth-down conversion and a 25-yard run by Lepola, to seal the win when VanMatre rushed in from the 11 for his second TD. Neither team scored in the fourth, but it took the strongest defensive series of the day to stop the Kards after the Bears turned over the ball on downs on their own 29 with 2-44 to play in the fourth.

The usual sure-handed Bears coughed up the ball five times, losing three of them.

Overall, Kodiak racked up 202 yards on the ground and 35 in the air. Kenai had 140 rushing and 42 passing.

Kevin Anthony gained 78 yards on the ground, while Lepola had 48 and VanMatre 41. In the air, Lepola was 5-for-10.

With the win, Kodiak improves to 3-0 in league play and 4-0 overall.

In other Northern Lights Conference action, Soldotna dismantled Homer 54-to-nothing, racking up nearly 500 yards on the ground. Skyview played victim to the Eagle River Wolves, who got their first win ever in the program's three-year history.

At last report, Kodiak has a week off coming up. When they play again, it'll be up in the valley at Palmer. The Bear's next home game will be on September 19th, when they host the SoHi Stars in the homecoming game.

The Bears remain ranked third in the state small schools football poll, behind number one SoHi and number two Barrow, both undefeated. Houston, at 4-and-0, is fourth, and Nikiski is fifth at 2-and-2.

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