

With Ethen Knox on the sidelines in street clothes, walking with *just* a bit of the limp, the Oilers lost to North East, 35-0, Sept. 8.

Scatback Jamari Curlett strutted his stuff, scoring four touchdowns on three pass receptions from Jackson Humes covering 27, 16 and 67 yards and a 60-yard punt return.

The punt return extended the North East lead to 21-0 shortly after the second half began.

Without Knox in the lineup, the game took on a different look/feel. With him, the time of possession, and thereby the complexion of the game, probably would have changed dramatically. But...

The Oilers could never sustain anything, despite valiant efforts by Jon Hargenrader (20/94) and Sean Alexander (15/49) at tailback. (It should be noted that junior Noah Sanchez, presumably the backup TB, is lost for the season. He was hanging with Knox on the sideline.)

And the passing game, which had been a pleasant surprise the first two games, didn't click either -- much to the dismay of junior WR Gavin Stephens, whose pleas for pass interference fell on the unsympathetic ears of the refs on two plays.

As it was, Kevin Pearsall was asked to punt five times, and came through with a solid 37.8 average.

North East, a 55-20 loser to the Oilers last season when Knox ran for 445, did have an advantage in total yards: 286-210 -- numbers that don't usually doesn't translate to 35-0. Most of the Pickers' offense came through the air as the Oilers had difficulty containing the shifty Curlett, a track star in the spring.

Humes, coming off a 7/7 for 275 effort vs. Girard last week, was 10/12 for 257 against the Oilers. Curlett caught four passes for 111.

Humes added a 60-yard TD pass to Carter Crozier before all was said and done. By this time thoughts on the Oil City side of the field were on injured LB Hayden Wilson who was being life-flighted to a Pittsburgh hospital for precautionary reasons. He was released from the hospital on Sunday night.

The Grapepickers (2-1) also showed off a pretty good kicker in Joel Morey, who was booming them into the end zone during the game and drilling field goals from around midfield in warmups.

In addition to to flirting with a 100-yard game, Hargenrader led the Oil City defense with 10 tackles.