

The final score was 28-10, but the Oilers' road game victory Friday night over Grove City was not without its nail-biting moments.

That's because of this pesky, little stat: eight penalties, 50 yards, pretty much all at inopportune times. These and other miscues prevented the Oilers from winning comfortably -- very comfortably -- over a 4-1 (now 4-2) Grove City team.

Still, there were the many positives for the 5-1 Oilers -- such as 162 yards rushing on 19 carries by quarterback Cole Findlay, who scored all four Oil City touchdowns, all on short runs.

And then there was the defense, which limited the Eagles 107 yards total offense. In fact, by the end of the first quarter, Oil City had outgained them 183-19. What's more, Grove City racked up red yardage 13 times during the fray.

Oh no!

That's how the game started out for the Oilers when the kickoff was muffed -- oh, no -- and they were forced to start from the 3. They began digging out of that hole and had a second-and-1 at the 22. But that soon turned into a third-and-one and then -- oh, no -- a false start. After an incomplete pass, they were forced to punt.

The Oilers' first TD came on their next possession and after Noah Lucarelli stymied the Eagles with a 10-yard sack.

Findlay went 23 and Steven Heise 19 before a pass to Landon Baker had them at first-and-goal from the 3. It took a couple of plays, but Findlay got in from the 1 and Landon Riley kicked the first of four extra points giving him 14 in a row.

Findlay's 74-yard dash -- second longest by a QB in Oil City history -- came on the team's next possession and had them at first-and-goal from the 4. Heise lost a couple and then came a dreaded false start.

Oil City thought it had a touchdown on the next play as Baker caught a pass, but his feet weren't in the end zone. So the sophomore Riley tried his first varsity field goal, but the 33-yarder missed the mark.

My'Saun Mills' 28-yard punt return to the 12 had the Oilers back in business on their next possession, Findlay eventually scoring from the 1 on fourth down to make it 14-0.

So at this point, the Oilers were moving the ball with the greatest of ease and Grove City wasn't.

After another stop by the defense -- Heise, Spence Singleton and Blake Stevens can take their bows -- Mills returned a second punt 37 yards. But he fumbled on the next play, and the Eagles responded by staging a march that had them at the 15 late in the half.

The Oilers got a reprieve when Heise made an interception with nine seconds left.

HOWEVER, Grove City did get back into the game when Peyton Miller returned the second half kickoff -- a squibber-- 75 yards for a touchdown.

The Oilers couldn't move and even had a punt blocked and the Eagles came back with another drive, this one resulting in a 22-yard field goal by Jonah Stucchio that cut the lead to that nail-biting 14-10.

But that's as close as they would get.

The Oilers answered with the first a 4-yard TD by Findlay to make a 21-10. Mills had a 16-yard catch and Findlay a 14-run run during that march.

Then things got real comfortable when Findlay scored from the 3 with 6:05 left in the game. A. Findlay-to-Baker pass netted 33 yards to the 16, and after a false start, Findlay scored two plays later.

OIL SLICKS -- Findlay also threw for 115 yards (6/14, no INTS)...Baker, Logan Heath and Mills caught two apiece...While Findlay ran wild, Heise was shut down, sort of: 15/46...The Oiler defense returned the favor on Jaxyn Wilson who was 15/26, but Stucchio was 4/35 and a headache when the Eagles threatened late in the first half...Grove City lost 54 yards running the ball, and they weren't all sacks...Freshman QB Heath Hohman was 11/22 for Grove City, but for just 51 yards...Oil City fullback Brayden Buzard, who doesn't get to touch the ball much, had a 14-yard punt return, but it didn't lead to anything...Others who made big defensive plays for the Oilers: Buzard, Tycen Sindlinger, Caleb Sparks...**Tackle leaders** for the game, according to the coaching staff, were Stevens with 12, followed by Sindlinger with 11 and Adbul Stanton 10...Next was Buzard with eight tackles...Sparks had three TFLs and a sack...Lucarelli finished with two quarterback hits, a tipped pass, a sack and a TFL to go with seven stops, matching Sparks and Lucarelli...Heise had six tackles and two TFLs to go with his interception...Findlay is the first Oiler to score four TDs in a game since Ethen Knox in 2023...