

Norton Blue Jays get first win; defeat Plainville 42-6

By DICK BOYD

Coach Bruce Graber's Norton Community High School football team bounced back on Friday from a season opening loss at Oakley to defeat Plainville 42-6 in the Mid-Continent League opener at home.

From the opening whistle, the Blue Jays were in control.

Norton players came swarming down field on the opening kickoff and smothered Plainville's kicker Taylor Dix on the 17-yard line. That set the tempo of the game.

On the Cardinals' second play from scrimmage, they fumbled and Norton senior defensive back Seth Mills fell on the ball on the Cardinal 28.

Mills also made his second start at quarterback. After the Jays picked up a first down on the 14 with four running plays, Mills passed to senior tailback Kyle Kats for a touchdown. Junior William Wilhite split the uprights and Norton led 7-0 with 9:01 left.

Less than two minutes later, the Jays were back in the end zone.

Senior Michael Sprigg's kickoff went out of bounds and Plainville received the ball on their 35. It was three and out for the Cardinals and they punted.

Kats returned the ball to the Plainville 44. On first down, senior fullback Aaron Overlease found running room on the left, got into the secondary and outran the Plainville defenders on the sideline for the Jays' second touchdown.

Wilhite's kick made the score 14-0 with 7:06 left in the opening quarter.

After the kickoff, the Jay defense limited Plainville to just three plays before they were forced to punt. Norton took over on their 37. With Mills, Kats and Overlease carrying the ball and the Norton linemen opening holes, it took Norton just seven plays to score again. Overlease tallied from the 4, Wilhite kicked the extra point and it was 21-0 with 2:41 left in the first period.

Plainville fumbled on the kickoff and Sprigg fell on the ball.

Norton scored again on the first play of the second quarter when Mills ran right on the option, kept the ball, reversed and ran into the end zone. After Wilhite's extra point kick, the Jays held a 28-0 advantage just 33 seconds into the second quarter.

After the kickoff, it was three and out once again for Plainville. They punted to midfield and Norton scored in nine plays.

Mills connected with senior tight end Justin Shirk on a slant pass from 10 yards out, Wilhite drilled another place kick through the uprights and Norton led 35-0 with 4:53 left in the half.

After the kickoff, Plainville had three plays and punted.

Kats returned the punt deep into Cardinal territory but Norton was whistled for clipping and the ball came back to the Norton 21. Coach Graber put the junior varsity in the game and they were forced to punt.

Plainville ran three plays and it was halftime with Norton on top 35-0.

On the first play in the second half, Mills broke loose for a 73-yard touchdown, Wilhite kicked the extra point and it was 42-0 with 11:45 left in the third quarter.

The Norton junior varsity played most of the rest of the game, which was shortened by the continuous clock, which is a league requirement when one team has a big lead.

Plainville's varsity scored against the reserves with 3:40 left in the third quarter when quarterback Justin Casey tallied from one yard. The extra point running attempt was stopped, making the final 42-6.

Norton gained 243 yards on the ground and 71 through the air for 314 yards of offense compared to 95 yards rushing and 58 passing for 153 total yards for Plainville.

Mills completed five of six passes. Pass receivers were Kats with two for 28 yards, Shirk with two for 22 and Overlease with one for 21.

Mills and Overlease were leading ground gainers. Mills had seven carries for 81 yards for an 11.5 yard average and Overlease gained 87 yards on nine for a 9.5 yard average.

Other carriers were Kyle Kats, seven for 26; Chris Davis, four for 10; Luke Pfannenstiel, one for three; Lance Roe, two for 11; Adam Krebsbach, one for two; Brian Sproul, two for five; and Logan Kats, one for no gain.

Kats had two punts for 21 yards. Overlease had a kickoff return for five yards and Krebsbach had one for 18. Davis punted twice for 33 and Kats once for 48.

Josh Eichman was leading rusher for Plainville with seven carries for 24 yards.

Tying for leading tacklers with seven each were senior tackles Blake Hillebrand and Michael Sprigg and junior defensive back Luke Pfannenstiel. Pfannenstiel

had six solos and one assist. Hillebrand had five solos and two assists and Sprigg had three solos and four assists. They were followed by: Ryan Maddy, three solos, three assists, six total; Austin Brooks, two solos, three assists, five total; Lance Roe, five solos; Andrew Ales, four solos; Chris Davis, four solos; Nathan Broeckelman, three assists; Jason Green, two solos, one assist, three total; Logan Kats, three solos; Matt Engel, two solos; Kyle Kats, Mark Scheetz and Justin Shirk, one solo, one assist, two total each; Brady Linner, two assists; Todd Bolt, Pat Burton, Brian Juenemann, Adam Krebsbach and Davvid Stanley, one solo each; Paul Juenemann, Aaron Overlease, William Wilhite and Galen Hillebrand, one assist each.

Tyler Brungardt, an all-league tailback and linebacker and M. J. Klein, an all-league tight end and defensive end, did not play for Plainville due to injury.

"I'm very pleased," said Coach Graber. "It's great to have a win but even more important that we executed well during that win. We were very efficient offensively. We moved the ball in a variety of ways such as the trap, option and toss sweep. Defensively, allowing

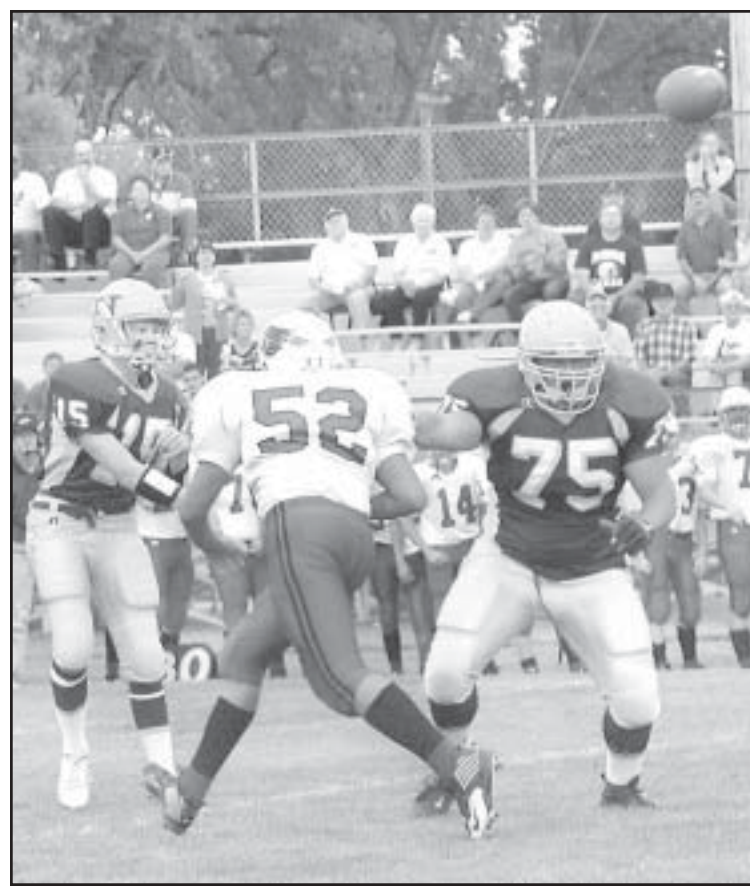
no first downs in the first half shows you're doing things right

"We responded well after last Friday and had a good week of practice. A number of Plainville players were injured and did not play so we did not receive their best effort but I still give us credit for executing very well. It was a good night for us. Had we executed that well a week ago, it would have been a different story.

"After two quick scores, we challenged our players to continue to play hard and they did. Seth had a great night completing all but one pass, not having any interceptions and running the ball well. He actually gained 102 yards but had some losses when he was back to pass.

"We still need game experience. We'll have to learn on the run with some of our players. We still have a long way to go but, if we improve as much this week as we did last week, we'll be competitive. We will need to do that because we will play Smith Center. They have the horses. Their stable of running backs doesn't seem to end. We'll have our work cut out for us

"I'm proud of our players. Our junior varsity also played well against Plainville."



Norton senior quarterback Seth Mills, No. 15, completes a pass during a Blue Jay touchdown drive in the first quarter of Norton's 42-6 win over Plainville on Friday night in Norton. Blocking for Mills is senior tackle Michael Sprigg. Mills passed for two touchdowns and ran for two touchdowns in the game. —Telegram photo by Dick Boyd



Norton's senior tailback Kyle Kats, No. 13, gains big yardage for the Blue Jays during the first quarter of their 42-6 win over Plainville on Friday night in Norton. Getting ready to attempt to tackle Kats is Plainville defensive back Justin Casey. Including pass receptions and punt returns, Kats accounted for 75 yards of offense in the game. —Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

Norton's play by play of their win over the Cardinals Friday

By DICK BOYD

The Norton High School Blue Jays showed the home crowd that they're still a top notch football team with a 42-6 defeat of the Plainville Cardinals on Friday night.

First quarter

Plainville's Taylor Dix returned Michael Sprigg's kickoff to the 17-yard line. Mark Axelson gained five on first down but Plainville fumbled and Seth Mills recovered on the 28.

Fullback Aaron Overlease gained six, then tailback Kyle Kats picked up a first down at the 14. Overlease and Kats were both held for no gain but Mills passed down the right sideline to Kats for a touchdown. William Wilhite kicked the extra point and Norton led 7-0.

The kickoff went out of bounds and Plainville received the ball on the 35. Josh Eichman and Dix each gained a yard. There was no gain on third down and the Cardinals punted.

Kats returned the ball to the Norton 44. Overlease circled left end and outran the secondary for a 56-yard touchdown. After Wilhite's extra point kick, Norton led 14-0 with 7:06 left in the first quarter.

Dix returned the kickoff and Luke Pfannenstiel made an excellent tackle on the 21. Axelson regained two and Eichman three. After no gain on third down, Plainville punted again. The ball rolled dead on the Norton 37.

Overlease sprinted for seven quick yards, then Mills ran the keeper to the Plainville 40 and followed with another to the 34. Overlease picked up a first down on the 25. Mills threw, what turned

out to be, his only incomplete pass of the game. Kats made a fancy run for 21 yards to the 4, then Overlease carried into the end zone. Wilhite's extra point kick made the score 21-0 with 2:41 left in the first quarter.

On the kickoff, Plainville's Scott Peavey fumbled and Sprigg pounced on the ball.

A slant pass from Mills to Justin Shirk gave Norton a first down on the 18. Mills lost two, then was sacked back on the 29. He connected with Overlease for a first down on the 9-yard line. Mills went back to pass again but was sacked on the 20 as the first quarter ended with Norton on top 21-0.

Second quarter

Mills kept the ball on an option play to the right, reversed his field and scored on the first play of the quarter. Wilhite split the uprights and Norton held a 28-0 advantage with 11:27 still remaining in the second period.

Dix got a good return of the kickoff to the Plainville 40. After no gain on first down, Plainville got five from quarterback Justin Casey. Dix was stopped for no gain and the Cardinals punted. The ball rolled dead at midfield.

Kats took over as quarterback and handed the ball to Lance Roe. He gained seven. A fumble cost Norton a down and a yard but Overlease earned a first down on the 31. Overlease gained two but Kats lost five. Mills returned as quarterback and completed a pass to Kats for a first down on the 19. Kats scored on the next play but a holding penalty nullified the touchdown and Norton was penalized 10 yards. Kats got the call again and responded with another outstanding run, breaking at least

two tackles before he was dragged down on the 10. Mills went upstairs with a slant pass to Shirk for another Norton touchdown. Wilhite kicked the extra point to extend the Norton advantage to 35-0 with 4:53 remaining in the half.

Casey returned the kickoff to the 34. A pass was incomplete, Dix was stopped for no gain and another pass missed its mark and the Cardinals had to punt again.

Kats received several good blocks and broke loose down the sidelines on the return. He was finally tackled around the Plainville five. The Blue Jays were flagged for clipping, however, and the officials placed the ball on the Norton 21.

At this point, Norton reserves saw some action. Quarterback Luke Pfannenstiel handed the ball to Chris Davis for a five-yard gain, then ran the keeper for three yards. Davis plunged for one but it was not enough for a first down and he punted.

Davis got a good punt and a clipping penalty against Plainville moved the ball back to the Cardinal 23. Conner McMullen gained two but Dix was stopped for no gain the next two downs and it was halftime with the Blue Jays leading 35-0.

Third quarter

Overlease returned the opening kickoff of the second half to the 27 yard line. On first down, Mills kept the ball on the option, turned upfield and outran the Cardinal secondary for a 73 yard touchdown. Wilhite was perfect once again on the conversion kick, making the score 42-0 with just 15 seconds gone in the half.

Due to league rules, the scoreboard clock ran continuously, except during time outs, for the rest of the game

The Norton reserves played the remainder of the contest. Davis kicked off for Norton and Casey returned the ball to the 25. The Blue Jay junior varsity gave ground grudgingly but the Cardinal varsity scored 12 plays later. Casey went in from one yard out. An attempted run for two extra points was stopped by the Norton defense, making the score 42-6 with 3:40 left in the third quarter.

Adam Krebsbach made a good return of the kickoff to the Norton 42. Davis ran for four yards and Krebsbach picked up two as the third quarter came to a close with Norton leading 42-6.

Fourth quarter


Davis carried the ball for no gain on third down and punted. The ball took a good roll and went out of

bounds on the Plainville 16. Once again, the Plainville varsity moved downfield against the Norton reserves. The Cardinals picked up four first downs and had the ball on the Norton 23 when they tried a pass and Logan Kats made a diving interception to stop their drive. The junior varsity ran three plays and Kyle Kats punted to the Plainville 30 as time ran out, mak-

ing the final score 42-6.

GAME STATISTICS

	Norton	Plainville
First Downs	12	9
Yards Rushing	34-243	38-95
Yards Passing	71	58
Total Yards	314	153
Passes Completed	5-6-0	2-5-1
Fumbles Lost	0	2-2
Penalties	2-15	2-15
Punts	3-38	4-27



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