

# Blue Jays football season begins Friday against Oakley

By DICK BOYD

Coach Bruce Graber's Norton Community High School football team will open the season Friday when they play Oakley in a 7 p.m. contest at Travis Field in Norton.

The Plainsmen, a Northwest Kansas League team, made the Class 2A playoffs last season and beat the Blue Jays 30-14 in last season's opener.

"They had a big, strong talented backfield last season and will have a similar one this year," said Coach Graber.

"They try to run over you, then catch you off guard with the throwing game. They try to suck you up with play action and beat you with the pass.

"Their tailback will be Aaron Racette, a 6-foot 1-inch, 220-pound sophomore who is tough to bring down and is also an outstanding defensive player.

"We had too many turnovers a year ago. We killed ourselves with mistakes. They blitzed us a lot and we didn't handle it very well.

"Making the playoffs last season gives their young players confidence that will make them a better team.

"We'll have our hands full. A lot will depend on how well we make adjustments during the game."

After losing the opener to Oakley, Norton defeated Plainville, then lost to eventual Class 2A state champion Smith Center. The Blue Jays' only other loss in an 8-3 season was to Southeast of Saline in the final game.

Norton placed second in the Mid-Continent League and won the Class 3A district and bi-district championships.

Despite losing 10 senior lettermen, this season's Blue Jay squad has 16 lettermen—Seniors Clay Madden, wide receiver/defensive back; William Wilhite, kicker; Luke Pfannenstiel, quarterback, defensive back; Austin Brooks, offensive lineman, defensive tackle; Andrew Ables, offensive guard/linebacker; Heath Vincent, offensive and defensive tackle; Davvid Stanley, offensive and defensive tackle; juniors Nathan Broeckelman, wide receiver/defensive back; Blake VanEaton, running back/linebacker; Chris Davis, running back/linebacker; Brian Juenemann, wide receiver/defensive back; Lance Roe, running back/linebacker; Nic Lewis, center/defensive end; Matt Engel, defensive end/offensive tackle; Pat Burton, offensive guard/defensive tackle; and Mark Scheetz, offensive lineman/defensive tackle.

Six of the returning Blue Jay players received Mid-Continent all-league recognition last season. Wilhite was named first team kicker. He scored 25 points on a perfect 3 of 3 field goal attempts

and 16 of 20 extra point kicks. He also averaged 47.6 yards on kick-offs.

Receiving honorable mention were: VanEaton, linebacker; Roe, linebacker; Pfannenstiel, defensive back; Davis, punter; and Davvid Stanley, center.

In addition, VanEaton received the team's Gatorade "Rookie of the Year" and "Special Teams Player of the Year" awards. He is the leading returning rusher for the Blue Jays. In a backup role, he rushed for 349 yards, averaging 7.3 yards per carry, and scored 36 points on six touchdowns. VanEaton also caught five passes for 83 yards.

VanEaton, Roe and Pfannenstiel were kickoff returners.

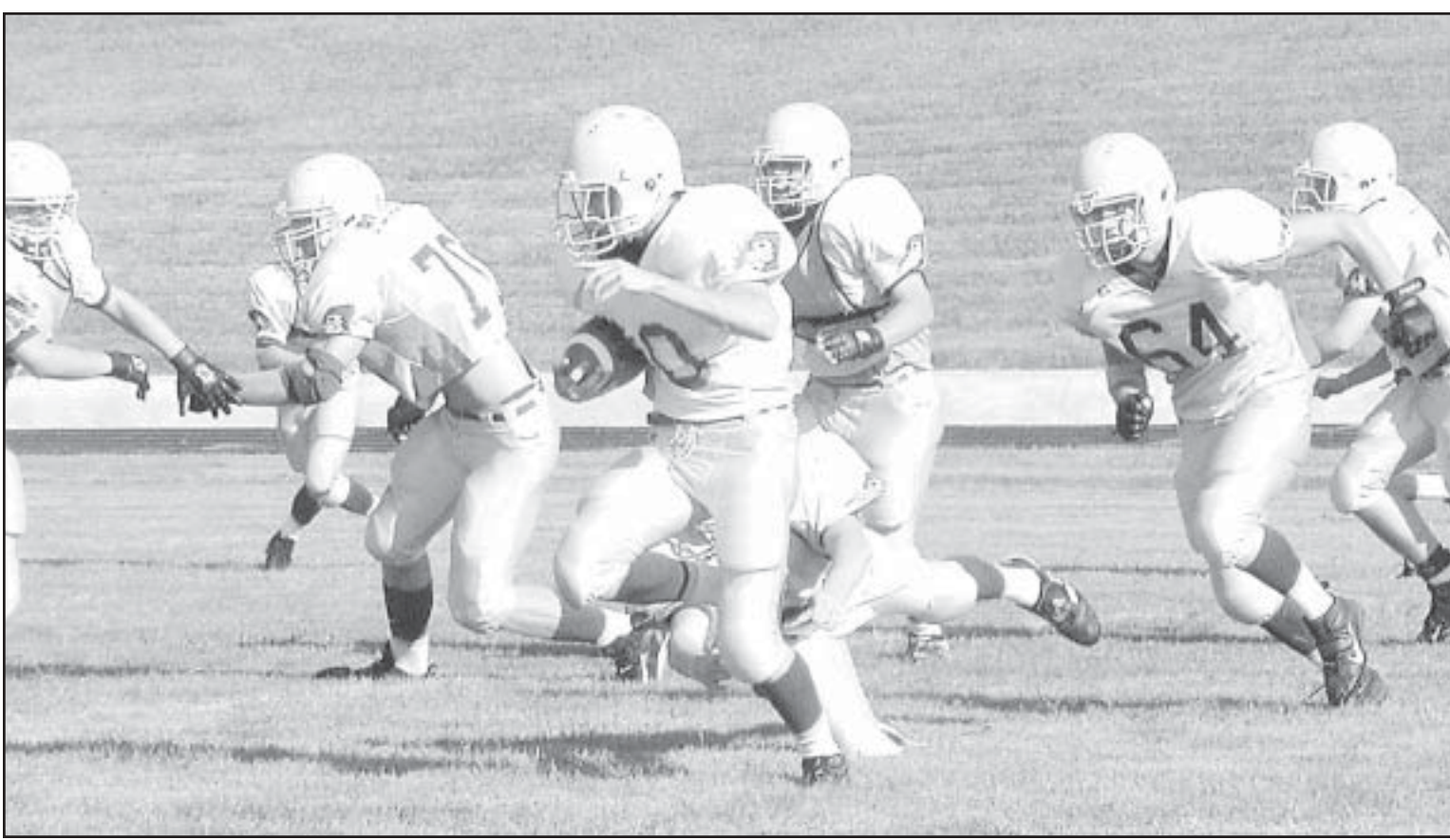
Madden is the leading returning pass receiver. He caught eight for 102 yards last season.

Roe is the leading returning tackler. He had 74 total stops last season. VanEaton had 71 total tackles and Pfannenstiel recorded 65 total.

Other squad members are senior Nathan Morse, wide receiver/defensive back; juniors Jordan Durham, wide receiver/defensive back; Todd Zink, running back/linebacker; Lucas Bailey, offensive lineman/defensive tackle; Perrell Stanley, offensive tackle/defensive tackle; and Brett Thomson, offensive guard/defensive end; sophomores Logan Kats, quarterback/defensive back; Brian Ulmer, running back/linebacker; Jared Cox, tight end/linebacker; Travis Ray, defensive back/wide receiver; Wes Georgeson, tight end/defensive back; Todd Bolt, running back/defensive back; Galen Hildebrand, offensive guard/defensive tackle; Preston Herman, center/defensive end; Kyle Edgett, offensive guard/defensive tackle; and Zach Mannel, defensive and offensive tackle; and freshmen Brad Nuzum, running back/linebacker; Brock Lauer, running back/linebacker; Matt Stanley, running back/linebacker; John VanDoren, offensive and defensive lineman; Nish Millan, offensive and defensive lineman; Kyle Mindrup, offensive and defensive lineman; Coady McMullen, center/defensive end; Jordan Bebb, wide receiver/defensive back; and Zach Dreher, tight end/linebacker.

Five Blue Jay gridders did not play in Saturday's scrimmage due to injuries. Starters Davvid Stanley and Madden had minor injuries. Roe, also a starter, has been sidelined by a case of mononucleosis. He practiced on Monday but probably will miss the opener.

Wilhite has a groin injury and may not be ready by Friday, which could put a strain on the Blue Jay kicking game. Lucas Bailey has a



Norton junior running back Blake VanEaton (No. 20) breaks into the open for a big gain. Norton senior quarterback Luke Pfannenstiel (No. 11) gains big yardage during the Blue Jays' food drive scrimmage on Saturday

morning at Travis Field. Norton will open the 2005 season versus Oakley Friday night at 7 p.m. at Travis Field.

— Telegram photos by Dick Boyd



knee problem which has kept him out of action recently.

"We've had more than our share of injuries so far," said Coach Graber.

"Davvid Stanley is the heart and soul of our offensive line and we really need Lance Roe as well. Clay Madden is a receiver who knows where to go. We really need him since our receiving corps is not too deep.

"This is a fun bunch of young men to work with. They work hard and are very coachable.

"There are no egos on this team. Nobody is trying to fill a super star role. To all of them, the team comes before the individual. I've had more talented ball clubs but, to this point, the backbone of this

team has been that they all work hard and support each other.

"We won't measure up talent wise but, if the intangibles of playing for each other remain, we have the chance to beat some teams.

"Our depth is developing up front, which is good because that has been a concern. Some youngsters have stepped in and shown they can give us some good minutes."

Coach Graber believes that the Mid-Continent League teams that have been good in the past will be good again this year. "Phillipsburg has the most talent," he said. "They are loaded and still have a lot of speed.

"Smith Center has a lot of holes to fill but they have quality athletes with which to fill them. They will rely on a strong sophomore class. "Some of the smaller schools in the league have increased their numbers. Every team will have 33 players or more."

Coach Graber is beginning his 11th year as head football coach at Norton and his 32nd year overall. His coaching record in Norton in 10 years is an enviable 84-18. His assistant coaches again this year

### Norton High School Football Schedule

Friday, Sept. 2, Oakley, 7 p.m.  
 Friday, Sept. 9, at Plainville, 7 p.m.  
 Friday, Sept. 16, at Smith Center, 7 p.m.  
 Friday, Sept. 23, Osborne, 7 p.m.  
 Friday, Sept. 30, at Stockton, 7 p.m.  
 Friday, Oct. 7, Ellis (Homecoming), 7 p.m.  
 Friday, Oct. 14, Thomas More Prep, 7 p.m.  
 Friday, Oct. 21, at Russell 7 p.m.  
 Thursday, Oct. 27, Phillipsburg (Senior Night), 7 p.m.  
 Tuesday, Nov. 1, Bi-District Game, 7 p.m.  
 Saturday, Nov. 5, Regional Game, 7 p.m.  
 Friday, Nov. 11 Sectional Game, 7 p.m.  
 Friday, Nov. 18, Sub-State Game, 7 p.m.  
 Saturday, Nov. 26, State Championship TBA

#### Junior Varsity Schedule

Tuesday, Sept. 6, at Oakley, 5:30 p.m.  
 Monday, Sept. 12, Plainville, 6:30 p.m.  
 Monday, Sept. 19, Smith Center, 6:30 p.m.  
 Monday, Sept. 26, at Osborne, 6 p.m.  
 Monday, Oct. 3, Stockton, 6:30 p.m.  
 Monday, Oct. 10, at Phillipsburg, 6:30 p.m.



# Norton cross country to open season with invitational here

By DICK BOYD

Coach Deyton Hager's Norton Community High School cross country team will open the 2005 season by hosting the Norton Invitational Cross Country Meet Thursday at the Prairie Dog Golf Course south of Norton.

The meet will begin at 4:30 p.m. with the girls and boys junior varsity races and will continue with the girls varsity at 5 p.m. and the boys varsity at 5:30 p.m.

The boys will run three miles and the girls, two.

Team medals will be awarded to the top three boys and girls teams. Individual medals will go to the top 15 varsity boys and girls and the top 10 junior varsity boys and girls.

Teams from Ellis, Goodland, Grainfield-Wheatland, Hill City, Hoxie, Ness City, Northern Valley, Oberlin, Phillipsburg and WaKeeney will compete.

Coach Hager has 15 boys and six girls on the team.

Returning boys lettermen are Jeremy Harding, a three-time lettering senior; Logan Keiswetter, a two-time lettering junior; Jared Engelbert and Kent Mann, juniors; and David Counter, sophomore.

Other boys on the team are Jon Harding, Philip Van Der Weele,

## Norton High School Cross Country Schedule

Thursday, Sept. 1 - Norton Invitational - 4:30 p.m.  
 Saturday, Sept. 10 - Wamego Invitational - 10 a.m.  
 Thursday, Sept. 15 - WaKeeney Invitational - 4:30 p.m.  
 Thursday, Sept. 22 - Hill City Invitational - 5 p.m.  
 Tuesday, Sept. 27 - Oberlin Invitational - 5 p.m.  
 Thursday, Oct. 6 - Phillipsburg Invitational (league) - 4:30 p.m.  
 Thursday, Oct. 13 - Lakeside Invitational - 4 p.m.  
 Saturday, Oct. 22 - Regional Meet TBA  
 Saturday, Oct. 29 - State Meet TBA



seniors; Camilo Briceno, Jared Bebb, juniors; Luke VanSike, Andrew Black, Bryce Engelbert, Tanner Griffith, sophomores; Zach Bainter, Cody Nickell, freshmen.

Three girl letter winners are returning — Amber Overlease, a three-time lettering senior; Karlie Jones, a two-time lettering senior; and Junior Morgan Bailey, a two-time lettering junior.

Also running for the girls will be Karlynn Kent, sophomore and KaraJo Jones and Laura Lee Baird, freshmen.

Anne Stiles is the assistant coach and Chantille Campbell, the student manager.

"On the boys' side, we had some experience on the team last year

but were still very young," said Coach Hager.

"Losing Derek Volgamore will hurt but we have some young boys who had lots of time on the varsity last year

"We are still very young but we have a number of boys back in addition to some new and exciting runners. They know what they have to do to reach their goals they have set this year.

"On the girls' side, we didn't have the numbers last year to have a full team but we just might have them this year. We lost only Crista Rhoades last year and have more new faces coming in so we are excited and waiting to see if we will have the numbers to have a full girls team."

## High School Sports This Week

**Norton Blue Jays**

**Northern Valley Huskies**

**Logan Trojans**

**FOOTBALL:**  
 Norton Blue Jays vs Oakley Plainsmen ..... 7 p.m., Friday, Travis Field, Norton  
 Norton Junior Varsity vs. Oakley ..... 5:30 p.m., Tuesday, Sept. 6 at Oakley  
 Northern Valley Huskies vs. Triplains ..... 7 p.m., Friday, in Almena  
 Logan Trojans vs. Western Plains ..... 7 p.m., Friday, in Logan

**VOLLEYBALL:**  
 Norton Lady Jays V-JV vs. Osborne and Colby ..... 5 p.m., today in Osborne  
 Norton Lady Jay Freshmen in Colby Quad ..... 4:30 p.m., today in Colby  
 Norton Lady Jays V-JV vs. Northern Valley/Phillipsburg ..... 5 p.m., Tuesday, Sept. 6  
 NCHS Memorial Gym and Wilmeth Kirk Memorial Gym in Norton  
 Northern Valley Lady Huskies vs. Kensington/Western Plains ..... 4 p.m., today in Kensington  
 Northern Valley Lady Huskies vs. Norton/Phillipsburg ..... 5 p.m., Tuesday, Sept. 6  
 NCHS Memorial Gym and Wilmeth Kirk Memorial Gym in Norton  
 Logan Lady Trojans vs Hill City/Trego ..... 5 p.m., Tuesday, Sept. 6 in Logan

**CROSS COUNTRY:**  
 Norton Cross Country Invitational ..... 4:30 p.m., Thursday  
 Prairie Dog Recreation Association Golf Course, Norton (Competing teams will include Northern Valley)

**TENNIS:**  
 Norton Lady Jays vs. Colby ..... 9 a.m., Saturday in Colby  
 Norton Lady Jays in Phillipsburg Varsity Quad ..... 1 p.m., Tuesday, Sept. 6 in Phillipsburg