

# Blue Jays shut out Thomas More Prep 21-0

By DICK BOYD

The Norton Blue Jays rediscovered their running game as they powered to a 21-0 shutout of Thomas More Prep on Friday.

In the first Class 3A, District 10 game of the season, the Norton Community High football team took advantage of their home-field to down the boys from Hays to the delight of a large Norton crowd.

Despite beating Ellis, 34-7, the Blue Jays rushed for just 136 yards on 35 carries for a 3.9 yards per carry average last week. Against Thomas More, they amassed 260 yards on 47 carries for a 5.5 yards per carry average and scored touchdowns in the first, third and fourth quarters.

Meanwhile, the Blue Jay defenders limited the Monarchs to just 84 yards rushing on 34 tries for a 2.5 yards per carry average and just 19 yards on three of 13 passing attempts and intercepted three Thomas More aeriels.

After an exchange of punts to start the game, the visitors punted again and Luke Pffannenstiel made the reception and was tackled on the Norton 45. With the help of a pass interference call, Norton moved downfield. Junior tailback Blake VanEaton got loose for 35 yards around right end to the Monarch 20. Pffannenstiel went to the air and VanEaton made a leaping catch over his shoulder for the Blue Jays' first touchdown with 4:37 left in the first quarter.

Senior kicker William Wilhite split the uprights and Norton led 7-0.

After another exchange of punts, Thomas More fumbled and Norton recovered on the Monarch 34 with time running out in the first.

Norton was unable to move in for a touchdown and the Monarchs took over on their 29. After another exchange of punts, the Blue Jay defense stopped the Monarchs again and they went into punt formation. This time the Monarch punter saw an opening and ran for a first down on the Norton 34.

Thomas More took advantage of the momentum and moved downfield. They appeared to be ready to score when they reached the Norton four but quarterback Scott Stamel tried to pass, the ball

was batted up in the air and Norton linebacker Lance Roe intercepted. After VanEaton gained 11 on



Norton junior tailback Blake VanEaton makes a cut en route to a 35 yard gain during the Blue Jays' 21-0 district win over Thomas More Prep here Friday night. VanEaton ran for one touchdown and caught a pass from

three rushes, a Pffannenstiel pass was intercepted on the Blue Jay 45. It was three-and-out for the Monarchs, however, and their punt was downed on the Norton six. With VanEaton and fullback Chris Davis carrying the ball, Norton moved to mid-field. With time running out in the first half, Pffannenstiel went to the air and his pass was intercepted. The teams went to the locker rooms with Norton leading 7-0.

Sophomore Logan Kats replaced Pffannenstiel at quarterback for Norton in the first series after the half. Norton returned the kickoff to the Norton 41 and moved downfield to score. Kats ran the final 22 on a keeper around right end. Wilhite kicked the extra point and Norton's lead was extended to 14-0 with 9:56 still left in the third period.

It was three-and-out for the Monarchs again and they punted to the Norton 38. The Blue Jays

drove downfield but the Monarch defense stiffened and they took over on their own 17. After making one first down, Thomas More faced a fourth and one situation and a Norton defender jumped across the line to give them a second first-and-10 on the Norton 43. The third quarter ended with the Monarchs on the Norton 35.

On the second play of the fourth, Thomas More fumbled and Norton recovered on the Blue Jay 41. With VanEaton carrying, Norton earned two first downs but could not get another and Pffannenstiel quick kicked out of bounds on the Monarch five-yard-line.

The Monarchs gained one in three tries against the Blue Jay defense and punted. Pffannenstiel returned the ball to the Monarch 33. With VanEaton, Davis and Pffannenstiel eating up yardage, Norton moved downfield for the Jays' third touchdown. VanEaton

powered into the end zone from nine yards out. Wilhite was perfect again on the extra point kick and the Blue Jays led 21-0 with 6:12 remaining in the game.

After Wilhite's kickoff, Todd Bolt intercepted a Monarch pass on the Norton 42. A long gain by VanEaton was wiped out by a holding penalty, then a 53-yard run by VanEaton for an apparent touchdown came back on a blocking in the back penalty and Norton punted to the Monarch 15.

The Norton defense pushed the Monarchs back to their three-yard-line and they punted again.

The Norton junior varsity ran two plays and the game was over.

"Defensively, we played well again," said Coach Bruce Graber. "Our pass coverage was excellent again and we took away their quick pitch and dive option plays.

"Offensively, we didn't block well the first half. Luke was having trouble with the option, so I

made the decision to put Logan in on the last series of the first half. I wanted Luke to watch and get relaxed. It didn't work out then so we put him in to start the second half.

"Our offensive linemen started getting on their blocks and Logan did a super job. Luke handled it extremely well. He went back in and was cool, calm and more collected. That's the way a champion responds. I'm proud of the way he came back in the second half. He was Logan's biggest supporter on the sidelines.

"Our offensive linemen were challenged at halftime. We went out and turned the tide. We bowed our necks. That last touchdown, we ran inside tackles and chewed up yardage. We kept pounding the ball at them. We needed that confidence that we could control the ball. We were able to run it inside the tackles and that's a confidence builder.

"It's to the credit of our young

men that they made the mental and physical changes in the second half. We were like another group in the second half. We went out to dominate the game.

"You have to play every Friday on both sides of the ball like you are playing for a state championship because right now we are. We'll see in practice this week how much we learned. If we learn from this, we'll be a better team."

VanEaton was leading rusher for Norton with 154 yards on 20 carries for a 7.7 yards per carry average. Other ball carriers were Davis, 6 for 34; Pffannenstiel 9 for 7; Kats, 3 for 33; Roe, 4 for 16; Bolt, 3 for 21; Brad Nuzum, 2 for 0.

VanEaton caught 2 passes for 33 yards and Broeckelman caught 1 for 6. Pffannenstiel had 2 punt returns for 26 yards and Broeckelman had 1 for 6. Davis had 1 kickoff return for 11 yards.

Davis punted four times for a 29 yard average. Pffannenstiel had 1 for 35. Wilhite kicked off 4 times for a 47 yard average.

Pffannenstiel completed 3 of 11 passes for 39 yards. Kats was 0 for 2 and Broeckelman was 0 for 1 in passing.

Staples was leading rusher for Thomas More with 45 yards on 17 carries.

Lance Roe was leading tackler for Norton with 7 solos, 3 assists, 10 total, followed by Chris Davis, 7 solos, 1 assist, 8 total; Nathan Broeckelman, 6 solos, 1 assist, 7 total; Austin Brooks, 4 solos, 3 assists, 7 total; Matt Engel, Blake VanEaton, 4 solos each; Luke Pffannenstiel, 3 solos, 1 assist, 4 total; Jared Cox, Heath Vincent, 1 solo, 2 assists, 3 total each; Andrew Ables, 3 assists; Clay Madden, 3 solos; Todd Bolt, 2 solos; Davvid Stanley, 1 solo, 1 assist, 2 total.

Norton will travel to Russell this Friday for its second district game with kickoff at 7 p.m..

## GAME STATISTICS

Norton	Thomas More Prep	
16	First Downs	6
47-260	Yards Rushing	34-84
39	Yards Passing	19
299	Total Yards	103
3-14-2	Passes Compl.	3-13-3
0-2	Fumbles Lost	2-3
10-65	Penalties	2-23
5-30.4	Punts	8-34.5

# Norton football team powers to first district win

By DICK BOYD

Touchdowns in the first, third and fourth quarter powered the Norton Blue Jays to a 21-0 shutout of Thomas More Prep of Hays on Friday.

## First quarter

Norton's William Wilhite kicked off to start the game. Scott Stamel returned the kick but fell on the turf trying to make a cut and the Monarchs started their first possession on their 23-yard-line.

Running back Rick Staples carried the ball on first down and regained one yard before Norton linebacker Lance Roe tackled him. Stamel was the quarterback. On second down, a fumble occurred on the exchange from the center but the Monarchs recovered. After an incomplete pass, they punted.

Luke Pffannenstiel returned the punt. A holding penalty cost Norton 10 yards and the Blue Jays started on their 38. Two Pffannenstiel keepers netted nothing. On third down, he passed to wide receiver Nathan Broeckelman for a seven yard gain. Chris Davis punted and the ball went out of bounds on the Monarch 36.

After an incomplete pass by Stamel, he was sacked for a seven-yard loss by defensive back Broeckelman, linebacker Davis and defensive back Pffannenstiel. After another incomplete pass, Thomas More punted again.

Pffannenstiel received the punt and was tackled on the Norton 45. Pffannenstiel gained nothing and tailback Blake VanEaton also gained no yardage. On third down, Thomas More was penalized for pass interference and the ball was moved to the Monarch 40. Pffannenstiel was sacked back on the Norton 45 but VanEaton got

loose around right end and gained 35 yards to the Thomas More 20.

After Pffannenstiel lost two yards, he passed to VanEaton in the end zone and he made a leaping catch over his shoulder for the Blue Jays' first touchdown of the game. Wilhite kicked the extra point and Norton led 7-0 with 4:37 left in the first quarter.

Stamel returned Wilhite's kickoff but this time he did not slip on the turf. He was upended on the 20 by a bone-jarring tackle by Norton defensive end Matt Engel. Staples gained 15 yards for a first down on the 35 but VanEaton dropped Stamel for a five yard loss. Staples gained seven yards before defensive tackle Austin Brooks tackled him. Stamel ran a keeper to the 41 but it was not enough for a first down. Thomas More punted and Broeckelman returned the ball six yards to the Norton 37.

VanEaton made four yards but fullback Davis gained just one in two tries and Davis punted. Staples made a fair catch on the Monarch 28. Stamel tried a keeper on first down but fumbled and Norton recovered on the 34. After a false start cost Norton five yards, Pffannenstiel ran four yards to the 35 as the first quarter ended with the Blue Jays leading 7-0.

## Second quarter

Pffannenstiel was sacked for a five-yard loss. A flat pass to VanEaton carried to the 29. A fourth down pass was incomplete and Thomas More took over. Travis Budke got his first carry for the Monarchs and was dropped by Davis for a two yard loss. But, a face mask penalty against Norton put the ball on the 35. After an incomplete pass, Staples was tackled for a five yard loss by Broeckelman. After another incomplete aerial, Thomas More

punted.

Broeckelman fell on the ball on the Norton 36. After an incomplete pass, no gain on the keeper by Pffannenstiel and another missed aerial, Davis punted.

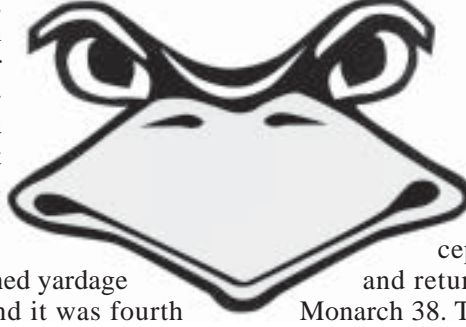
Staples called for a fair catch on the 30. Norton lost five yards on an offside penalty. After an incomplete pass, Stamel ran the keeper but Broeckelman and Davis put him on the turf for a two yard loss. Staples gained yardage

and returned it to the Monarch 38. Thomas More did not get a play off before intermission and the two teams went to the locker room with Norton leading by just 7-0.

## Third quarter

Thomas More kicked off to Norton to start the second half. Davis returned the ball 11 to the 41. Sophomore Logan Kats replaced Pffannenstiel at quarterback for the first series. VanEaton ran for eight to the 49, then Kats ran a keeper to the Monarch 33. VanEaton ran over the left side of the line for five yards, then took a pitch for two more yards. An illegal substitution penalty cost Norton five yards. Roe ran from the fullback spot and earned a first down on the 22. Kats ran the keeper around right end, followed his blocking and ran untouched into the end zone for Norton's second touchdown. Wilhite split the uprights and Norton led 14-0 with 9:56 still remaining in the third period.

Thomas More was offside on the kickoff and moved back five yards. Staples returned Wilhite's kickoff to the 19. Davvid Stanley



was dropped for a two yard loss by VanEaton. A pass was incomplete and Thomas More punted. The ball was downed on the Norton 6.

VanEaton broke several tackles as he ran 20 yards for a first down. After an incomplete pass, Davis ran for nine yards to the 35. Next, he ran 15 more yards to mid-field.

With time running out in the first half, Pffannenstiel went to the air. Schippers intercepted the pass and returned it to the Monarch 38. Thomas More did not get a play off before intermission and the two teams went to the locker room with Norton leading by just 7-0.

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tackled Staples for no gain on first down. Staples ran for three but a pass was incomplete and the Monarchs punted. The ball rolled dead on the Norton 38.

Davis got three, then VanEaton ran to the Monarch 43 for a first down. Roe gained three, then Todd Bolt ran to the 24 for another Blue Jay first down. After an incomplete pass, Bolt gained five yards and Roe two. A pass fell incomplete and Thomas More took over the pigskin on their 17.

Stamel gained six yards before Roe tackled him. Staples gained two more before Davis made the stop. Budke ran for a first down on the 29. Staples gained three yards and Roe again made the tackle. Staples ran for four yards, a quarterback sneak netted two and it was fourth and one for the Monarchs. They lined up as if they planned to run the ball but a Norton defender became anxious and jumped across the line. The five-yard penalty against Norton gave the Monarchs a first down on their 43.

Budke tried the Norton line but Roe tackled him for no gain. Stamel pitched to Staples and he ran for eight yards before Roe tackled him. The third quarter ended on that play with the Blue Jays ahead 14-0.

## Fourth quarter

Norton was penalized five yards for encroachment. The next play, Thomas More fumbled and Norton recovered on the Blue Jay 41. After an incomplete pass, VanEaton ran for 10 and a first down on the Monarch 49. The next down, VanEaton legged the pigskin to the 37 for another first down.

The Norton drive stopped here, however, as VanEaton lost two yards, two passes fell incomplete and Pffannenstiel quick kicked. The ball rolled out of bounds on the

Monarch 5-yard-line. Stamel completed a five-yard pass to end Tucker Mall and Roe made the tackle. Staples was stopped for no gain by Heath Vincent and Chris Davis. It didn't get any better for the Monarchs as Andrew Ables and Austin Brooks sacked Stamel on the six.

Thomas More punted and Pffannenstiel returned the ball to the Monarch 33. It didn't take long for the Blue Jays to enter the end zone for the third time in the contest. VanEaton gained three and Pffannenstiel two yards. Then, Davis plowed ahead for a first down on the 20. Pffannenstiel ran a keeper to the nine for another Blue Jay first-and-10. Next, VanEaton ran over the left side of the line and carried tacklers with him as he powered in for the touchdown. Wilhite's kick made it 21-0 with 6:12 left in the game.

Staples returned Wilhite's kickoff to the 40. On first down, Stamel passed and Bolt intercepted for the Jays on the Norton 42. A long gain by VanEaton was wiped out by a holding penalty and the ball went back to the 33. VanEaton got the yardage back and then some as he ran for a first down on the Norton 47. The next down, VanEaton went 53 yards for an apparent touchdown but it was called back on a blocking in the back penalty. Roe gained two yards and Bolt nothing and Norton punted.

The ball rolled dead on the Monarch 15. Thomas More tried a quarterback sneak to no avail, then an intentional grounding of a pass put them back on their 3-yard-line. A flat pass to Staples netted nothing and they punted. The ball went out of bounds on their 38.

The Norton junior varsity ran two plays and the Blue Jays put a 21-0 district win over Thomas More into the record books.

— Telegram photo by Dick Boyd