

Norton loses district game to Phillipsburg

By DICK BOYD

Coach Bruce Graber's Norton Community High School football team fell behind an outstanding Phillipsburg team 16-0, then played the Panthers even the rest of the way but could not make up for the early deficit and lost 30-14 in District 10 football at Travis Field last night.

The win earned the Panthers the district championship and a sub-district game Tuesday in Phillipsburg versus Beloit, who placed second in District 9 to Riley County.

Riley County defeated Beloit 21-7 to win the District 9 championship and Norton will travel to Riley County on Tuesday for a Sub-District game. Norton will have to defeat Riley County in order to continue on in the playoffs.

Last night at Travis Field, Norton trailed Phillipsburg by just 8-0 after one quarter and 16-7 at halftime. The Blue Jays suffered their only fumble of the game on their first possession of the second half. Phillipsburg recovered on the Norton 36 and scored to take a 24-7 advantage. A 70 yard scoring drive by the Panthers late in the third quarter made it 30-7.

Norton scored on a pass play with 5:23 left in the game to make the final 30-14.

Both teams had to punt after their first possession in the game. Phillipsburg received the ball on the Panther 36 for their second possession. A third down measurement gave Phillipsburg a first down on the 46 by inches.

A holding penalty slowed the Panthers but running back Travis Yoxall gained back the yardage to the 46. Norton linebacker Blake VanEaton sacked Panther quarterback Taylor Redinger for a 13 yard loss but running back Garrett Wickham got loose for a gain to the Norton 47. It was fourth and four and Phillipsburg went into punt formation. It was a fake and Wickham ran for a first down on the Norton 31. The next play, Redinger ran a keeper around the left side of the line and scored. He passed to tight end Caleb Breon for two extra points and the Panthers led 8-0 with 14:39 left in the first quarter.

On the kickoff, the Panthers tried a squib kick but it was recovered by Pat Burton on Norton's 46-yard-line. Norton was unable to take advantage of the good field position and Chris Davis punted out of bounds on the Phillipsburg 22. The Norton defense was equal to the occasion this time and the Panthers were forced to punt. They got a good roll and the ball rolled dead on the Norton 16. Senior quarterback Luke Pfannenstiel completed a third down pass to wide receiver Nathan Broeckelman for a first down on the Norton 31 as the first quarter ended with the Panthers leading 8-0.

Pfannenstiel lost a yard and two more passes fell incomplete. Davis punted and Lance Roe tackled Kade Bloom on the Phillipsburg 43 the instant he received the ball. With Phillipsburg's speedsters Jarret Abell and Travis Yoxall getting most of the carries, the Panthers moved downfield. Abell ran around left end, broke two tackles and scored Phillipsburg's second touchdown with 9:11 left in the half. Redinger ran a keeper for two extra points and it was 16-0 in favor of the visitors.

The Blue Jays answered with a touchdown drive of their own. VanEaton returned the kickoff to the Norton 31. A holding penalty against Norton moved the ball back to the 18 but an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty against Phillipsburg moved the ball to the 33. Pfannenstiel completed a pass to wide receiver Clay Madden for a first down on the Norton 43. Fullback Chris Davis gained four yards, then tailback VanEaton found a hole and ran for a first down on the Panther 47. Pfannenstiel ran the keeper to the 40. Fullback Lance Roe plunged for one yard and VanEaton ran for another first down on the 35. VanEaton ran over the left side of the line to the 23 for another first down.

Roe broke several tackles as he plowed to the 15. VanEaton was hit behind the line of scrimmage but stayed on his feet and ran to the 7.



Most of the time in last night's district game with Phillipsburg, the Norton defenders were able to contain the Panthers' explosive offense, but the speedy Phillipsburg backs escaped enough times to produce

a 30-14 win for the visitors. Above, Norton defensive back Luke Pfannenstiel tackles Phillipsburg's Jarret Abell for no gain as defensive back Nathan Broeckelman comes in to assist.

— Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

VanEaton was stopped for no gain but, the next down, he ran over the left side of the line and ran over a potential tackler and into the end zone. A pass from Pfannenstiel to Roe was good for an apparent two extra points but Norton was penalized for holding. William Wilhite kicked the extra point and the Blue Jays trailed 16-7 with 3:41 left in the half.

After Wilhite's kickoff, the Panthers put together a drive of their own but got no further than the Norton 25. With time running out, defensive tackle Heath Vincent sacked Redinger on the 30 as the first half came to a close with the visitors on top 16-7.

Norton fumbled for the only time in the game on their second offensive play of the second half and Phillipsburg recovered on the Norton 36. Defensive end Matt Engel tackled Abell for no gain but, the next down, Abell ran around right end for a first down on the 23. Defensive end Andrew Ables tackled quarterback Redinger for a four yard loss but the Panthers scored the next down on a trick play. Redinger ran the keeper to the left, faked a pitch to the left, then ran around right end for the touchdown. Norton stopped Lee Hadley short of the end zone on the extra points try but Norton was penalized for grabbing his face mask. Abell ran for the extra points on the replay and the Panthers led 24-7 with 9:34 left.

The two teams exchanged punts then Norton had to punt for a second time in the half. Phillipsburg

got the ball on their 30. On first down, Abell got loose and Davis made a touchdown saving tackle on the Norton 41. After a three yard loss, Davvid Stanley came in from his defensive tackle position to sack Redinger on the Norton 49. Redinger passed to Abell and he was tackled by Broeckelman on the Blue Jay 11. Bloom gained nothing as Pfannenstiel tackled him but Brandon Karlin, the Panthers' 222 pound fullback, bulled to the 1 for a first down. Abell ran around right end for the touchdown. A pass for two extra points was intercepted by Davis in the end zone and Phillipsburg led 30-7 with 1:13 left in the third quarter.

The Blue Jays did not give up and moved the ball after the kickoff. VanEaton returned the kickoff to the 34, then caught a slant pass over the middle and ran to the Panther 49. Pfannenstiel ran the keeper to the 43, then ran another keeper for a first down on the 39. Todd Bolt gained two yards from his tailback spot as the third quarter ended with Norton trailing 30-7.

Pfannenstiel tried for the home run to start the fourth quarter but his pass was intercepted in the end zone. Phillipsburg received the ball on their 20. Karlin ran for three yards, then VanEaton sacked Redinger. Yoxall ran around left end to the 29. On fourth and one, the Blue Jay defense held and Norton took over on the Phillipsburg 30.

VanEaton gained three yards, then ran up the middle for a first

down on the 18. Pfannenstiel gained just one yard, a pass was incomplete. VanEaton ran for two yards and another pass was incomplete. Phillipsburg took over. The Panthers got a first down by inches when Davvid Stanley tackled Abell on the 25. Next, Wickham was dropped by Nic Lewis and Pfannenstiel for a two yard loss. The Blue Jay defense came charging in on the next play and Redinger barely got a pass off before he was knocked to the ground. He completed the pass but to the wrong jersey.

Broeckelman intercepted and returned the pigskin to the Panther 32. Davis bulled for four yards. On second down, Pfannenstiel passed to Davis and he reversed field and ran untouched into the end zone. Wilhite split the uprights and it was 30-14 with 5:23 remaining in the game.

After Wilhite's kickoff, the Panthers gained just two yards in three tries and punted. With time running out, Norton went to the air but Pfannenstiel was unable to complete any aeriels and Davis punted. Again, Phillipsburg could not move the ball and punted back to the Jays.

With just 33 seconds left on the clock, Norton's junior varsity offense ran several plays and the game was over with Phillipsburg prevailing 30-14.

"It was the same story we've had the past month. Our offense was inconsistent," said Coach Graber. "We did nothing on our early possessions, then went 70 yards to score. To start the second half, we

were down just 16-7 and turned the ball over right away on our 36 and they scored again. From then on, we played great on defense and only allowed them to score one more time.

"Our offense and defense seem to have a different mind set. Our defense plays with a dominating attitude with great intensity. Our offense is not playing with that same intensity. We need to find a way to be more efficient offensively. When you can't move offensively, you give the other team short fields.

"I'm not disappointed in how hard we played. When we got down by two scores early, we didn't quit. We played hard and that's all you can ask.

"We just need to fix some things offensively so we won't put pressure on our special teams and defense. Our young men will bounce back and be ready for Riley County. We had some bumps and bruises in this game but we will be healed by Tuesday. We have tough players who will answer the call."

Norton gained just 108 yards rushing and 70 passing in the game for 178 total yards of offense. Phillipsburg earned 222 yards rushing and 48 passing for 270 total.

VanEaton was leading rusher for Norton with 16 carries for 69 yards for a 4.3 yards per carry average. He was followed by Roe, 4 for 15; Davis, 4 for 19; Pfannenstiel, 11 for 0; Bolt, 1 for 1; Brad Nuzum, 1 for 0; Brock Lauer, 1 for 4.

Pass receivers for Norton were Nathan Broeckelman, 1 for 14; Clay Madden, 1 for 10; Davis, 1 for 28; VanEaton, 1 for 20.

Pfannenstiel had 1 punt return for minus 3. VanEaton had 2 kick-off returns for 55 yards and Broeckelman had 1 for 10.

Abell was leading rusher for Phillipsburg with 20 carries for 125 yards and a 6.25 yards per carry average. He came into the game with 102 carries for 906 yards and a 8.9 yards per carry average.

"We know a little about Riley County because we played against them last year," said Coach Graber.

"They will run the 3-3 stack defense that we had trouble with early in the year but we have learned how to block it. Offensively, they like to throw the ball.

"We will need to play aggressively on offense and defense."

Last night was "Senior Night" at the football game. The senior members of the Norton football team, cross country team and tennis team were honored prior to the Norton-Phillipsburg game and senior members of the Norton band were honored at halftime.

GAME STATISTICS

| Norton | Phillipsburg |
|--------|----------------------|
| 11 | First Downs 16 |
| 38-108 | Yards Rushing 60-222 |
| 70 | Yards Passing 48 |
| 178 | Total Yards 270 |
| 4-13-1 | Passes Compl. 4-7-2 |
| 1-1 | Fumbles Lost 0-0 |
| 3-31 | Penalties 4-45 |
| 6-32 | Punts 5-37.5 |

Huskies run past Natoma in high scoring game

The Northern Valley Huskies had a wild night last night in Natoma, beating them 88-66 in District football.

Northern Valley's Joey Copper and Clarke Nelson each ran for five touchdowns, while Avery Thalheim ran for one. Cole Kinderknecht ran one kick return for a 34 yard touchdown.

"This was a wild, wild football game, said Coach Chuck Fessenden. "We were able to run the ball very effectively. They had a lot of success passing. We played error free football and that turned out to be the difference in the game. We had no turnovers and we were able to intercept three passes."

Clarke Nelson led rushing with 300 yards on 38 carries, followed by Joey Copper, 245 on 25; Avery Thalheim, 79 on 12.

Northern Valley will now play a Bi-District contest against Weskan in Sharon Springs on Tuesday, Nov. 1. Kick-off is 7 p.m.

Game Statistics

| N. Valley | Natoma |
|-----------|------------------------|
| 21 | First Downs 14 |
| 628 | Yards Rushing 153 |
| 3 | Yards Passing 371 |
| 631 | Total Yards 524 |
| 1-1 | Passes Completed 27-56 |
| 4-32 | Penalties 6-35 |
| 0 | Fumbles 2-0 |
| 0 | Punts 1 blocked |



Northern Valley's Cole Kinderknecht, No. 62, provides some blocking for Clarke Nelson on one of the Huskies' scoring drives. Nelson ran up a total of 300 yards on 38

carries in last evening's contest against the Natoma Tigers. Also shown for the Huskies are No. 38, Cameron Duede and No. 58, Zach Miller. — Telegram photo by Susie Marble