

Norton whips Plainville in shortened game

Lightning concerns end action in 3rd

By DICK BOYD

Although the game was shortened by lightning threats, the only lightning strikes on the field Friday night in the Norton-Plainville Mid-Continent League football game in Plainville came from the Norton offense in the Jays' 44-6 victory.

Norton scored seven touchdowns, rolled up 371 yards of offense and did not punt in the game that was stopped with 4:30 left in the third quarter. Meanwhile, the Norton defense did its job, all but one time when they allowed a 70-yard touchdown run for the Cardinals' only points of the night. Take away that one run and Plainville gained 48 yards on 29 attempts for an average of 1.7 yards per carry.

The Cardinals also intercepted a Logan Kats pass on the third down of the game but the hard-charging Blue Jays defense held them to four-and-out. When Norton got the ball again, senior fullback Chris Davis rambled 56 yards for the Jays' first touchdown with 8:29 left.

The Blue Jay defense held again and Kats connected with Davis for a 25-yard touchdown and it was 12-0 with 6:00 remaining.

On Plainville's third possession, Norton held again. Junior linebacker Jared Cox blocked a Cardinal punt and the Jays took over on the 3-yard line. Junior tailback Todd Bolt plunged the three yards for Norton's third touchdown in the opening quarter and it was 18-0 with 3:54 left.

The Blue Jay defense forced the Cardinals to punt again and Norton drove to the Plainville 19 before giving up the ball for the first time in the game.

To start the second quarter, Plainville earned their initial first down of the contest, then senior running back Lucas Hachmeister found a hole in the middle of the Norton defense and sprinted 70 yards for a touchdown. The extra points attempt failed and it was 18-6 with 10:56 left.

After the Plainville kickoff, Kats passed 30 yards to Cox for Norton's fourth touchdown. That score made it 24-6 with 8:40 left in the half. After holding Plainville again, Norton regained possession and senior tailback Blake VanEaton ran 65 yards to score, making it 30-6 with 5:52 left. After junior linebacker Matt Stanley recovered a Plainville fumble, VanEaton got his second touchdown on a 35-yard screen pass from Kats. Davis kicked the extra point and it was 37-6 with 2:29 left.

Senior defensive end Matt Engel recovered another Cardinal fumble and reserves for both teams finished the half. Norton kicked off to Plainville to start the second half and senior defensive end Brett Thomson blocked a Cardinal punt. The Blue Jays drove for their final touchdown, which came on a three-yard run by Bolt. Davis kicked the extra point and it was 44-6.

The game was ended at that point due to lightning threats in the storm clouds. "We had a good game overall," said first year head coach Lucas Melvin. "We played hard the whole time and executed better. We were more focused. "We really attacked their double wing offense. We had the fire back from our first game. "Our offensive line did a good job and our defense played very well. "We improved overall as a team."

Coach Melvin started the following players on offense: senior Nic Lewis, center; senior Pat Burton and sophomore Brock Lauer, guards; senior Mark Scheetz and senior Lucas Bailey, tackles; junior Jared Cox, tight end; senior Nathan Broeckelman and senior Brian Juenemann, wide receivers; senior Chris Davis, fullback; senior Blake VanEaton, tailback and junior Logan Kats, quarterback.

Starting on defense for the Blue Jays were: senior Brett Thomson and senior Matt Engel, ends; junior Preston Herman, Scheetz and junior Zach Mannel, tackles; VanEaton, Cox and sophomore Zac Dreher, linebackers; Broeckelman, junior Todd Bolt and junior Travis Ray, defensive backs.

First quarter

Plainville kicked off to start the game and Bolt returned the ball to the Norton 40-yard line. After VanEaton plunged for four yards, Davis lost a yard. On third down, Kats went to the air. His pass was intercepted by junior defensive back Aaron Becker and he returned the ball to the Norton 30. Hachmeister tried the Norton line and Cox tackled him for no gain. After Hachmeister gained one yard, Aaron Becker carried for four yards before VanEaton dropped him to the turf. Senior running back Kennis Becker also made nothing against the ferocious Norton defense and the Blue Jays took over.

VanEaton ran 19 yards around right end for a first down on the 44. Davis got the next carry and he ran through a big hole in the right side of the line for a 56-yard Blue Jay touchdown. The extra points kick attempt by Davis was no good but Norton led 6-0 with 8:29 left.

Hachmeister returned Davis' kickoff to the 20 where VanEaton tackled him. Aaron Becker carried on first down and Cox tackled him for no gain. Becker ran around left end for an apparent first down but Plainville was penalized for holding. Kennis Becker gained one yard on two carries and Plainville punted into the stiff wind. The ball carried just to the Plainville 25.

On first down, Kats passed to Davis and he ran untouched into the end zone. Kats was tackled on a try for two extra points and it was 12-0 with 6:06 remaining in the first stanza.

Freshman J.D. Gall kicked off for Norton. Hachmeister returned the ball to the 20 where Brian Juenemann tackled him. Mark Scheetz and VanEaton wrapped Kennis Becker up for no gain. Aaron Becker attempted a sweep around left end but Cox broke through the line to throw him for a five yard loss.

Hachmeister tried to go around right end but Bolt tackled him after three yards. An illegal procedure penalty cost Plainville five yards. On fourth down, Cox came storming into the backfield to block the Cardinal punt.

Norton took over on the 3-yard line. Bolt bolted into the end zone from there. He was stopped on a two-point extra try but the Jays had extended their lead to 18-0 with 3:54 left.

Aaron Becker returned the kickoff to the 20 where Nathan Broeckelman made the tackle. Junior running back Aaron Dinkel gained two yards but Aaron Becker was stopped for no gain. Norton was whistled for a face mask penalty and the ball was moved to the Plainville 40. Juenemann tackled Hachmeister for no gain, then Engel did the same. VanEaton tackled Aaron

Becker after a five yard gain. Again, the Cardinals punted into the strong wind and, this time, the ball went backwards five yards to the 40.

Bolt made a great run to the Plainville 24. After an incomplete Kats pass, Stanley plunged for one yard up the middle. Bolt made a diving catch of a Kats pass on the 19.

Another pass was incomplete and Plainville took over. Aaron Becker ran for two yards before Travis Ray tackled him and the first quarter was history with Norton on top 18-0.

Second quarter

Kennis Becker earned Plainville's second first down of the game on a run up the middle before Bolt tackled him. He repeated the play but this time made nothing. On the next down, Hachmeister ran into the line on a counter play and found running room for a 70 yard touchdown. A run for extra points was stopped and Norton led 18-6 with 10:56 left.

Plainville kicked the ball on the ground on the kickoff and Stanley returned it to the Cardinal 45. VanEaton lost four yards but gained five the next down. Next, VanEaton ran around left end for a first down on the 30. Bolt got nothing but Kats passed against the wind to Cox for a fourth Blue Jay touchdown. The extra point kick by Davis was no good and Norton led 24-6 with 8:40 left in the first half.

Davis kicked off and Hachmeister returned the ball to the 26. A face mask penalty cost Norton five yards. Junior quarterback Toby Ruder ran the ball for the first time in the game but lost a yard to the furious Blue Jay defenders. Broeckelman tackled Aaron Becker after a five yard gain. A pass was incomplete and Plainville punted out of bounds on the 24.

VanEaton ran around left end for a first down on the 35, then picked up one yard over the right side of the line. On third down, VanEaton found running room over the right side and sprinted into the end zone for a touchdown. Bolt was tackled short of the goalline on a two-point try and Norton led 30-6 with 5:52 left.

Davis kicked off and senior Luke Brin returned the ball to the 40. On first down, the Cardinals fumbled and Stanley recovered on the 45. Bolt gained five yards on two carries, then gained nine more for a first down on the 31. A holding penalty cost Norton 10 yards. Davis was stopped for no gain. VanEaton ran for six yards as some rain began to fall.

Next, Kats passed to VanEaton on a screen pass, he got a great block from center Nic Lewis and weaved his way through the Cardinal defenders for a 35 yard touchdown. Davis kicked the extra point and it was 37-6 with 2:29 left in the half.

Davis kicked off and Plainville got the ball on the 30. On first down, the Cardinals fumbled and Engel pounced on the ball for the Jays on the Plainville 29. Both head coaches sent reserves into the game. Norton moved to the 10 and called time out with three seconds left. Davis attempted a field goal but it was wide right and Norton led 37-6 at halftime.

Third quarter

Gall kicked off for Norton to start the third period. Hachmeister returned the ball to the 25 where Bolt made the tackle. Broeckelman tackled Aaron



Norton senior tailback Blake VanEaton had a stellar offensive and defensive performance during the Blue Jays' 44-6 win over Plainville on Friday. He gained 155 yards on 12 carries and was also the leading tackler from his linebacker position. Above, he broke loose for one of his long gains after receiving a block from senior fullback Chris Davis

- Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

Becker after four yards. Hachmeister ran over the right side for a first down on the 37. Aaron Becker gained five yards before Thomson tackled him. VanEaton stopped Kennis Becker after two yards. Kennis Becker gained two more yards and it was fourth and one.

Ruder sneaked for a first down on the Plainville 48. Hachmeister gained two yards, then Zac Dreher tackled Aaron Becker for a two yard loss. VanEaton knocked down a pass attempt. Thomson cam roaring in to block the attempted punt and Dreher picked up the ball and returned it to the Plainville 38.

Kats ran the option and pitched to VanEaton who ran around right end for a first down on the 13. VanEaton gained three more yards, then scored on the next play. Norton was penalized for holding. Bolt ran to the 10, then to the 5 and then for a first down on the 3.

Next, Bolt plunged over the left side of the line for Norton's final touchdown. Davis kicked the extra point and Norton led 44-6 with 4:30 still remaining in the third quarter.

Officials and school administrators then made the decision to end the game due to the threatening weather.

Individual statistics

VanEaton had a great night on both sides of the ball. Not only was he leading rusher for the Blue Jays but he was also leading tackler from his linebacker position.

VanEaton rushed for 155 yards on 12 carries for a 12.9 yards per carry average. Other Norton backs and their yardage were: Davis, 3

for 55; Bolt, 10 for 47; Brad Nuzum, 2 for 5; Stanley, 1 for 9; Gall, 1 for 2; Connor Pfannenstiel, 1 for 4.

Norton pass receivers were: VanEaton, 1 for 35; Cox, 1 for 30; Davis, 1 for 25 and Bolt, 1 for 4.

Bolt had 1 kickoff return for 16 yards and Stanley had 1 for 15.

Davis kicked off 5 times for a 36.6 average and Gall kicked off 2 times for an average of 38.5.

Norton had no fumbles in the game and did not punt.

Hachmeister was leading rusher for Plainville with 74 yards on 8 carries. Kennis Becker gained 20 yards on 8 tries and Aaron Becker picked up 12 yards on 11 attempts.

VanEaton led tackles with 6 solos, 5 assists, 11 total, followed by: Jared Cox, 3 solos, 6 assists, 9 total; Nathan Broeckelman, 3 solos, 4 assists, 7 total; Travis Ray, 2 solos, 5 assists, 7 total; Zac Dreher, 2 solos, 3 assists, 5 total; Todd Bolt, 4 assists; Brian Juenemann, 2 solos, 2 assists, 4 total; Zach Mannel, 4 assists; Brett Thomson, 1 solo, 2 assists, 3 total; Matt Engel, 1 solo, 1 assist, 2 total; Preston Herman, 1 solo, 1 assist, 2 total; Aaron Husted, 2 assists; Mark Scheetz, 2 assists; Matt Stanley, 2 assists; Chris Davis, 1 assist; Brad Nuzum, 1 assist.

Next action

This is homecoming week for Norton and the Blue Jays will host Hill City at Travis Field on Friday in another Mid-Continent League game.

Kickoff will be at 7 p.m.

Norton is now 2-1 for the season after losing the opener 14-3 to No.1 state ranked and defending state champion Smith Center.

The Blue Jays outscored Trego Community 27-6 in WaKeeney last Friday.

Hill City lost 25-20 to Quinter in their opener, then lost 58-19 to Smith Center. On Friday night, they got their first win of the season by outscoring Osborne 26-14.

It was the Ringnecks' first homecoming win since 2003 and first win over Osborne since 2002. They rolled up 297 yards rushing on 53 carries for 5.6 yards per carry and passed for 74 yards for 371 total yards of offense against Osborne.

Junior running back Kenny Slattery rushed for 155 yards and scored touchdowns from 42 and 17 yards. Junior running back David Gerstner rushed for 74 yards and ran 12 yards and 5 yards for touchdowns.

On the negative side, the Ringnecks were penalized 170 yards on 18 penalties.

First year head coach Chris Shank has 13 returning lettermen. There are nine offensive and 10 defensive starters returning.

"Hill City has a better team this year," said coach Melvin. "Their new coach has given them a new attitude about playing the game. We'll have to play hard to beat them."

GAME STATISTICS

Norton		Plainville
8	First Downs	4
31-277	Yards Rushing	30-118
94	Yards Passing	0
371	Total Offense	118
4-7-1	Passes Completed	0-2-0
0-0	Punts	5-9.8
0-0	Fumbles Lost	2-2
4-35	Penalties	2-15

No wins for volleyball in tough quad at Atwood

By DICK BOYD

Coach Chuck Zimmerman's Norton Community High School varsity girls volleyball team competed in the tough Atwood Quad on Saturday and was unable to win any matches.

Norton lost to Atwood 11-25, 20-25, was outscored by No.4 state ranked Brewster 13-25, 12-25 and was beaten by Dundy County 25-23, 17-25, 19-25.

"We played against three good teams and all of them kept us off balance," said coach Zimmerman. "We only passed at a 1.5 clip for

the entire day, which means our setters had to go get the ball to set it most of the time. As a result, we were not able to mount an offense to give them back what they were giving us in spikes.

"This makes for long matches when we are constantly having to dig the spikes that the other teams are hitting at us while we are only able to give them free balls.

"The spikes we did get to hit when our passes were on target were, for the most part, in play. They were 81 percent, 90 percent and 84 percent, which is good. The

problem is we are not getting to hit enough of them. Again, this goes back to the total team passing. All our players must learn to focus each time they touch the ball and get it to the target as close as possible for us to start to be successful as a team.

"Our bright spot for the day was our serving. We served well all day with percentages all above 90 at 97, 93 and 92."

Next action

The Norton varsity plays Hoxie and Hill City today in Hoxie, beginning at 4 p.m.

High School Sports This Week



FOOTBALL:

Norton Blue Jays vs. Hill City Ringnecks (Homecoming) 7 p.m. Friday in Norton
 Norton Junior Varsity vs. Hill City 6 p.m. Monday in Hill City
 Northern Valley vs. Logan 7 p.m. in Logan

VOLLEYBALL:

Norton Lady Jays Varsity vs. Hoxie and Hill City 4 p.m. Today in Hoxie
 Norton C-Team vs. Colby and Smith Center 4:30 p.m. Thursday in Norton
 Norton C-Team vs. Hill City and Phillipsburg 8:30 a.m. Saturday in Hill City
 Norton C-Team vs. Hill City 5 p.m. Monday in Hill City
 Norton Lady Jay Varsity & Junior Varsity vs. Colby & Atwood 4:30 p.m. Tuesday in Norton
 Northern Valley Lady Huskies vs. Alma and Logan 5 p.m. Today in Alma
 Northern Valley Lady Huskies in Junior Varsity Tournament Saturday in Hill City
 Logan Lady Trojans vs. Alma and Northern Valley 5 p.m. Today in Alma
 Logan Lady Trojans in Osborne Round Robin 8 a.m. Saturday in Osborne
 Logan Lady Trojans vs. Palco and Western Plains 4 p.m. Tuesday in Logan

CROSS COUNTRY:

Norton Blue Jays in Hill City Invitational 5 p.m. Thursday in Hill City
 Norton Blue Jays in Oberlin Invitational 5 p.m. Tuesday in Oberlin
 Northern Valley Huskies JH/HS in Hill City Invitational 5 p.m. Thursday in Hill City

TENNIS:

Norton Lady Jay Junior Varsity vs. Goodland 3 p.m. Today at Goodland
 Norton Lady Jay Varsity in Trego Invitational 9 a.m. Saturday in WaKeeney
 Norton Lady Jay Junior Varsity in Phillipsburg Invitational 9 a.m. Saturday in Phillipsburg
 Norton Lady Jay Varsity vs. Colby 3 p.m. Tuesday in Colby