

# Blue Jays conclude another successful year

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The second season for Norton Community High School head football coach Lucas Melvin was even better than his successful first year as his "Fighting Blue Jays" tied for second in the tough Mid-Continent League, won the District championship, won the Bi-District championship and placed runner up in the Regional in compiling an impressive 8-3 record!

The Blue Jays had an outstanding offense with two backs, senior Todd Bolt and freshman Terrell Lane, each recording over 1,000 yards of all-purpose offense and senior quarterback Logan Kats passing for over 1,000 yards.

The defense was equally effective. Not including the season opener with three-time Class 2A state champion Smith Center, the Blue Jay defense limited opponents to an average of just 11.6 points per contest.

Norton traveled to Smith Center to open the season and was overpowered 60-0 by the Redmen, who have continued on unbeaten so far this season. Smith Center has won 53 straight games and has outscored opponents 804-6 this season for an average of 67 to .5 points per game. They will play Pittsburg Colgan for the state championship at 1 p.m. on Saturday at Lewis Field Stadium in Hays.

The Smith Center offense is a precision wishbone which is sometimes slowed by fumbles or penalties but the Redmen appeared to be in mid-season form against the Blue Jays with neither fumbles nor penalties causing them any grief.

Highlight of the game for Norton was a 75 yard run on a counter play by senior tailback Todd Bolt in the second quarter which carried to the Smith Center 1-yard-line but the Blue Jays were unable to dent the end zone. Smith Center recorded 461 yards of offense, most of it on the ground, and Norton had 121 total offensive yards.

Norton returned to the friendly confines of Travis Field for their 2007 home opener and the Blue Jays responded with a solid 27-6 win over Trego Community.

The visitors scored first but Norton tied it 6-6 after one quarter and Bolt "bolted" 85 yards on a punt return for a touchdown early in the second quarter to put the Blue Jays ahead for good. Lane threw a pass to senior wide receiver Wes Georgeson for a 50 yard touchdown and Kats passed to senior wide receiver Travis Ray for two extra points to put Norton ahead 20-6 at half-time.

Lane tallied from 35 yards out in the third quarter and senior kicker Kyle Edgett split the uprights for the extra point to make the final 27-6. Norton had 339 total yards of offense compared to 133 for Trego. Lane carried the ball 18 times for 159 yards and an 8.8 yard average. Georgeson caught 4 passes for 172 yards. Junior linebacker Zac Dreher was leading tackler with 8 total stops.

Norton played even better the next Friday night when the Blue Jays hosted Plainville in another Mid-Continent League contest and rolled to a 52-6 victory. For the second straight game, Bolt returned a punt for a touchdown; this time he scampered 41 yards. Bolt also scored three more touchdowns in the game and rushed for 97 yards on 10 carries for a 9.7 yard average. Lane gained 93 yards on 12 carries for a 7.7 yard average.

The gang-tackling Norton defense limited Plainville to 6 first downs and 53 yards rushing for a 1.5 yard average. Norton averaged 5.7 yards on 232 yards rushing, earned 18 first downs and totaled 343 yards of offense. Kats com-

pleted 5 of 8 passes for 111 yards. Dreher was leading tackler with 10 stops while Bolt had 7.

The Blue Jays were definitely on a roll as they traveled to Hill City the next Friday evening and returned with an almost identical 53-6 victory in their final 11-man game with the Ringnecks, who will switch to 8-man football next season. Kats passed for 169 yards and ran for 53 for 222 yards. He passed for 2 touchdowns, ran for another and intercepted a pass. Dreher led tackles again with 10.

Norton had a wake-up call the next Friday, however, when the Blue Jays traveled to Ellis for another MCL contest. The Railroaders came out fired up from the opening whistle and the Blue Jays were not ready. The result was a 13-6 half-time deficit for the visiting Jays and, while they played much better the second half, they could not make up for the first half and lost 13-12. Lane scored Norton's first half touchdown on a 100 yard kickoff return after the Railroaders had forged a 13-0 advantage. Lane suffered a concussion later and did not play in the second half.

Bolt scored Norton's final touchdown with no time left on the clock but a pass for a possible two extra points and a victory was no good. Norton had 239 total yards of offense and Ellis had 229. Bolt had 89 yards on 20 carries for a 4.5 yard average. Georgeson had a good receiving game, catching 4 passes for 65 yards. Kats completed 8 of 19 aerials for 116 yards. Dreher led in tackles again with 10.

Next it was time for Norton's homecoming and the Jays returned to Travis Field to entertain the Stockton Tigers in another league contest. The Tigers would probably not call it "entertained" since the Blue Jays ran rough shod over them. Norton built a 49-0 half-time lead, then turned it over to the reserves in the second half. The Cardinals scored twice after intermission to make the final 49-14.

Norton had the ball seven times in the first half and scored on every possession. Stockton had 2 first downs and 11 yards rushing after the first half. Bolt added to his touchdown total with 3 more and also had 2 pass interceptions. Kats had 1 touchdown and passed to Georgeson for another. Zach Mannel, Norton's 235 pound senior tackle, lived a lineman's dream when he got to carry the ball into the end zone for one of the Jays' touchdowns!

Bolt finished with 125 yards rushing on just 9 carries for a stellar 13.9 yard average.

It was time for District play and the Blue Jays faced challenges from Beloit, Phillipsburg and Oberlin. First, they met Beloit on the Trojans' home field. Norton was 4-2 and Beloit was 5-1, having lost only to unbeaten Sacred Heart of Salina in overtime. They featured an outstanding running back in Cas Spangler, who was leading the *Salina Journal* circulation area in all classes with 1,551 yards on 101 carries for a 15.3 yard average and 23 touchdowns.

The Blue Jays held Spangler to 118 yards on 22 carries for a 5.4 yard average and kept him out of the end zone as they won 32-14. Norton rolled up 357 yards of offense, recovered 2 fumbles and intercepted 2 Trojan passes. Kats ran for 2 touchdowns and passed for 1. He completed 10 of 15 passes for 142 yards. Lane gained 93 yards on 24 carries. Bolt and Dreher were leading tacklers with 10 each.

Next, it was to Phillipsburg in hopes of gaining revenge for last year's District loss to the Panthers at Travis Field. After a scoreless first quarter, Kats connected with Bolt for a 55 yard touchdown in

the second quarter and the Jays led 6-0 at intermission. Bolt intercepted a pass and sprinted 43 yards for Norton's second touchdown in the third quarter to make it 12-0 but the Panthers wouldn't go away. Norton had to stop them on the Blue Jay 2-yard-line later in the third quarter and the Panthers tallied in the fourth to cut the margin to 12-6. Phillipsburg drove into Norton territory late in the game but the Blue Jay defense was equal to the occasion and stopped them on the 20 as time ran out.

Bolt rushed for 83 yards on 12 carries for a 6.9 yard average as the Blue Jays rolled up 278 yards of offense. Kats was 6 of 11 passing for 114 yards to 5 different receivers. Dreher had a career night on defense with 16 tackles.

Norton hosted long-time rival Oberlin from the Northwest Kansas League in the Jays' final District game, which was also "Senior Night" for Norton. A 43-0 shutout extended Norton's record to 7-2 and earned the Blue Jays the District championship. Norton scored two of the first three times they had the ball in the first quarter, added another touchdown in the second quarter and scored the first three times they had the ball in the third quarter before turning it over to the junior varsity.

Bolt averaged a first down every time he touched the ball as he gained 162 yards on 15 attempts, scored three touchdowns and intercepted 2 passes. Lane rushed for 136 yards on 16 carries for an 8.5 yard average. The Blue Jays racked up 482 yards of total offense and held Oberlin to 132. Norton had 25 first downs and the Red Devils managed just 7.

After winning the District championship on a Thursday, Norton hosted Ellsworth the next Tuesday for the Bi-District title. This time Norton prevailed 32-12 in a contest against another foe with an outstanding running back. The Bearcats' Caleb Kruse entered the game with 1,969 yards on 227 carries for an 8.7 yard average. The Blue Jay defense held him to 134 yards on 33 carries for a 4 yard average.

Lane scored from 1 yard out with 2:17 left in the first quarter to put Norton on top 6-0 but Ellsworth tied the score at 6-all with a touchdown with 10:47 left in the half. Lane responded with a 50 yard touchdown run and a Kats pass to Georgeson for 2 extra points made it 14-6 at half-time. Bolt got the second half started by returning the kickoff 78 yards to paydirt and Kats scored with 1:37 left in the third quarter on an 8 yard scamper to extend the Norton lead to 26-6. Ellsworth scored with 9:04 remaining but Lane tallied from 5 yards out with time running out to extend the final victory margin to 20 points.

Lane rushed for 95 yards on 14 carries for a 6.8 yard average.

The next Saturday, Norton traveled to Scott City for the Regional contest with just 16 teams left in Class 3A competing for the state championship. The long trip was not very fruitful as the Jays could never get their offense untracked and the defense gave up too many yards in a 39-0 loss. Dreher had 12 tackles and Lane had 9.

Scott City continued on and lost 6-0 to Conway Springs in the Sectional contest.

The 10 seniors on this year's Norton eleven were: Logan Kats, quarterback, defensive back; Jared Cox, tight end, linebacker; Travis Ray, wide receiver, defensive back; Wes Georgeson, wide receiver, defensive lineman; Todd Bolt, tailback, defensive back; Aaron Husted, tight end, defensive back; Preston Herman, center, defensive end; Kyle Edgett, offensive guard, defensive tackle; Zach Mannel, offensive tackle, defensive tackle; Alex

Thomas, offensive tackle, defensive tackle.



Norton senior wide receiver Wes Georgeson's performance was the highlight of the Blue Jays' Class 3A Regional playoff loss at Scott City. Georgeson is pictured here pushing a would-be tackler aside to pick up extra yardage after catching another pass from senior quarterback Logan Kats. Georgeson caught six passes for 83 yards in the game and was also the leading receiver for Norton during the 2007 season.

—Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

Thomas, offensive tackle, defensive tackle.

#### Coach's comments

"I was very proud of the young men who were part of the 2007 Blue Jay football team," said Melvin. "I feel like we improved as a team and had some great victories along the way."

"We had some good senior leadership but were also able to play a lot of younger players throughout the year and many of them stepped up at key times. I really believe we could have played better at Scott City but, overall, we had a good season. These seniors have a great deal to be proud of and our underclassmen have a tremendous opportunity to build on this season."

"Many thanks to my assistant coaches Kevin Jilka, Todd Fulton, David Stover and Jason Jones who do such a wonderful job of working with our young men. Thanks to our managers, the school faculty and administration, the parents, the media, our stats man Kirk Foley and Ray Hildebrand and his crew who keep the fields in good condition and many others I am sure I am forgetting. There is so much that goes into a football season and all of these people and more make it happen and make it special."

"As far as next year is concerned, we want to be better. That is our goal and that is what we are working towards."

#### Team season statistics

For the season, Norton outscored opponents by totaling 304 points while limiting opponents to 176 for an average victory of 27.6 to 16. In games, other than the Smith Center contest, Norton averaged winning by 30.4 to 11.6.

The Blue Jays rushed for 2,211 yards and passed for 1,153 yards for total offense of 3,364 yards. This is an average of 201 rushing yards, 104.8 passing yards and 305.8 total yards of offense per game.

The Norton defense allowed opponents 1,742 yards rushing, 780 yards passing and 2,522 total yards. This is an average of just 158.4 yards rushing, 70.9 yards passing and 229.3 yards of total offense per game.

The Blue Jay defense limited teams to just 4.2 yards per rushing attempt throughout the season while the Norton offense averaged 5.1 yards per rush.

The 2007 squad averaged 12.3 first downs per game while limiting opponents to 10.7 first

downs.

Norton lost only 9 fumbles in the 11 games for an average of less than 1 per contest. The Blue Jays averaged 22.1 yards on kickoff returns and 16.7 yards on punt returns. Norton also had an excellent 19 pass interceptions.

#### Individual statistics

Leading tackler again this season for the Norton defense was junior linebacker Zac Dreher with 85 solos and 24 assists. The team counts each assist as one-half a tackle, giving him a total of 97 stops for the 11-game season or an average of 8.8 per game.

Second high on the tackles chart was freshman linebacker Terrell Lane with 50 solos, 14 assists for 57 total. Third high was senior defensive back Todd Bolt with 47 solos, 12 assists for 53 total. Coming in a close fourth was junior linebacker Matt Stanley with 42 solos, 18 assists for 51 total.

They were followed by Preston Herman, 31 solos, 16 assists, 39 total; Travis Ray, 31 solos, 13 assists, 37.5 total; Jared Cox, 31, solos, 5 assists, 33.5 total; Logan Kats, 27 solos, 10 assists, 32 total; Brock Lauer, 23 solos, 15 assists, 30.5 total; Zane Perez, 22 solos, 11 assists, 27.5 total; Zach Mannel, 14 solos, 9 assists, 18.5 total; Brad Nuzum, 15 solos, 7 assists, 18.5 total; J.D. Gall, 13 solos, 2 assists, 14 total; John Van Doren, 10 solos, 4 assists, 12 total; Alex Thomas, 6 solos, 7 assists, 9.5 total; Ashton Draper, 9 solos; Landon Hamel, 6 solos, 2 assists, 7 total; Connor Pfannenstiel, 6 solos, 1 assist, 6.5 total; Tyler Cook, 4 solos, 2 assists, 5 total; Jeremy Sproul, 4 solos, 1 assist, 4.5 total; Kasey Nichols, 4 solos, 1 assist, 4.5 total; Aaron Husted, 4 solos, 1 assist, 4.5 total; Kyle Edgett, Casey Robison, 2 total each; Kaid McKenna, 1.5 total; Spencer Shirk, Zeb Lynd, Jesse Gallentine, Brett Terrell, Kyle Mindrup, Nish Millan, Robert Derauf, 1 solo each; Billy Broeckelman, 1 assist.

Bolt led the Norton defense with 7 pass interceptions for 136 yards and an average of 19.4 yards per interception. Two of his thefts went for touchdowns. Ray had 4 interceptions and Lane had 3. Ashton Draper and Landon Hamel each intercepted 2 aerials and Logan Kats had 1.

Lane led the team in fumble recoveries with 3, followed by Edgett, Perez, 2 each and Stanley, Herman, Lauer, 1 each.

Bolt was the leader in all purpose offensive yards. He gained

848 yards rushing on 136 attempts for 6.2 yards per carry and 16 touchdowns. He caught 7 passes for 139 yards and 1 touchdown and averaged 12.6 yards per reception. He also returned 10 kickoff returns for 190 yards and a 19 yard average and 1 touchdown and returned 10 punts for 219 yards and a 21.9 yard average and 2 touchdowns. His 7 pass interceptions for 136 yards bring his total offense to 1,532 yards.

Lane was second leading in all purpose yards with a total of 1,139. He rushed for 755 yards on 134 attempts for an average of 5.6 yards per carry. He scored 7 touchdowns. Lane caught 4 passes for 67 yards and a 16.8 yard average. He returned 10 kickoffs for 276 yards and a 27.6 yard average and 1 touchdown. Lane had 3 pass interceptions for 41 yards and a 13.7 yard average.

Junior fullback Stanley was third leading rusher with 189 yards on 38 carries for a 5 yards per carry average and scored 2 touchdowns.

Senior wide receiver Wes Georgeson was leading pass receiver with 31 catches for 564 yards and an average of 18.2 yards per catch. He had 4 receptions for touchdowns. Georgeson also had 5 yards rushing, making his total of 569 yards third high in all purpose yards.

Senior wide receiver Cox was second high in pass receptions with 8 for 163 yards and a 20.4 yard average and 2 touchdowns. Bolt was third high with his 7 catches for 139 yards and senior wide receiver Travis Ray was fourth high with 6 catches for 81 yards and 1 touchdown, despite not playing a full season due to injury.

Senior quarterback Kats had an outstanding season passing. He completed 65 of 131 attempts for 1,103 yards and 8 touchdowns. He averaged 17 yards per completion. He also rushed for 171 yards for a total of 1,274 yards passing and rushing.

Bolt punted 35 times for 1,146 yards and a 32.7 yard average. J.D. Gall punted 4 times for 125 yards and a 31.3 yard average.

Edgett was successful on 10 of 23 extra point kicks and Husted was 2 for 2. Gall kicked off 22 times for 823 yards and a 37.4 yard average. Lane kicked off 15 times for 644 yards and a 42.9 yard average. Edgett kicked off 5 times for 177 yards and a 35.4 yard average.

## Norton seventh grade boys rattle Osborne by 47-10 tally

Here is a recap of the Norton seventh grade boys' game against Osborne.

**Nov. 16 vs. Osborne (home)**  
Norton 47, Osborne 10

Coach Myers had this to say: "This was a game where we could play a lot of kids and work on quite a few different things."

The win moved the seventh graders' record to 4-1 on the sea-

son. John Renner led the offensive charge with 14 points.

Statistically:  
**Field goals attempted/made/percentage**

Jacob Brooks - 6, 3, 50; John Renner - 10, 7, 70; Dalton Miller - 6, 4, 67; Carson McKenna - 4, 1, 25; Cassius Dole - 2, 1, 50; John Risewick - 2, 1, 50; Ryan Bainter

- 1, 1, 100; Dylan Sprigg - 4, 2, 50; Treven Rossi - 3, 0, 00; Lucas Engel - 2, 0, 00; Jayen Colip - 4, 0, 00; Andrew Ellis - 4, 2, 50; Austin Duscher - 1, 0, 00

**Team - 52 attempts, 22 made, 42 percent; Osborne - 25 attempted, 4 made, 16 percent.**

**Foul shots attempted/made/percentage**  
McKenna - 2, 2, 100.

Team - Norton - 2, 2, 100; Osborne - 8, 2, 25

**Individual scoring**  
Brooks - 6; Renner - 14; Miller - 9; McKenna - 4; Dole - 2; Risewick - 2; Bainter - 2; Sprigg - 4; Ellis - 4.

**Rebounds**  
Offensive/defensive/total  
Brooks - 2, 1, 3; Renner - 2, 3, 5; Miller - 2, 1, 3; McKenna - 0,

1, 1; Dole - 1, 1, 2; Bainter - 0, 1, 1; Sprigg - 0, 1, 1

Team - Norton 7 offensive, 9 defensive, total 16; Osborne - 2 offensive, 8 defensive, total 10.

**Steals**  
Brooks 2; Miller 6; McKenna 4; Dole 1; Risewick 1; Lane Archer 2; Bainter 1; Rossi 1; Engel 1; Ellis 1. Total 20. Osborne 2

There was no jayvee game.

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