

# VICTORY!

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The Norton Community High School football team has had some close games with Smith Center in recent years but has been unable to beat the Redmen since 2003 until Friday night at Travis Field in Norton when head coach Lucas Melvin's Blue Jays put together a dominating 41-20 victory!



Norton senior tailback Terrell Lane avoids a Smith Center player to enter the end zone standing up for his first touchdown during the Blue Jays' 41-20 win over the Redmen on Friday night at Travis Field. Terrell had a career night, scoring five touchdowns and rushing for 276 yards.

Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

Norton's last win over Smith Center was by a 17-8 score in Smith Center and the Redmen started a nation-leading win streak after that. The streak reached 79 straight victories and was broken in the Class 2A state finals last season in a 20-12 overtime loss to Centralia.

This season, the Redmen have moved up to Class 3A. They lost 19-14 to an outstanding Phillipsburg eleven in week two and entered this Friday's game 3-1 for the season. After the big win, the Blue Jays are 5-0.

It was evident from the start of the game, that Norton was fighting mad over the previous losses and determined to win this year.

After kicking off to the visitors and forcing the famed Smith Center wishbone offense to a three-and-out, Norton moved quickly down the field to score. Senior tailback, defensive back Terrell Lane returned the Redman punt to the Norton 42.

It took just three plays for Norton to score. Lane ran 43 yards to the Smith Center 15, running back Trey Millan tacked on 5 yards and Lane avoided several would-be tacklers as he waltzed 10 yards into the end zone! Caleb Laughlin's kick gave Norton the early 7-0 lead with 8:57 left in the first period.

Smith Center answered when Kale Newell returned Laughlin's kickoff to the Norton 35. The Redmen then surprised Norton by mixing passes with their usually exclusive run game. The strategy paid off as quarterback Alex Hobelmann completed an 18-yard pass to Nathan Cox, who made a diving catch on the Norton 14.

After a series of penalties on both sides, Hobelmann completed a 21-yard touchdown pass to Newell. A pass to Cox for two points gave the Redmen a brief 8-7 lead with 4:44 left.

Jacob Brooks returned the kickoff to the Norton 38 and two plays later Lane was off on a 64 yard touchdown run! The extra point was no good but the Jays led 13-8 with 3:50 left in the first period.

Smith Center fought back on the ground with a drive deep into Norton territory but reverted to the passing game and Norton defensive back Tye Nickell intercepted on the Norton 7-yard-line!

Norton was three-and-out and the Blue Jay punt went out of bounds on the Norton 26. The "Blue Swarm" defense along with several Smith Center penalties turned the pigskin back over to Norton on their 29-yard-line.

Lane got the ball again, found a great hole on the right side of the line and scampered 71 yards for his third touchdown of the evening! The extra point kick was no good but Norton led 19-8 with 6:51 left in the first half.

Laughlin kicked the ball into the end zone. Smith Center responded with their best drive of the game, going 80 yards to score. Newell ran the last two yards but the run for two extra points was stuffed by the Blue Jay defense, making the score 19-14 with 2:01 left.

Norton came right back to score again before intermission. Brooks returned the kickoff to the Smith Center 47 and, with Lane making most of the yards, the Blue Jays scored again with just 21 seconds left in the half. Quarterback Spencer Shirk sneaked into the end zone from 2 yards out and ran a keeper for 2 extra points to extend the lead to 27-14.

The third quarter was decisive for Norton, who scored two more touchdowns while shutting down the Redmen's wishbone offense.

Lane apparently scored from 41 yards out on Norton's first possession of the second half but it was called back due to a penalty. Lane got the call again and repeated the feat, this time from the 26-yard-line! Laughlin's kick extended the Blue Jay lead to 34-14 with 9:26 left.

The Norton defense was still equal to the occasion and forced Smith Center to another three-and-out. Lane received the punt and returned it 55 yards for his fifth touchdown of the game! Laughlin's kick made it 41-14 with 7:37 left in the third quarter.

The two teams traded punts before the third quarter ended with the same 41-14 score.

Smith Center finally scored again when they put together a 60-yard-drive that ended when Zach Eaton tallied from 1 yard out. The run for extra points was stuffed by Norton, making the score 41-20 with 3:38 left. Norton was driving downfield again when the final whistle sounded and the Blue Jays had captured a rare 41-20 victory over the Smith Center Redmen and legendary head coach Roger Barta!

**Coach's comments**

"Our offensive line did a tremendous job of blocking and Terrell Lane ran very well," said coach Melvin. "Our defense also played well except for their first scoring drive when we let them convert two fourth downs. Our pass defense was also a little weak on that drive. The rest of the time our defense played well."

Coach Melvin said his team did nothing different this year in the way of strategy against the Redmen.

"We had no necessity to pass because we were running the ball so well," he said. "All our players wanted this game and we just went out and executed well. We wanted this game badly and practiced like it and played like it."

"We have to play this way in every upcoming game because we have a lot of tough games left."

The Smith Center wishbone offense is known for eating up lots of yardage on the ground and passing little if any. The Norton defense forced them to alter their strategy somewhat and Terrell Lane's performance allowed the Blue Jays to outrush them.

Norton had 353 rushing yards and completed 1 pass for 2 yards for 355 yards of offense. Smith Center had 222 rushing yards and 73 passing for 295 total yards.

Lane ran for 276 yards on 15 carries for an average of 18.4 yards per carry!

Norton punted just twice and Smith Center punted four times. Norton was penalized 7 times for 60 yards and the Redmen were penalized 11 times for 88 yards.

Norton quarterback Spencer Shirk carried the ball 12 times for 64 yards and a 5.3 yard average. Other Norton ball carriers were: Jeremy Sproul, 9 for 8; Trey Millan, 1 for 5; Brett Terrell, 1 for 1.

Jacob Brooks had 2 kickoff returns for 47 yards and Lane had 1 for 16 yards.

Laughlin had 7 kickoffs for a 42.3 yard average.

Leading ball carriers for Smith Center were Kale Newell, 12 for 74 yards; Aaron McNary, 8 for 66 and Zach Eaton, 16 for 62.

**Starting lineup**

Coach Melvin started the following players on the offensive line: senior Ryan Blecha, 185 pounds, left tackle; senior Landon Keiswetter, 190 pounds, left guard; senior Kaid McKenna, 185 pounds, center; senior Luke

Ninemire, 215 pounds, right guard; senior Justin Griffith, 190 pounds, right tackle; junior Dillon McConney, 150 pounds, wide receiver; senior Billy Broeckelman, 170 pounds, wide receiver; senior Dakota Dreher, 170 pounds, tight end; senior Spencer Shirk, 180 pounds, quarterback; junior Trey Millan, 160 pounds, fullback; senior Terrell Lane, 220 pounds, tailback.

On defense for the Blue Jays were: Dakota Dreher, senior Jeremy Sproul, 205 pounds, ends; Luke Ninemire, Justin Griffith, tackles; senior Rylee Stanley, 155 pounds, nose guard; Landon Keiswetter, Kaid McKenna, Terrell Lane, linebackers; Billy Broeckelman, Spencer Shirk, cornerbacks; junior Tye Nickell, free safety.

**Tackles**

Kaid McKenna was leading tackler once again with 12 solos, 8 assists for 20 total tackles. Landon "Tug" Keiswetter was right behind him with 10 solos, 8 assists, 18 total; followed by Spencer Shirk, 10 solos, 3 assists, 13 total; Dakota Dreher, 5 solos, 3 assists, 8 total; Billy Broeckelman, 4 solos, 3 assists, 7 total; Luke Ninemire, 3 solos, 4 assists, 7 total; Tye Nickell, 4 solos, 1 assist, 5 total; Rylee Stanley, 3 solos, 2 assists, 5 total; Ryan Blecha, 2 solos, 2 assists, 4 total; Brett Terrell, 3 solos, 1 assist, 4 total; Terrell Lane, 2 solos; Carson McKenna, 2 assists; Trey Millan, 1 solo, 1 assist, 2 total; Jeremy Sproul, 1 solo, 1 assist, 2 total; Jacob Brooks, 1 assist; Justin Griffith, 1 assist; Caleb Laughlin, 1 solo; Casey Temmel, 1 solo; Jordan Wahlmeier, 1 assist.

**First quarter**

Norton kicked off and Kale Newell returned to the 22 where Carson McKenna and Jeremy Sproul tackled him. Derek McNary gained 2 and Spencer Shirk tackled him. McNary ran again and gained 6 before Landon "Tug" Keiswetter and Kaid McKenna stopped him. "Tug" threw D. McNary for a 1 yard loss and Smith Center punted.

Terrell Lane returned the punt to the Norton 42. Lane ran to the Smith Center 15, Trey Millan gained 5 yards and Lane scored from 10 yards out. It was 7-0 with 8:57 left after Caleb Laughlin split the uprights.

Newell made a good return of McLaughlin's kickoff to the Norton 35. Newell ran to the 26 where Rylee Stanley and Dakota Dreher tackled him. Zach Eaton got nothing. Illegal procedure cost the Redmen 5 yards but Alex Hobelmann passed to Nathan Cox and he made a diving catch on the Norton 14. After a double penalty, the Redmen had a second and 17 on the 21.

Tye Nickell tackled D. McNary after 5 but illegal procedure cost the Redmen 5. Hobelmann's pass was broken up by Nickell and Billy Broeckelman but the next down he passed 21 yards to Newell for a touchdown. A pass to Nathan Cox for 2 points put Smith

Center ahead 8-7 with 4:44 left.

Jacob Brooks returned the kickoff to the Norton 38. On second down, Lane weaved through the Smith Center defense, broke at least three tackles and powered into the end zone for a 64-yard touchdown! The extra point kick was not good but Norton led 13-8 with 3:50 left.

Laughlin's kickoff was returned by Truitt Kuhlmann and kicker Laughlin made the tackle on the Redmen 38. Broeckelman tackled A. McNary after 6 and "Tug", Kaid McKenna, Luke Ninemire and Brett Terrell ganged up to stop Zach Eaton after 3. D. McNary got a first down on the Smith Center 49 before Spencer Shirk tackled him. Newell got 7 more and Shirk and Stanley made the stop. Eaton gained 2; K. McKenna and Ninemire made the tackle. Eaton gained 3 for a first down.

Another Smith Center gain came back on an illegal block to the Redmen 46. A. McNary ran to the Norton 35. D. McNary lost 2 as K. McKenna and "Tug" made the stop.

The first quarter ended 13-8 in Norton's favor.

**Second quarter**

Smith Center had another gain brought back due to holding. They were on the Norton 41 and Hobelmann passed but Broeckelman broke it up. Next down, Tye Nickell intercepted a Hobelmann pass on the Norton 7-yard-line!

Lane gained 2, Sproul 1 and Shirk recovered a Norton fumble. Lane punted for the only time in the half and the ball went out of bounds on the Norton 26. A. McNary gained 2 and D. McNary made a short gain and was tackled by Dakota Dreher. A holding penalty brought the ball back to the 35. Hobelmann got loose for what appeared to be a big gain but holding brought the ball back to the Norton 41.

"Tug" stopped D. McNary for no gain but Hobelmann completed a pass to Newell on the Norton 29. A fourth down pass was incomplete, and Norton took over.

Lane found a big hole created by Norton's right guard and right tackle and sprinted 71 yards to paydirt! The extra kick was not good but Norton led 19-8 with 6:51 left.

Laughlin boomed the kickoff into the end zone but Smith Center responded with their best touchdown drive of the night. A. McNary gained 6; Broeckelman made the tackle. A. McNary barely got a first down on the 30. A block-in-the-back penalty brought a long run by Eaton back to the Smith Center 36. Nickell and Terrell held Newell to 1. Nathan Cox caught a pass for a first down on the Norton 42 and Shirk made the tackle. Lane, Stanley and Terrell stopped Newell after 3. Eaton ran to the 36 and a face mask penalty against Norton moved the ball to the 23.

Newell ran to the 10 and then to the 7 before Trey Millan and Dreher stopped him. Norton was offside and penalized half the distance to the goal on the 4. D. McNary plunged to the 2 and

Newell ran in for the touchdown. A whole host of Norton defenders hit Eaton and kept him out of the end zone on the extra points attempt, leaving the score at 19-14 with 2:01 left in the half.

Jacob Brooks broke into the open on the kickoff and was finally downed on the Redmen 47. Sproul gained 5, then Lane made several good gains to the 9. Norton lost 5 for being offside but Shirk ran the bootleg to the 2 and, next down, he sneaked into the end zone. Shirk ran the keeper for 2 extra points, extending the Norton lead to 27-14 with 21 seconds left in the half.

Laughlin made a squib kick which was recovered by Smith Center on their 43 but they ran out of time before they could make any progress.

**Third quarter**

Smith Center kicked off to start the second half. Lane returned the ball to the Norton 39. Sproul gained 5, Shirk ran a keeper for a first down on the Redmen 47, Lane gained 4, Sproul got 2 and Lane ran 41 yards for an apparent touchdown. A blocking-in-the-back penalty brought the pigskin back to the 26.

Never fear, Lane just ran the ball back into the end zone! Laughlin's kick made it 34-14 with 9:26 left in the third period.

After Laughlin's kickoff was returned by Kuhlmann to the 19, the Norton defense was tougher than ever after the halftime break. D. McNary got 3 before Dreher, and "Tug" made the stop, A. McNary was met by a whole host of Blue Jay defenders for a 2 yard loss! A desperation third down pass was incomplete and the Redmen punted.

Lane gathered in the punt and sprinted down the Norton sideline 55 yards for his fifth touchdown of the night! McLaughlin split the uprights, extending the Blue Jay lead to 41-14 with 7:37 left.

McLaughlin booted the kickoff into the end zone for the second time. D. McNary gained 6 and Shirk tackled him. Eaton got 2, Norton was offside and Smith Center got a first down on their 34. A. McNary was stopped for no gain, Smith Center fumbled and recovered for 1 yard gain and

Hobelmann was sacked by K. McKenna!

The Redmen went back to punt and the punter temporarily fumbled the punt snap. Norton was penalized for hitting the punter in the helmet but the penalty didn't give Smith Center a first down and they punted. The ball rolled dead on the Norton 13.

After Shirk gained 7 on a keeper, Norton was unable to get a first down and Lane punted for the second time in the game. The ball carried to the Smith Center 45.

On first down, A. McNary got the ball. Dreher made the hit of the night and McNary lost 3 yards! D. McNary got the call next and "Tug" lit him up for a 2 yard loss to end the third quarter with Norton enjoying a 41-14 advantage.

**Fourth quarter**

The final period didn't start any better for the Redmen. After losing 10 yards on 2 offside penalties, a flat pass netted nothing as "Tug" made the tackle. They punted and Lane was tackled as he caught the ball on the Norton 46.

On third down, Shirk ran a keeper for 16 yards for a first down on the Smith Center 40. The Redmen were able to hold the Blue Jays and took over on their 40. Eaton made a good run to the Norton 45 where Broeckelman and Ryan Blecha made the tackle. K. McKenna and "Tug" limited Eaton to 1, illegal procedure cost Smith Center 5. Newell gained 15 yards to the Norton 33, Eaton ran to the 28 and Newell ran to the 10, then to the 6 where Dreher and Ninemire made the stop. Kuhlmann plunged to the 1 and Eaton ran in for the touchdown.

K. McKenna hit Newell head-on in his try for two extra points, stopping him short of the goalline! That made the score 41-20 with 3:38 left in the game.

Smith Center squib kicked the ball and Justin Griffith covered the ball on the Redmen 49.

Norton drove down the field for two first downs before the final gun and the 41-20 victory!

**Next action**

Norton has an open date this Friday and will begin District play Friday, October 15 at Goodland.

**GAME STATISTICS**

Norton		Smith Center
8	First Downs	9
353	Yards Rushing	222
2	Yards Passing	73
355	Total Yards	295
1-1-0	Passes Completed	6-11-1
0-1	Fumbles Lost	0-1
2-25	Punts	4-34.25
7-60	Penalties	11-88

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**High School Sports This Week**



Norton Blue Jays



Northern Valley Huskies



Logan Trojans

**FOOTBALL:**

Norton Junior Varsity Blue Jays vs. Smith Center . . . . . 6 p.m. Monday in Smith Center  
Northern Valley Huskies vs. Victoria . . . . . 7 p.m. Friday in Victoria  
Logan Trojans vs. Thunder Ridge . . . . . 7 p.m. Friday in Kensington

**VOLLEYBALL:**

Norton Lady Jays V, JV vs. Trego, Smith Center . . . . . 5 p.m. Today in WaKeeney  
Norton Lady Jays in Scott City Invitational . . . . . 9 a.m. Saturday in Scott City  
Norton Lady Jays V, JV vs. Logan, Golden Plains . . . . . 4 p.m. Tuesday in Logan  
Norton C-team vs. Atwood, Colby, St. Francis . . . . . 10 a.m. Saturday in Atwood  
Northern Valley Lady Huskies vs. Golden Plains, Triplains . . . . . 4 p.m. Today in Rexford  
Northern Valley Lady Huskies vs. Stockton, Thunder Ridge . . . . . 4 p.m. Tuesday in Alma  
Logan Lady Trojans vs. Palco, Thunder Ridge . . . . . 4 p.m. Today in Kensington  
Logan Lady Trojans in Cougar Invitational . . . . . 9 a.m. Saturday in Mankato  
Logan Lady Trojans vs. Norton, Golden Plains . . . . . 4 p.m. Tuesday in Logan

**CROSS COUNTRY:**

Norton Cross Country V, JV in Mid-Continent League Meet . . . . 4:30 p.m. Thursday in Phillipsburg  
Northern Valley Huskies V, JV in Phillipsburg Meet . . . . . 4:30 p.m. Thursday in Phillipsburg

**TENNIS:**

Norton Lady Jays in Class 3A Regional Tournament . . . . 11 a.m. Friday, 10 a.m. Sat. in WaKeeney