

Blue Jays beat Cimarron in Bi-District game

By DICK BOYD

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The Norton Community High School football team blocked very well, senior tailback Terrell Lane ran exceptionally well and the defense played lights out as the Blue Jays from Norton defeated the visiting Blue Jays from Cimarron 68-14 on Tuesday night at Travis Field to win the Class 3A Bi-District championship!

Lane took advantage of gaping holes in the Cimarron line to rush for his career record of 320 yards and he scored five touchdowns along the way! Lane's yardage is even more amazing when you realize it was gained in just the first half plus one more play in the second half.

Just three minutes into the third quarter with Norton leading 56-0, Blue Jay head coach Lucas Melvin put in the reserves for the rest of the contest.

Norton ended the game with 505 yards rushing, 74 passing for 579 total yards.

Cimarron, who had minus one yard of offense at halftime, finished with 156 yards rushing, 2 passing for 158 total.

Lane scored from 27 yards out and senior kicker Derek Laughlin added the extra point to make it 7-0 with 9:00 left in the first quarter. Senior quarterback-defensive back Spencer Shirk intercepted a Cimarron pass on their 33 and, two plays later, ran 33 yards for another touchdown.

The extra point try was no good but Norton led 13-0 with 7:24 left.

After the kickoff, Cimarron got one first down before defensive back Billy Broeckelman intercepted another pass and made a good runback to the Cimarron 32.

A blocking in the back penalty took the ball back to the 43 but Lane scored from there. The extra point kick made it 20-0 with 5:18 left.

After another three-and-out and punt by Cimarron, they recovered a Norton fumble on the Blue Jay 28. But, the rock solid Norton defense held and took over on the 29. Lane sprinted through a good hole 71 yards to the end zone. The extra point kicked extended the Norton lead to 27-0 with 1:06 left in the first quarter.

Junior defensive back Tye Nickell intercepted another Cimarron pass and returned the ball to the Cimarron 20. The visitors' defense held and Laughlin kicked a 33 yard field goal to make it 30-0 with 10:01 left in the half.

After another three-and-out and punt by Cimarron, Norton marched down the field for another score. This time Lane ran 20 yards to paydirt, the extra point kick missed and it was 36-0 with 5:57 left.

The Norton defense held again and the Blue Jays drove for another score. This time Nickell ran in from 8 yards out. The extra point kick missed again but it was 42-0 with 2:22 remaining in the first half.

Norton had one more chance to score before intermission but a field goal attempt was no good and the first half ended with Norton leading 42-0.

Cimarron kicked off to start the second half and Lane got loose on the first play from scrimmage for his final carry of the night.

The extra point kick by Laughlin made it 49-0 with 11:45 left in the third quarter. The next time Norton got the ball, Shirk completed a 21 yard touchdown pass to senior tight end Dakota Dreher. The extra point kick made the score 56-0 with 8:56 left.

After the kickoff, Cimarron fumbled and freshman Tanner Furbush recovered on the Cimarron 7-yard line. Sophomore running back Jacob Brooks scored from 10 yards out. A pass for two extra points was incomplete and it was 62-0 with 8:23 left in the third period.

After the kickoff, Cimarron moved downfield against the junior varsity and scored when Alex Neuschafer ran 20 yards and Nate Baublits kicked the extra point with 6:07 left in the third quarter.

On the second play after the ensuing kickoff, junior running back Trey Millan ran 67 yards for another Norton touchdown. A pass



Norton senior tailback Terrell Lane, No. 1, had a career night rushing in the 68-14 Bi-District victory over Cimarron on Tuesday in Norton. In a little over one half of play, Lane ran for 320 yards! This photo shows him breaking into the open for one of his five touchdowns while his teammates clear the way with very efficient blocking. The Norton players who can be identified, in addition to Lane, are Landon Keiswetter, No. 62; Ryan Blecha, No. 51; Tye Nickell, No. 5; Dillon McConney, No. 11 and Justin Griffith, No. 79.

—Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

for two points was incomplete, making the score 68-7 with 5:23 left.

With 7:58 remaining in the game, Anthony Price scored from 25 yards out and the extra point kick by Baublits made the final score 68-14.

In the latter stages of the game, Norton was playing mostly freshmen.

Coach's comments

"We played well; we were quicker and more aggressive than they were," said coach Melvin. "They were 6-3 so they had won some games.

"Forty-six of our young men were able to play in the game so this was an opportunity that many in the state don't have at this time in the season. Hopefully, our players will take advantage of this extra playing time in the playoffs and continue to get better."

Starting lineup

Coach Melvin started the following players on offense: 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; senior Brett Terrell, 160 pounds, fullback; senior Terrell Lane, 220 pounds, tailback.

Starting on defense for the Blue Jays were: Ryan Blecha, senior Rylee Stanley, 155 pounds, ends; Justin Griffith, senior Josh Asbury, 220 pounds, Luke Ninemire, tackles; Landon Keiswetter, Kaid McKenna, Brett Terrell, linebackers; Spencer Shirk, Billy Broeckelman, Terrell Lane, defensive backs.

Statistics

Nine different backs carried the ball for Norton. In addition to Terrell Lane's 320 yards on 10 carries for an average of 32 yards per carry, the other Blue Jay ball carriers were: Spencer Shirk, 7 for 49; Tye Nickell, 4 for 19; Brett Terrell, 3 for 19; Jacob Brooks, 2 for 17; Trey Millan, 3 for 68; Tanner Furbush, 4 for 4; Austin Hager, 4 for 19; Toby Nickell, 4 for minus 10.

Spencer Shirk completed 5 of 13 passes for 66 yards. Jordan Wahlmeier completed 2 of 4 for 8 yards. Receivers were: Dakota Dreher, 3 for 33; Billy Broeckelman, 1 for 14; Jacob Brooks, 1 for 19; Trey Millan, 1 for 6; Carson McKenna, 1 for 2.

Caleb Laughlin kicked off 10 times for a 50.7 yards average. Austin Hager kicked off 2 times for a 43 yard average.

Trey Millan returned 1 kickoff for 17 yards and Tanner Furbush returned 1 for 60 yards.

Leading rusher for Cimarron was Nate Baublits with 61

yards on 13 carries.

Tackles

A total of 31 Norton players made at least one of the solo tackles or assists and a season high 89 tackles were made by the Blue Jays.

Kaid McKenna was the leader with 6 solos, 5 assists, 11 total. He was followed by Landon "Tug" Keiswetter, 5 solos, 4 assists, 9 total; Justin Griffith, 3 solos, 2 assists, 5 total; Jared Bohl, 3 solos, 1 assist, 4 total; Carson McKenna, 3 solos, 1 assist, 4 total; Luke Ninemire, 3 solos, 1 assist, 4 total; Treven Rossi, 3 solos, 1 assist, 4 total; Robert Blecha, 1 solo, 2 assists, 3 total; Ryan Blecha, 1 solo, 2 assists, 3 total; Jacob Brooks, 3 solos; Taylor Meder, 2 solos, 1 assist, 3 total; John Risewick, 2 solos, 1 assist, 3 total; Josh Asbury, 2 solos; Billy Broeckelman, 2 assists; Damien Davis, 2 solos; Terrell Lane, 1 solo, 1 assist, 2 total; Trevor Lewis, 1 solo, 1 assist, 2 total; Trey Millan, 2 solos; Cole Renner, 2 assists; Rylee Stanley, 2 solos; Justin Waggoner, 2 solos; Eli Bozarth, 1 assist; Kurt Douglas, 1 assist; Andrew Ellis, 1 assist; Kolton Harting, 1 solo; Caleb Laughlin, 1 solo; Toby Nickell, 1 solo; Tye Nickell, 1 assist; Isaac Schaefer, 1 solo; Cody Temmel, 1 assist.

Honored students

Honored after the first quarter was Tawni Griffey, Norton's state champion tennis player who had a perfect 31-0 record this season. She was introduced with her parents.

Honored at halftime were members of the Norton state champion cross country girls team and the Norton boys medalists. Girls team members were: Dustyna Sprigg, Astrid Moen, Abby Bainter, Kamilla Jones, Julia Kent, Darcy Bainter, Katelyn Engelbert and Marisa Maddy.

The boys cross country team placed fifth and state medalists on the Norton team were Zach Hartwell and Bryan Henry.

First quarter

Caleb Laughlin kicked off for Norton and Brady Barrett returned the ball to the 11-yard line where Trey Millan made the tackle. Luck Ninemire stopped Barrett for no gain, a pass was incomplete and Nate Baublits lost 1 as Kaid McKenna and Landon Keiswetter made the tackle. Cimarron punted and Terrell Lane had a 7 yard return. A block-in-the-back penalty against Norton moved the ball to the Norton 40. Lane ran 20 yards, Spencer Shirk made nothing and Lane ran 13 yards to the 27. After an incomplete pass, Lane got some good blocks in the line and ran for a touchdown. Caleb Laughlin kicked the extra point, making it 7-0 with 9:00 left.

Laughlin had been roughed as he made the kick and the 5-yard penalty was assessed on the kick-

off. Laughlin kicked the ball into the end zone.

Quarterback Derek Hoskinson passed to Anthony Price for 5 yards. Alex Neuschafer picked up 2 yards. Hoskinson went to the air again and Spencer Shirk intercepted the pass and returned it to the Cimarron 33. After an incomplete pass in the end zone, Shirk ran a keeper, broke several tackles and scampered into the end zone. Laughlin's extra point kick was unsuccessful but Norton led 13-0 with 7:24 left.

Laughlin kicked the ball into the end zone and Cimarron got the ball on their 20-yard line. Josh Asbury and Kaid McKenna tackled Baublits after 1 yard. Tyler White got a first down on the 32 before Jacob Brooks tackled him. Ninemire stopped Neuschafer for no gain. After an incomplete pass, Billy Broeckelman intercepted an aerial and returned the pigskin down the sideline to the Cimarron 32.

Shirk made a long run but it came back to the Cimarron 43 due to a block-in-the-back by Norton. Lane got good blocking up the middle and ran for another Norton touchdown. Laughlin's extra point kick made it 20-0 with 5:18 left.

Barrett returned Laughlin's kickoff to the 25 where Taylor Meder and others made the stop. White gained 7 before Lane made the tackle.

White gained 2 more before McKenna, Stanley and Nickell made the stop. Baublits tried for a first down but he hit a stone wall put up by Josh Asbury, Ninemire and Keiswetter. Cimarron punted.

Lane received, dodged several would-be tacklers and was stopped on the Norton 40.

Shirk was sacked, a pass was incomplete. Shirk was tackled for another loss and fumbled. Cimarron recovered on the Norton 28.

After an incomplete pass, Ninemire and McKenna tackled Baublits for a 1 yard loss. Nickell broke up a pass in the end zone and a fourth down flat pass fell incomplete.

Norton took over on the 29. Lane got the call, ran through a hole up the middle, cut left and sprinted 71 yards to score. Laughlin's extra point kick extended the lead to 27-0 with 1:06 left.

Barrett returned Laughlin's kickoff to the 20. Brett Terrell stopped Neuschafer for no gain, then Asbury threw Anthony Price for a 3-yard loss as the first quarter came to a close with Norton on top 27-0.

Second quarter

On the first play of the second quarter, Nickell intercepted a Cimarron pass and returned the ball to the Cimarron 20. Nickell gained 3, Terrell picked up 3 more. Nickell was tackled for a loss and Laughlin kicked a 33 yard field goal to make it 30-0 with 10:01 left.

Barrett returned Laughlin's kickoff to the 15. Ninemire

stopped quarterback Tyler Siek for no gain. A trick pass play was incomplete and Stanley and company sacked Siek. Cimarron punted and the ball rolled dead on the 50.

Lane gained 5, Shirk fumbled and recovered for a 4 yard loss. Terrell ran up the middle for a first down on the Cimarron 35. Shirk passed to Dreher on the 28. Terrell gained 3, Lane had a good gain but an illegal block brought the ball back to the Cimarron 40. Shirk passed to Broeckelman on the 28, then ran the keeper to the 20. Lane got good blocking again and ran over the right side for another Norton touchdown. The extra point kick attempt was no good and it was 36-0 with 5:57 left.

Barrett returned Laughlin's kickoff and Jacob Brooks and Meder tackled him on the 17. White gained 1, then Siek was sacked by Griffith on the 8. Baublits made nothing as a host of tacklers mobbed him. They punted out of bounds on their 35.

Shirk passed to Dakota Dreher for a 3 yard gain. Lane ran off left tackle for an apparent touchdown but Norton was penalized for holding. The ball was on the Cimarron 41 and Norton ran the same play. Lane was stopped on the 17. Tye Nickell got a nice hole from the linemen and ran to the 8 for a first down. Next, Nickell ran around right end and into the end zone untouched. The extra point kick was unsuccessful and it was 42-0 with 2:22 left.

Barrett returned Laughlin's kickoff and Terrell knocked him out of bounds on the 33. White lost 1 yard, courtesy of Keiswetter and McKenna. After two incomplete passes, Cimarron punted out of bounds on the Norton 38.

Shirk had two incomplete passes, then Lane ran over right tackle to the Cimarron 38. Shirk passed to Brooks on the 18. After three incomplete passes, Laughlin tried a field goal but it was no good.

Cimarron got the ball on the 20. Ryan Blecha tackled Siek for no gain. A flat pass to Barrett went nowhere as a host of Norton players tackled him. Time had run out in the first half with Norton leading 42-0.

Third quarter

Nickell returned the opening kickoff of the second half to the 28. On first down, Lane ran over the right side, cut back to the left and sprinted 72 yards to paydirt for his fifth touchdown of the night. Laughlin's extra point kick made it 49-0 with 11:45 left.

Laughlin kicked off into the end zone and Cimarron got the ball on their 20. Griffith and McKenna dropped Barrett for no gain and Stanley and Asbury sacked the quarterback on the 15. Griffith and Terrell tackled the quarterback for no gain. Cimarron punted out of bounds on their 47.

Shirk ran 26 yards to the Cimarron 21, then passed to Dreher in the flat and he ran into the end zone. Laughlin's extra point kick

made it 56-0 with 8:56 left.

Kevin Garcia returned Laughlin's kickoff but fumbled and Tanner Furbush recovered for Norton on the 7!

Delay of game cost Norton 5 yards. Brooks gained 2 yards, then raced around right end, got a good block from Millan and scored! A pass from quarterback Jordan Wahlmeier was incomplete for extra points and it was 62-0 with 8:23 left in the third period.

With all reserves playing the rest of the way for Norton, kickoff duties went to Austin Hager. Cimarron was able to move downfield and Neuschafer scored on a 20-yard run with 6:07 left in the third period. Baublits kicked the extra point and it was 62-7.

Millan returned the kickoff to the 25. Brooks ran to the 33. Millan found a big hole over the right side of the line and motored 67 yards for Norton's final touchdown of the night! A pass from Wahlmeier for extra points missed its mark again and Norton led 68-7 with 5:13 left in the quarter.

The two teams traded punts before Treven Rossi recovered a Cimarron fumble on their 36. Norton was unable to advance the ball as the third quarter came to a close.

Fourth quarter

Cimarron drove for their final touchdown with 7:58 left in the game. Anthony Price ran 25 yards to score. Baublits kicked the extra point, making the score 68-14.

Furbush returned the kickoff to the Cimarron 30 but Norton could not move in for another score. Each team had the ball one more time but the score remained 68-7 in favor of the Norton Blue Jays!

Next action

The 9-0 Norton Blue Jays will now play at 8-2 Beloit at 7 p.m. this Saturday in the Class 3A Regional game.

Beloit defeated Ellsworth 34-14 on Tuesday evening to win their District championship.

"Beloit is very, very good," said coach Melvin. "They are fast and quick and run mostly but mix in passing to keep your defense honest. They run a double wing offense which is very deceptive.

"Defensively, they fly around to the ball.

"Luke Shamburg and Lane Koster are very good senior running backs.

"Beloit's only two losses are by a few points to outstanding Smith Center and Concordia teams."

GAME STATISTICS

Norton	Cimarron
10	8
505	156
74	2
579	158
7-17-0	2-14-3
1-6	2-3
2-25.	8-35.9
7-61	2-7