

Norton can't stop Smith Center in league play

By Dick Boyd

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Coach Lucas Melvin's Norton Community High School football team slowed but couldn't stop Smith Center's efficient wishbone offense Friday in Smith Center and the result was a 58-20 Mid-Continent League loss.

The first half was close, ending 24-14 in favor of the Redmen but they outscored the visiting Blue Jays 34-6 after intermission.

Smith Center drove downfield to score the first two times they had the ball. Junior back Kyler Atwood scored from 2 yards out with 9:27 left and senior Alex Hobelmann ran for 2 extra points. Their second touchdown came on a 10 yard run by senior back Truitt Kuhlmann and senior Aaron Sellars ran for 2 extra points to make it 16-0 with 3:44 left.

A fumbled punt stopped the Redmen on their third possession but Norton could not score until after a second Smith Center fumble on their 21. Senior quarterback Jordan Wahlmeier scored on a 3-yard run and sophomore Austin Hager's kick made the score 16-7 with 25 seconds left in the first period.

Norton junior Eli Bozarth made a big play in the second quarter when he stripped the ball from a Smith Center player and dashed 34 yards to paydirt! Hager's kick split the uprights and Norton had cut the Redman lead to 16-14 with 9:00 left in the half.

Smith Center continued to eat up yardage, however, and scored again with 3:28 remaining when Atwood ran 5 yards. Kuhlmann ran for 2 extra points, making the score 24-14.

Norton stopped another Smith Center drive but an intercepted Wahlmeier pass kept the Blue Jays from scoring before halftime.

The Blue Jays were unable to move the ball in the third quarter and Smith Center scored on runs of 40 yards, 61 yards and 2 yards by Kuhlmann, a 2 point conversion by Sellars and extra point kick by Kale Terrill to extend their lead to 45-14.

Kuhlmann scored his fifth touchdown on a 4 yard run and Atwood tallied from 4 yards out and Terrill kicked 1 of 2 extra point tries as the Redmen extended their lead to 58-14 in the fourth quarter.

Norton's final touchdown came on a 24-yard keeper by Wahlmeier with 57 seconds left to make the final 58-20.

Smith Center dominated the statistics, rolling up 441 yards rushing for a 6.3 yard average. Norton gained 116 yards and averaged a reasonable 3.9 yards but had half as many attempts.

Norton punted 6 times and Smith Center did not punt. The Redmen fumbled 4 times and lost 3; the Blue Jays did not fumble.

Norton was penalized 10 times for 68 yards and Smith Center was flagged 5 times for 40 yards.

Coach's comments

"Our defense was out there way too long," said coach Melvin. "And our offense didn't do much. We had several dropped passes that really hurt; our receivers were probably nervous. We didn't execute our offense very well. Their defense was stunting and blitzing quite a bit, which caused some of that."

"Although we played hard on defense, we have to be more disciplined in carrying out our assignments."

"We played hard but we just have to get tougher and work on our mistakes this week."

Starting lineup

Coach Melvin started the following players on offense: senior Casey Temmel, 190 pounds, left tackle; junior Treven Rossi, 165 pounds, left guard; junior Lane Bigge, 200 pounds, center; senior Kurt Douglas, 175 pounds, right guard; junior Alex Riggin, 275 pounds, right tackle; senior Dillon McConney, 150 pounds, wide receiver; junior Carson McKenna, 155 pounds, wide receiver; senior Robert Blecha, 180 pounds, tight end; senior Jordan Wahlmeier, 180 pounds, quarterback; senior



Norton senior fullback Tye Nickell was not intimidated by the Smith Center eleven and used every ounce of energy as he met them face to face without backing down. Here he is shown sprinting for a good gain in last Friday night's encounter with the Redmen in Smith Center.

Tye Nickell, 150 pounds, fullback; junior Jacob Brooks, 175 pounds, tailback.

Starting on defense for the Blue Jays were: junior Eli Bozarth, 160 pounds, left end; sophomore Kolton Harting, 195 pounds, tackle; sophomore Cole Renner, 165 pounds, noseguard; senior Damian Davis, 165 pounds, tackle; Lane Bigge, right end; junior Dalton Miller, 185 pounds; senior Cayleb Campbell, 185 pounds and Treven Rossi, linebackers; Tye Nickell, safety; Carson McKenna, sophomore Austin Hager, 145 pounds, cornerbacks.

Individual statistics

Jacob Brooks carried the pigskin 14 times for 45 yards and a 3.9 yard average, Jordan Wahlmeier had 5 carries for 35 yards and a 7 yard average; Tye Nickell had 5 for 4 yards, Austin Hager had 4 for 22 and a 5.5 yard average and Jared Bohl had 2 for 0 yards.

Wahlmeier completed 2 of 11 passes for 19 yards. Nickell caught 1 pass for 6 yards and Robert Blecha caught 1 for 13 yards.

Wahlmeier punted 5 times for a 32.4 average; Dillon McConney punted 1 time for 25 yards.

Hager kicked off 3 times for a 33.3 yard average. Nickell had 6 kickoff returns for a 17.3 average and Brooks had 1 for 13 yards.

Casey Temmel blocked 1 extra point try. Recovering fumbles for Norton were Carson McKenna, Tye Nickell and Eli Bozarth.

Leading rusher for Smith Center was Kuhlmann with 286 yards on 31 carries. Atwood had 21 totes for 89 yards.

Tackles

Leading tackler again this week was Cayleb Campbell with 9 solos and 5 assists for 14 total tackles. He was followed by Carson McKenna, 7 solos, 4 assists 11 total; Damian Davis, 6 solos, 3 assists, 9 total; Lucas Engel, 7 solos, 1 assist, 8 total; Tye Nickell, 7 solos, 1 assist, 8 total; Taylor Meder, 1 solo, 5 assists, 6 total; Lane Bigge, 4 solos, 1 assist, 5 total; Eli Bozarth, 3 solos, 2 assists, 5 total; Austin Hager, 2 solos, 2 assists, 4 total; Kolton Harting, 3 solos, 1 assist, 4 total; Dalton Miller, 2 solos, 2 assists, 4 total; John Risewick, 3 solos, 1 assist, 4 total; Jared Bohl, 3 solos; Cole Renner, 2 solos, 1 assist, 3 total; Treven Rossi, 2 solos, 1 assist, 3 total; Casey Temmel, 2 solos; Justin Waggoner, 2 solos; Jacob Brooks, 1 solo; Wyatt Harting, 1 solo; Dillon McConney, 1 solo.

First quarter

Hager kicked off and Grant Lambert returned to the 38. Truitt Kuhlmann ran for a first down on the Norton 35; Damian Davis tackled him. Lambert ran for a first down on the Norton 25; Carson McKenna made the tackle. Cayleb Campbell limited Kuhlmann to 1; then he ran to

the 14; Hager made the tackle. Kuhlmann ran to the 11, then to the 2 where McKenna tackled him. Kyler Atwood plunged for the touchdown. Alex Hobelmann ran for 2 points, making it 8-0 with 9:27.

Tye Nickell returned the kickoff to the Norton 17. Jacob Brooks gained 9; Nickell got a first down on the 29. After an incomplete pass, Brooks gain of 1, and incomplete pass, Jordan Wahlmeier punted.

Smith Center had the ball on their 45. Kuhlmann got nothing, Lambert ran for 3 before Nickell and Campbell tackled him. Kuhlmann ran for 6, Atwood ran to the Norton 44 for a first down. Atwood got 5 more, Kuhlmann ran around right end to the 12. Atwood gained 2, then Kuhlmann ran around left end for a touchdown. Aaron Sellars ran for 2 points, making it 16-0 with 3:44.

Brooks returned the kickoff to the Norton 34. Nickell lost 1, Nickell gained 4, a pass was incomplete and Wahlmeier punted. Smith Center fumbled on the reception and Carson McKenna recovered on the Smith Center 32. Brooks gained 6, Nickell lost 3, Brooks got 0, a pass from Wahlmeier to Nickell was 1 yard short and Smith Center took over.

The Norton defense forced a 4-yard loss and fumble and Nickell recovered on the Redmen 21. After an offside penalty cost Norton 5, Brooks got loose to the 3-yard line and Wahlmeier sneaked into the end zone for a touchdown. Hager kicked the extra point and it was 16-7 with 2 seconds left.

Kuhlman returned Hager's kickoff and was tackled on the 11-yard line!

Second quarter

Atwood got nothing, Lambert got 6, Lambert ran to the 26 for a first down. Lane Bigge tackled Hobelmann after 4, Kuhlmann ran to the Norton 34. The next down, Eli Bozarth stripped the Redman back of the pigskin and raced untouched into the end zone! Hager split the uprights and Norton was within 2 points of the Redmen at 16-14 with 9:00 left in the first half.

Hobelmann returned Hager's kickoff to the Smith Center 28. Atwood gained 3, Hobelmann ran to the Smith Center 42. Kuhlmann got to the Norton 49 before Nickell and Dalton Miller tackled him. Atwood ran to the Norton 43 for a first down. Damian Davis tackled Kuhlmann after 5. Smith Center gained 2, Kuhlmann lost 3, Norton was offside and lost 5, Smith Center got a first down on the 32, then gained 6 more. Kuhlmann ran to the Norton 14, Atwood plunged to the 11, Kuhlmann was tackled on the 9 by McKenna. Norton was offside; Atwood drove 5 yards for a touchdown. Kuhlmann ran for 2 and Smith Center led 24-14 at

3:28.

Nickell returned the kickoff to the Norton 29. Brooks gained 4 on 2 carries, Wahlmeier got 2, then punted. The ball rolled dead on the Smith Center 30. Norton lost 5 on a penalty, Atwood gained 3, Kuhlmann ran to the 44; Meder made the tackle; Kuhlman ran to mid-field, Sellars gained 4, Kuhlmann ran to the 37, McKenna broke up a Redman pass, a host of Norton tacklers dropped Kuhlmann for a loss on the 40. Another pass was incomplete and Norton took over possession.

Norton tried to pass and Kuhlmann intercepted. Kuhlmann gained 3 yards before halftime with the Redmen leading by 24-14.

Third quarter

Nickell returned the kickoff to the 31. Brooks lost 7, then gained 6, a pass was incomplete and Wahlmeier punted. Kuhlmann returned the ball to the Norton 40. On the next down, Kuhlmann ran all the way for a touchdown. Sellars ran for 2 and it was 32-14 at 10:12.

After the kickoff, Norton had the ball on their 30. After two incomplete passes and no gain by Brooks, Wahlmeier punted. Kuhlmann returned the ball to the Smith Center 39. On first down, Kuhlmann sprinted through the Norton defense for another touchdown. A run for 2 points failed but the Redmen led 38-14 at 8:53.

Nickell returned the kickoff but a 15-yard penalty moved the Blue Jays back to the 19. After another 5-yard penalty against Norton, Brooks gained 2, Nickell got 2, Norton was

offside and lost 5, a pass was incomplete and Dillon McConney punted.

The ball was downed on the Norton 37. Sellars got 3, Kuhlmann ran to the 26, Atwood got 3, a host of Norton tacklers threw a Redman for a loss but a pass over the middle to Louis Frazier was good for a first down on the Norton 7-yard line. Smith Center fumbled but recovered; Hobelmann ran the keeper to the 2, Atwood got 0 but Kuhlmann ran into the end zone to score. Terrill kicked the extra point, making it 45-14 at 2:47.

Nickell returned the kickoff to the Smith Center 45. Brooks ran to the 37 on 2 plays but a personal foul cost Norton yardage back to their 47. Austin Hager ran to the Redman 45 but Wahlmeier was sacked and Smith Center took over the ball.

A host of Norton tacklers threw Sellars for a 2 yard loss but Kuhlmann ran to the Norton 31 and Sellars to the 26 as the quarter ended with the Redmen leading 45-14.

Fourth quarter

Atwood plunged to the 23, then ran to the 10 and to the 8. Kuhlmann scored from there. Casey Temmel blocked the extra point attempt but the Redmen led 51-14 at 9:58.

Nickell returned the kickoff to the Norton 38. Brooks gained 2, Norton was penalized 5 for illegal procedure, Jared Bohl ran for 1. Kody Molzahn intercepted a Wahlmeier pass on the Norton 35. Atwood gained 12, then 3, Trevor Overmiller gained 11, Atwood got 3, a host of tacklers stopped Overmiller for nothing, Norton was offside and lost 5, Atwood ran 4 yards for a touchdown. Terrill kicked the extra point, making it 58-14 at 5:17.

Nickell returned the kickoff to the Norton 35. Hager gained 5, then got a first down on the Norton 46. Bohl lost 1, Wahlmeier passed to Blecha to the

Smith Center 42. Wahlmeier ran for a first down on the Redman 27. Hager gained 3, then Wahlmeier ran a keeper for a 24-yard touchdown. The extra point kick was wide and the game ended early due to the continuous clock with Smith Center earning a 58-20 win.

Next action

Norton will play an unfamiliar foe whom they have never played in history when they host Perryton, Texas this Friday night at Travis Field with kickoff set for 7 p.m.

Perryton is a larger school than Norton with an enrollment similar to a large 4A or small 5A school in Kansas. They have a current record of 2-3.

"They will be an excellent football team," said coach Melvin. "It's a one-time opportunity for our young men to play a team from Texas. We're telling them to go out and have fun, do their best and see what happens."

Coach Melvin said Perryton has several 350 pound linemen. They run a spread offense with an athletic quarterback and receivers and a good running back.

"We want to develop an attitude in our players that they want to play anyone anywhere," said coach Melvin. "You have to have that attitude to be a competitor."

"We will learn from this kind of game. Good things will come from it. We just have to continue pushing and getting tougher."

GAME STATISTICS

Norton	Smith Center	
5	First Downs	19
116	Yards Rushing	441
19	Yards Passing	20
135	Total Yards	461
2-11-2	Passes Compl.	1-3-0
0-0	Fumbles	3-4
6-31.2	Punts	0-0
10-68	Penalties	5-40

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FOOTBALL:

Norton Blue Jays vs. Perryton, Tex. 7 p.m. Friday in Norton
Norton Junior Varsity vs. Smith Center 5:30 p.m. Monday in Norton
Northern Valley Huskies vs. Victoria 7 p.m. Friday in Almena
Logan Trojans vs. Thunder Ridge 7 p.m. Friday in Logan

VOLLEYBALL:

Norton Lady Jays vs. Smith Center, Trego V, JV 5 p.m. Today in Smith Center
Norton Lady Jays in Scott City Invitational 9 a.m. Saturday in Scott City
Norton Lady Jays vs. Logan, Golden Plains (Senior Night) 4 p.m. Tuesday in Norton
Northern Valley Lady Huskies vs. Golden Plains, Tri-Plains 4 p.m. Today in Almena
Northern Valley Lady Huskies vs. Stockton, Thunder Ridge 4 p.m. Tuesday in Kensington
Logan Lady Trojans vs. Palco, Thunder Ridge 4 p.m. Today in Logan
Logan Lady Trojans in Cougar Invitational 9 a.m. Saturday in Mankato
Logan Lady Trojans vs. Norton, Golden Plains 4 p.m. Tuesday in Norton

CROSS COUNTRY:

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

TENNIS:

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