

Blue Jays lose to Texas team last Friday

By Dick Boyd

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Coach Lucas Melvin's Norton Community High School football team hosted Perryton, Texas in a once-in-a-lifetime encounter on Friday night at Travis Field and led the visitors after three quarters but gave up two touchdowns in the final period to lose 28-19.

Perryton is the equivalent of a large Class 4A high school in Kansas with three times more students than Norton but both schools have had a hard time filling a full schedule so the two came to terms prior to the 2011 season.

The game was played in light rain until a steady downpour occurred throughout the fourth quarter.

Both teams had lots of yardage in the game. Norton had 134 yards rushing and 186 yards passing for a total of 320 yards on 60 plays for a 5.3 yard average.

Perryton had 216 yards rushing and 115 yards passing for 331 total yards, or a 4.3 yard average.

The Blue Jays punted only two times and the Rangers punted three times.

Norton lost four fumbles and Perryton lost just one bobble and that had a lot to do with the outcome of the game.

After a 0-0 first quarter, Perryton tallied with a touchdown from 3 yards out by senior back Kade Keeth. Heriberto Romero kicked the extra point for a 7-0 lead with 4:48 left in the first half.

Perryton's lone fumble with 3:04 remaining in the half was recovered in the end zone by Norton's John Risewick for a touchdown. A pass for extra points was no good and Norton trailed 7-6 at halftime.

The third quarter belonged to the Blue Jays who scored twice to take a 19-7 lead into the final period. Norton senior quarterback Jordan Wahlmeier scored from 1 yard out with 7:33 left and junior wide receiver Carson McKenna caught a 54 yard touchdown pass from Wahlmeier at 4:59 for the second score. Sophomore Austin Hager kicked one extra point and a pass for a PAT failed.

Norton fumbled early in the fourth quarter and Perryton's senior quarterback Blake Turner scored from 11 yards out. The extra point kick put the visitors closer at 19-14. They scored twice more before the final gun when Keeth tallied from 2 yards and 4 yards. Romero's kicks after each touchdown were good, making the final score 28-19.

Coach's comments

"Our young men played hard and did a lot of things very well," said coach Melvin. "Offensively, we made some great plays and our defense played well."

"We played hard enough to win but just made too many mistakes. We need to eliminate those mistakes in future games."

"Our guys enjoyed playing them."

Starting lineup

Coach Melvin started the following players on offense: senior Damian Davis, 165 pounds, left tackle; junior Eli Bozarth, 160 pounds, left guard; junior Lane Bigge, 200 pounds, center; senior Kurt Douglas, 175 pounds, right guard; freshman Wyatt Harting, 210 pounds, right tackle; senior Robert Blecha, 180 pounds, tight end; junior Carson McKenna, 155 pounds, wide receiver; senior Dillon McConney, 150 pounds, wide receiver; senior Jordan Wahlmeier, 180 pounds, quarterback; senior Tye Nickell, 150 pounds, fullback; junior Jacob Brooks, 175 pounds, tailback.

Starting on defense for the Blue Jays were: Lane Bigge, left end; Damian Davis and junior Lucas Engel, 180 pounds, tackles; Eli Bozarth, right end; senior Taylor Meder, 145 pounds; Jacob Brooks; junior Dalton Miller, 185 pounds; junior John Risewick, 140 pounds, linebackers; sophomore Austin Hager, 145 pounds, Carson McKenna, cornerbacks; Tye Nickell, safety.

Individual statistics

Jordan Wahlmeier carried the ball 15 times for 81 yards and an average of 5.4 yards per carry. Jacob Brooks had 10 carries for 32 yards and Tye Nickell toted the ball 11 times for 23 yards.

Wahlmeier completed 10 of 24 passes for 186 yards. His receivers were: Carson McKenna, 3 catches for 67 yards; Robert Blecha, 3 for 36; Dillon McConney, 1 for 31; Jacob Brooks, 2 for 44; Andrew Ellis, 1 for 8.

Austin Hager kicked off 4 times for a 48.3 yard average.

Jacob Brooks had 1 kickoff return for 21 yards.

Leading rusher for the Rangers was Kade Keeth with 29 carries for 153 yards. Blake Turner gained 58 yards on 18 tries.

Turner completed 13 of 26 passes for 115 yards. Tackles

Damian Davis and Lucas Engel led Norton in tackles with 12 each. Damian had 8 solos, 4 assists and Lucas had 6 solos, 6 assists. They were followed by: Taylor Meder, 6 solos, 2 assists, 8 total; Tye Nickell, 6 solos, 2 assists, 8 total; John Risewick, 5 solos, 2 assists, 7 total; Dalton Miller, 6 solos; Eli Bozarth, 4 solos, 1 assist, 5 total; Austin Hager, 4 solos, 1 assist, 5 total; Carson McKenna, 4 solos, 1 assist, 5 total; Jacob Brooks, 4 solos; Caysean Campbell, 3 solos, 1 assist, 4 total; Casey Temmel, 2 solos, 1 assist, 3 total; Cayleb Campbell, 2 assists; Justin Waggoner, 2



Norton senior tight end Robert Blecha stretches for more yardage after catching a pass from quarterback Jordan Wahlmeier during the Blue Jays' battle with Perryton, Tex. here on Friday night. Blecha caught three passes from Wahlmeier for 36 yards.

- Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

solos; Tanner Furbush, 1 solo; Cole Renner, 1 solo; Stewart Whitney, 1 solo.

First quarter

Austin Hager kicked off. Heriberto Romero returned to the 31 where Eli Bozarth made the tackle. Rider Clapp gained 1. Quarterback Blake Turner passed to Russell Anderson to the 40. Kade Keeth got a first down on the 45. Turner passed to Calum Townsend for a short gain and 1 play later they had a first down on the Norton 45. A Turner pass gained 10, Townsend gained 4 and Justin Waggoner and Damian Davis tackled him. Dalton Miller stopped Keeth for no gain.

Cole Renner got loose into the Ranger backfield and threw Keeth for a 6 yard loss! Norton took over possession on their 35-yard line. Jacob Brooks gained 4 around left end but Norton was offsidies. Jordan Wahlmeier passed to Carson McKenna on the Norton 49. Tye Nickell gained 1, then lost 1. Norton fumbled and Perryton recovered on the Norton 45.

Davis tackled Keeth for no gain. Turner passed to Zach Farney for a first down by inches. Turner ran the keeper but Brooks came storming in to throw him for a 5-yard loss! A good rush caused an incomplete pass. Turner ran a keeper and Bozarth tackled him on the 34. A field goal try was short and Norton received the ball on their 20-yard line.

Nickell lost 2, a pass was knocked down, another pass was incomplete and Wahlmeier punted to the Norton 49. Turner made 4 yards, then 2 more before Bozarth and Risewick made the tackle. Bozarth and Davis then dropped Keeth for a 3 yard loss! Perryton kicked and downed the ball on the Norton 4-yard line. After a 5 yard penalty for Perryton for being offsidies, Wahlmeier passed to Robert Blecha over the middle for a first down on the 25!

Wahlmeier was sacked, however, on the next play on the 13. The Rangers lost 5 for being offsidies. Wahlmeier and Dillon McConney connected on a pass to mid-field as the quarter came to a close without either team scoring.

Second quarter

Nickell gained 4, Brooks got 0 and a pass was incomplete but Perryton was whistled for holding and lost 10 yards. After an incomplete pass, Nickell scooted through a hole 11 yards for a first down on the Perryton 26. Brooks lost 1, Perryton lost 5 for being offsidies and Brooks got loose around right end to the 5! A pass was incomplete, Brooks lost 7, Wahlmeier ran to the 5 and Nickell got to the 4 but Perryton took over possession.

Keeth found a hole and rambled 66 yards to the Norton 30. Turner passed 5 yards to Townsend. Townsend gained 2 but Turner was tackled by Davis for a 2-yard loss. Turner ran the keeper to the 15 where Taylor Meder tackled him. Turner ran the ball again and got to the 3. From there, Keeth scored and Romero kicked the extra point, putting the Rangers ahead 7-0 with 4:48 left in the half.

Dalton Miller received the kickoff at the Norton 35. Brooks took a pitchout from Wahlmeier and swept around right end to the Norton 47. Norton lost 5 for offsidies. A flat pass to Brooks carried to the Ranger 44. After an incomplete pass, Wahlmeier punted. The ball rolled dead on the 6-yard

line. Keeth gained 2 before Brooks made the tackle; then Brooks tackled the Ranger ballcarrier in the end zone, he fumbled and John Risewick recovered for a Norton touchdown! A pass for extra points failed and Norton trailed 7-6 at 3:04.

Romero returned Hager's kickoff to the 25. After an incomplete pass, Bozarth threw Turner for a 3 yard loss, he was sacked again and Perryton punted. Nickell's good return was hurt by a penalty on Norton, moving the ball back to the Norton 43. Nickell gained 3, Brooks got 4, then Norton fumbled and Perryton recovered on the Norton 45. Turner passed to Keeth for 5, then ran a keeper to the Norton 27. After an incomplete pass, the Rangers lost 10 for holding. Nickell intercepted a Turner pass on the 7-yard line and it was halftime with Norton trailing by 7-6.

Third quarter

Perryton was offsidies and had to kick over. Norton got the ball on their 26. Brooks gained 1, Perryton was offsidies and lost 5, Wahlmeier got 0 then passed to Andrew Ellis for a first down on the Norton 40. A Wahlmeier pass was intercepted, however, on the Perryton 30. They lost 5 for offsidies, then a host of Norton defenders stopped Turner for no gain. After an incomplete pass, Perryton faked a punt, had an incomplete pass and Norton took over on the Perryton 35.

After an incomplete pass, Norton had an ineligible receiver downfield and the ball came back to the Perryton 40. Wahlmeier hit Brooks with a pass and he was downed at the 1-yard line! Wahlmeier sneaked for the touchdown and Hager split the uprights, making the score 13-7 in favor of Norton at 7:33.

Keeth returned Hager's kickoff to the 28. Keeth gained 7, Perryton recovered their own fumble, a pass was broken up by Meder and Perryton punted to the Norton 21.

A pass was incomplete, Norton was offsidies, Wahlmeier

passed to Blecha on the 25. After an incomplete pass, Perryton was penalized 15 yards for pass interference, putting the pigskin on the Norton 40. Brooks ran to the Norton 46, then Carson McKenna got behind a Ranger defender and made a great catch of a Wahlmeier pass and sprinted into the end zone for another Norton touchdown! A PAT pass was incomplete but Norton led 19-7 at 4:59.

Following Hager's kickoff, Perryton used the forward pass, a pass interference on Norton and a face mask penalty on Norton to move downfield for another score. Turner scored from 11 yards out and Romero kicked the extra point, cutting the Norton lead to 19-14 at 2:27.

Norton responded by moving downfield themselves. Brooks returned the kickoff to the Norton 45. Wahlmeier passed over the middle to Blecha on the Perryton 45. Wahlmeier ran the keeper to the 27. Norton fumbled but recovered, then Nickell broke several tackles before he was stopped on the 19. Norton gained nothing on first down and the quarter ended with the Blue Jays on top 19-14.

Fourth quarter

Norton fumbled on the first play of the final period and Perryton recovered on the 25. Perryton used a combination of running plays, passes and penalties on Norton to move downfield for another touchdown. Keeth scored from 2 yards out, Romero kicked the extra point and the Rangers took over the lead 21-19 at 7:37.

Norton fumbled the ball on the kickoff and the Rangers drove to the Norton 20 where the Blue Jay defense held and regained possession of the pigskin. A flat pass to McKenna was good for just 1, Wahlmeier got a good gain on a keeper but it came back due to holding. A pass was incomplete, Nickell lost 5 and a fourth down pass was also incomplete.

Perryton took over on the Norton 17 and drove in for their final touchdown. Keeth ran 4 for the score, Romero kicked the extra point and it was 28-19 with 57 seconds left in the game.

Several penalties hurt Norton in the closing seconds and the Blue Jays were defeated 28-19 by the visitors from Texas.

Next action

Norton will begin District play this Friday night when the Blue Jays host Goodland in a 7 p.m. game at Travis Field.

Goodland is 3-3 for the season, having defeated Colby, Hugoton and Lakin and lost to Holcomb, Scott City and Ulysses.

Their offense is led by outstanding passing senior quarterback Reed Bellamy and senior running back Riley Oharah is a rushing leader for the Cowboys.

"Goodland will be a tough test for us; we need to eliminate mistakes to be able to beat them," said Norton coach Melvin.

GAME STATISTICS

Norton		Perryton
14	First Downs	18
134	Yards Rushing	216
186	Yards Passing	115
320	Total Yards	331
10-24-1	Passes Comp	13-26-1
4-6	Fumbles Lost	1-3
2-35.5	Punts	3-43.3
11-105	Penalties	12-86

Norton Recreation Commission announces Racquetball Court Challenges

Every Tuesday and Wednesday evening anytime from 5:00 - 8:00 p.m. Cost is \$2.00 per person per night. You will have an opportunity to play a variety of people and challenges. Questions? Gail Roy at 874-4310

High School Sports This Week



Norton Blue Jays



Northern Valley Huskies



Logan Trojans

FOOTBALL:

Norton Blue Jays vs. Goodland Cowboys 7 p.m. Friday in Norton
Northern Valley Huskies vs. Thunder Ridge 7 p.m. Friday in Kensington
Norton Eighth Grade and High School C-Team vs. Smith Center . . . 5 p.m. Thursday in Smith Center
Norton Junior Varsity vs. Goodland 5:30 p.m. Monday in Goodland

VOLLEYBALL:

Norton Lady Jays vs. Logan, Golden Plains (Senior Night) 4 p.m. Today in Norton
Norton Lady Jays in Mid-Continent League Tournament 9 a.m. Saturday in Hill City
Norton Lady Jays vs. Goodland, Ulysses V, JV. 5 p.m. Tuesday in Goodland
Northern Valley Lady Huskies vs. Stockton, Thunder Ridge 4 p.m. Today in Kensington
Northern Valley Lady Huskies in NPL Tournament Saturday in Beloit
Northern Valley Lady Huskies vs. Palco, Victoria. 4 p.m. Tuesday in Palco
Logan Lady Trojans vs. Norton, Golden Plains 4 p.m. Today in Norton
Logan Lady Trojans in NPL Tournament Saturday in Beloit
Logan Lady Trojans vs. Tescott, Wichita-World of Life 4:30 p.m. Tuesday in Tescott

CROSS COUNTRY:

Norton Cross Country in Lakeside Invitational 4 p.m. Thursday in Downs
Northern Valley Cross Country in NPL Meet 4 p.m. Thursday in Downs

SEE US FOR ALL OF YOUR LOCAL SPORTS!