

Blue Jays end football season with 21-19 loss

By DICK BOYD

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Coach Lucas Melvin's Norton Community High School football team won the battle of the statistics but lost the important one, the score, in their Bi-District game at Sacred Heart of Salina on Tuesday evening.

After a scoreless first quarter, Norton trailed 7-0 at halftime, 14-13 after three quarters and 21-19 when the final whistle blew.

Norton rushed for 237 yards on 48 carries for an average of 4.9 yards while Sacred Heart picked up 139 yards on 34 tries for a 4 yard average. The Blue Jays also had the edge in passing with 134 yards on 4 of 12 passes while the Knights gained 75 yards on 9 of 20 aerials.

Norton had 12 first downs compared to 7 by Sacred Heart.

An apparent 55 yard touchdown run by senior tailback Jacob Brooks in the fourth quarter would have been the winning points for the Blue Jays had it not been nullified by an official's holding call.

An excellent Norton season ended with a 7-3 record. Sacred Heart (9-1) will move on into the Regional playoffs versus unbeaten Scott City on Saturday in Salina.

"I was really proud of the way we played," said coach Melvin. "We played hard to the very end and played well enough to win. We just didn't get any breaks.

"Even when we were down by eight points late in the game, we went downfield and scored but didn't get the conversion.

"I'm extremely proud of these young men, especially our seniors. They deserved to continue playing but it didn't work out. We'll miss our seniors a lot. They were great leaders.

"We hope our underclassmen will step up as leaders and continue the tradition."

First quarter

Norton junior Austin Hager kicked off and the Blue Jay defense stopped the returner Kyler Stover on the Sacred Heart 15. In addition, they forced the home team to a three-and-out. The Knights punted to the Norton 35.

Senior fullback Jared Bohl bulled for nine yards and senior tailback Jacob Brooks picked up 15 yards to the Sacred Heart 41. The Knights forced a punt by Brooks to their 16-yard line. On third down, Hager recovered a Sacred Heart fumble on their 31.

The Blue Jays were unable to capitalize on the break, howev-

er. A field goal try by Hager was blocked and Sacred Heart took over on the Norton 49. Again, the Blue Jay defense was equal to the occasion and forced another Sacred Heart. three-and-out. Their punt was downed on the Norton 2-yard line.

Deep in their own territory, Norton was unable to sustain a drive and punted back to the Knights 43 after a holding penalty assessed against Sacred Heart. Once again, the rock solid Norton defense forced a three-and-out. Norton senior John Risewick made a fair catch of the Knights punt on the Norton 34.

Norton was also forced to punt after three downs. Brooks' kick was fumbled by the receiver and recovered by Norton on the Knights' 9-yard-line! Officials ruled that the receiver did not touch the ball and awarded the pigskin to Sacred Heart as the scoreless first quarter ended

Second quarter

The gang-tackling Blue Jay defense held Sacred Heart to another three-and-out. Brooks returned their punt but a holding penalty gave the Jays the ball on the Norton 48. After senior quarterback Dalton Miller sneaked two yards for a first down on fourth down, Brooks had to punt. The Knights got the ball on their 12-yard line but again the Blue Jays held them to three-and-out. They punted to the Norton 48.

Sacred Heart gained some momentum when a Miller pass was intercepted and they drove for their first touchdown. Quarterback Nick Wuthnow passed 28 yards to Aaron Diederich for the score. Tymony Bonilla kicked the extra point, giving the Knights a 7-0 lead with 1:54 left in the half.

Tanner Furbush returned the kickoff to the 25. A pass from Miller to Brooks and a penalty on Sacred Heart moved the pigskin to the Knight 30. A Miller pass was intercepted on the Sacred Heart 23. The rugged Norton defense responded with another three-and-out. Risewick received the punt on the Norton 47. A pass interference penalty against the Knights helped but did not allow Norton to get close enough to score as the first half ended with the home team on top 7-0.

Third quarter

Furbush returned the kickoff to the Norton 26. After one first down on runs by Brooks, Bohl and Miller, the Blue Jays scored on a perfect 64 yard pass from Miller to Furbush! Hager split

the uprights to tie the score at 7-all with 9:33 left.

Stover had a good return of Hager's kickoff to the Sacred Heart 45 where Hager made the tackle. After an 11 yard pass to Aaron Diederich, the Blue Jays were pushing the Knights back and they faced a third and 15. Wuthnow got the ball and weaved his way through the Norton defense for a 51 yard touchdown. Bonilla kicked the extra point, making it 14-7 with 6:43 left.

Furbush returned the kickoff to the Norton 34. On first down, Brooks got great blocking over the left side of the line and sprinted 66 yards for a touchdown! Hager's extra point kick was long enough but officials ruled that his kick was barely no good and Norton trailed 14-13 with 6:28 showing on the clock.

Stover returned Hager's kickoff to just the 29 this time and once again the Blue Jay defense forced a three-and-out. Norton got the ball on their 16 yard line. On third down, senior wide receiver Andrew Ellis made an outstanding diving catch of a Miller pass for an apparent Norton first down but officials declared the pass incomplete. Brooks punted to the 50.

The Norton defense was rock solid once again, forcing another three-and-out. Their punt was downed on the Norton 14. Sacred Heart's defense held as well and Brooks punted to the Knight 42 as the quarter ended with Sacred Heart still leading 14-13.

Fourth quarter

Again, the Norton defense held and forced a three-and-out. The Knights punted to the Norton 22. Brooks toted the ball 10 yards for a first down, Bohl blasted for 10 yards on 2 carries and another first down on the Norton 45. Brooks received great blocking once again, made it into the secondary and was gone for what appeared to be another Blue Jay touchdown. Officials had other ideas, however, as they called a holding on one of the Norton linemen and the go-ahead touchdown was nullified.

After the penalty, another Norton first down was followed by a fumble. Sacred Heart recovered on their 40. After two first downs by the Knights, Norton was whistled for pass interference and the ball was moved to the Norton 20. An unsportsmanlike penalty against Norton put the pigskin on the 10. Drew Diederich scored from there, Bonilla kicked the extra point



Norton junior cornerback Austin Hager makes sure a Sacred Heart player goes no farther after catching a short pass in Tuesday night's playoff game in Salina. Hager is also the outstanding kicker for the Blue Jays. Coming up at left is senior linebacker Jared Bohl, who was the leading tackler for Norton in the game.

- Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

and Sacred Heart led 21-13 with 5:47 left in the game.

Bohl returned the kickoff to the Norton 36. With Brooks carrying the ball, the Blue Jays moved downfield and into Sacred Heart territory. The Knights defense stiffened and Bohl plunged for a first down on fourth down. It was close to a first down but officials decided to measure. They determined that Bohl's effort was an inch short and Norton turned the ball over!

An unsportsmanlike penalty against Norton moved the pigskin to the Sacred Heart 44. After one first down, Sacred Heart punted for the tenth time in the game. The ball ended on the Norton 19 with 2:24 left. Brooks got the call and charged through the Knight defense for a 56 yard run to the Sacred Heart 25! Miller passed to senior tight end Carson McKenna in the end zone for an important Blue Jay touchdown!

With 1:49 remaining, Norton needed two extra points to tie the score but Brooks was stopped short of the end zone, leaving it at 21-19.

Norton tried an onside kickoff in an attempt to get the ball back and score but the Knights

covered the ball and ran out the clock.

Starting lineup

Starting on offense for Norton were senior Andrew Elli, senior John Risewick, wide receivers; senior Carson McKenna, tight end; sophomore Wyatt Harting, left tackle; senior Treven Rossi, left guard; junior Cole Renner, center; senior Lane Bigge, right guard; senior Dylan Sprigg, right tackle; senior Dalton Miller, quarterback; senior Jared Bohl, fullback; senior Jacob Brooks, tailback.

Defensive starters for the Blue Jays were senior Eli Bozarth and Renner, ends; Bigge and junior Kolton Harting, tackles; sophomore Stewart Whitney, noseguard; Rossi and Bohl, linebackers; McKenna and junior Austin Hager, cornerbacks; Risewick and Brooks, safeties.

Individual statistics

Jacob Brooks, who gained 199 yards during Norton's big win over Phillipsburg last Thursday, finished his high school grid career by amassing 207 yards rushing on 22 carries for an average of 9.4 yards per carry!

Other ball carriers for Norton and yards gained were: Jared Bohl, 11 for 42, 3.8 average; Tanner Furbush, 3 for 4; Dalton

Miller, 12 for minus 20.

Brooks punted 6 times for a 40.8 average; Hager kicked off 4 times for a 39.5 average.

Miller completed 4 of 12 passes for 134 yards. Receivers were: Carson McKenna, 2 for 40; Tanner Furbush, 1 for 64; Jacob Brooks, 1 for 30.

Furbush had 3 kickoff returns for 64 yards and Bohl had 1 for 7.

Leading tacklers were: Jared Bohl, 8 solos, 6 assists; Lane Bigge, 7 solos, 4 assists; Jacob Brooks, 7 solos, 2 assists; Treven Rossi, 2 solos, 6 assists; John Risewick, 4 solos, 2 assists; Lucas Engel, 3 solos, 2 assists; Stewart Whitney, 2 solos, 3 assists; Austin Hager, 4 solos; Carson McKenna, 4 solos; Cole Renner, 2 solos, 2 assists; Eli Bozarth, 3 assists; Kolton Harting, 1 solo, 1 assist; Mickey Hahn, 1 solo; Toby Nickell, 1 assist.

GAME STATISTICS

Norton	Sacred Heart
12	First Downs
237	Yards Rushing
134	Yards Passing
371	Total Yards
4-12-2	Passes Compl.
1-2	Fumbles Lost
6-40.8	Punts
7-74	Penalties
	9-20-0
	1-2
	10-36
	5-50

Huskies finish with a big win

By Mike Stephens

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The Northern Valley Huskies ended the 2012 football campaign with a 50-36 win over the Golden Plains Bulldogs on Thursday, Oct. 25 in Alma. The Huskies finished the season with an overall record of 7-2.

However, a victory didn't seem likely early on with the Huskies committing mistakes and the Bulldogs capitalizing on them.

"We were not ready to play and Golden Plains really took it to us in the first quarter," said Huskies head coach Chuck Fessenden. "Fortunately we woke up and started playing."

Golden Plains struck quick with a nine yard touchdown pass from Grant Spreser to Andrew Luna at 9:01 in the first quarter. Spreser passed to Tristan Schwarz for the 2-point conversion, 8-0 Bulldogs.

The Huskies and junior running back Jordan Baird responded quickly. Baird scored from five yards out and rushed for the conversion, Huskies tie it up at 8-8

Less than a minute later the Bulldogs exploited the Huskies defense for a big play. Andrew Luna sprinted 60 yards on his way to the end zone. Chance Hoeting rushed for the conversion and the Bulldogs were back on top 16-8.

A Huskies miscue would

set up another quick score by the Bulldogs. Jose Bermudez scored on an 18 yard run, the conversion failed, and the Huskies were down 14 points, 22-8.

The Huskies mounted a drive that was capped by sophomore running back Phillip Bryant muscling into the end zone from the two yard line with 1:01 remaining in the first quarter. Bryant also ran for the conversion and the Huskies cut the Bulldogs' lead to six points, 22-16.

But on the following possession the Huskies defense would give up another big play. The Bulldogs' Andrew Luna raced through the Huskies defense for a 67 yard rushing touchdown. Luna ran for the conversion as well, giving the Bulldogs a 30-16 lead after one quarter of play.

The Huskies settled down in the second quarter. The defense held the Bulldogs scoreless and the offense went to the running game and scored twice.

Junior quarterback Hunter Chandler scored on a 25 yard run at the 9:42 mark. The conversion failed but the Huskies trailed by only eight points, 30-22.

Then sophomore running back Phillip Bryant broke free of the Bulldogs defense for a 46 yard touchdown run. Baird rushed for the conversion to tie the game at 30-30 at halftime.

Early in the third quarter, the

Bulldogs regained the lead. Jose Bermudez scored on a 20 yard run, the conversion failed, Bulldogs lead 36-30.

The Huskies defense didn't allow any more points in the game and coach Fessenden explained why.

"We had to make some defensive adjustments to deal with their mis-direction offense. The defense played much better the last three quarters," said Fessenden.

The Huskies closed out the game and the season with three unanswered touchdowns.

Chandler scored from the two yard line with 4:00 remaining in the third quarter. Bryant rushed for the conversion and the Huskies had their first lead of the game, 38-36.

Beginning of the fourth quarter, Baird scored on a one yard rushing touchdown, the conversion failed, extending the Huskies lead to eight points, 44-36.

With 1:35 remaining in the game, Chandler scored on a 10 yard touchdown run, his third of the night, for a 50-36 comeback victory to close out the 2012 season.

The Huskies rushed for 387 yards in the game and Chandler and Bryant accounted for 333 of those yards. Chandler rushed 26 times for 191 yards and three touchdowns. Bryant had 22 carries for 142 yards and two touchdowns. Baird rushed

15 times for 47 yards and two touchdowns.

"After our first possession we were able to move the ball fairly well," said coach Fessenden.

The Huskies, top tacklers were; Bryant, 19 tackles, Tyson Callaway, 13 tackles, Terry Shrader, 12 tackles, Chandler, 10 tackles and Ian Vincent, 10 tackles.

"We were happy to get this win and finish the year with a seven and two record," said Huskies coach Fessenden.

The Northern Valley Huskies got off to a slow start against the Golden Plains Bulldogs on Thursday, Oct. 25, but rallied in the second half for a 50-36 win. (Pictured) Running back Jordan Baird had two touchdowns in the game. The Huskies finished the season with a 7-2 overall record.

-Telegram photo by Mike Stephens



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