

# Blue Jays win first game of District play

By DICK BOYD

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With members of Norton's 1983 state runner-up team looking on with approval, the 2013 Norton Community High School football team defeated Minneapolis 41-7 in their first District contest on Friday at Travis Field.

The Blue Jay 1983 team chose this game for their 30th reunion. The 13 members who returned enjoyed a tailgate hamburger meal prior to the game and they were introduced to the crowd between the first and second quarters.

"We played pretty well but we still need to eliminate turnovers," said Norton head football coach Lucas Melvin. "We had blown coverage on their only touchdown.

"Our offensive line blocked tremendously. I give Cressler, Green, Renner, Harting and Sondergaard a lot of the credit for the win. Furbush and Nickell also ran hard behind their blocks.

"We fight hard and have gotten better."

Norton got a slow start in the game. Minneapolis kicked off to Norton but the Blue Jays' senior Toby Nickell had to punt after a three-and-out. The Norton defense was equally effective and the Lions kicked back after a three-and-out. Norton sophomore free safety Gavin Lively returned the punt but a blocking in the back penalty cost the Blue Jays and they had the ball back on their 23.

With senior tailback Tanner Furbush and senior fullback Toby Nickell alternating carries, Norton moved to mid-field. A fumble turned the ball over to Minneapolis. The Lions earned one first down before punting back to Norton. Lively received the ball with a fair catch on the Norton 12. Again, Norton was three-and-out and Nickell punted out of bounds on the Norton 37.

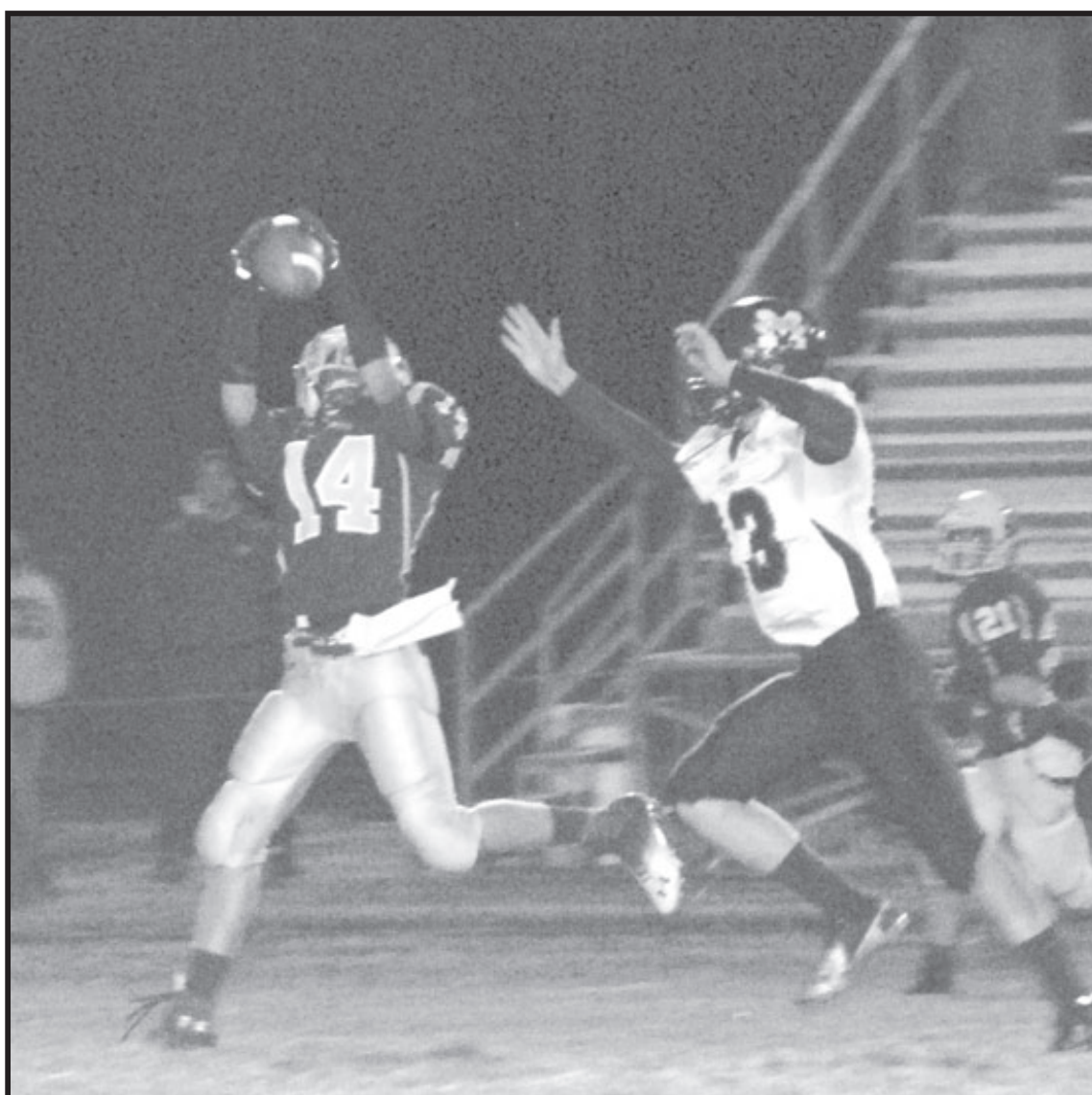
Minneapolis earned one first down before trying a field goal on fourth down. The kick was short and the first quarter ended with neither team denting the end zone.

After the missed field goal, Norton received the ball on their 20. Three running plays produced only nine yards then Furbush gained 8 yards for a first down. Next, sophomore quarterback Jordan Dole handed off to fullback Nickell. He burst through a hole opened by the offensive line and was finally tackled on the Minneapolis 9-yard-line for a 54 yard gain!

Dole ran a keeper into the end zone, senior kicker Austin Hager split the uprights and Norton led 7-0 with 11:22 left in the first half.

Hager kicked off and, after one first down, the Lions punted to the Norton 28. Furbush ran over the right side of the line, cut back and was finally tackled on the Lion 26! Norton's momentum was stopped, however, when the Lions intercepted a Dole pass on their 15. After one Lion first down, they punted and Lively returned the ball to the Minneapolis 43. Nickell picked up 12 yards on 2 carries, Dole ran a keeper to the 25 and Furbush and Nickell alternated carries until Furbush ran around left end and into the end zone standing up for a 12 yard score! Hager's kick extended the Norton lead to 14-0 with 4:22 left.

After Hager's kickoff, the Norton defense held again and, after one first down, the Lions punted to the Blue Jay 35. Norton scored quickly when Dole passed to junior wide receiver Kobie Unterseher who was sprinting down the sideline. Unterseher



Norton junior wide receiver Kobie Unterseher made a tremendous over-the-head catch of a pass from sophomore quarterback Jordan Dole for a 61-yard touchdown in the second quarter of the Blue Jays' 41-7 District win over Minneapolis at Travis Field on Friday night!

- Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

made a perfect over-the-head catch and outran the defender for a 61 yard Norton touchdown! Norton was unsuccessful on the conversion but the Blue Jays were on top 20-0 with 3:01 remaining.

After Hager's kickoff, the Lions picked up one first down before punting. A Dole pass was intercepted on the Norton 37. After another 3-and-out by the Lion offense, they punted and downed the ball on the Norton 1-yard line. Dole handed off to Furbush and he ran through the Minneapolis defenders for an apparent 99 yard touchdown. It was nullified, however, by a block in the back. The first half ended with Norton leading 20-0.

Hager kicked off to start the third quarter. After two first downs, Minneapolis punted. Norton also earned two first downs before fumbling the ball away to the Lions on their 26. Again, Norton's defense forced a 3-and-out and they punted to the Norton 40. Furbush gained 13 yards and got the pigskin again after two Dole carries. He followed his blocking over the left side of the line, broke a tackle and was off to the races for a 49 yard touchdown with 56 seconds left in the third period! Hager's kick put Norton ahead 27-0.

Things went from bad to worse for the visitors early in the fourth quarter when senior defensive

back Trever Lewis intercepted a Lion pass and returned it 20 yards to the Minneapolis 35. Furbush and Nickell moved the ball to the 25 and Dole passed to Lively for another touchdown. Hager split the uprights and the lead was extended to 34-0 with 9:02 left in the game.

After Hager's kickoff, Minneapolis quarterback Josh Macy went to the air. He completed one pass to mid-field, then connected with Gage Mortimer for a 50-yard touchdown. The extra point kick by Eric Yoxall was good, cutting the Norton lead to 34-7 with 7:43 remaining.

After the kickoff, the Norton offense controlled the ball for the next three minutes as they moved downfield for another touchdown. Furbush returned the kickoff to the Norton 40, ran for two first downs and Dole ran for another on a keeper to the 9. Nickell appeared to score but Norton was whistled for illegal motion. Dole ran around right end and bulled through a tackler for another Blue Jay touchdown. Hager's kick extended the Norton lead to 41-7 with 4:44 left.

The Norton reserves played the rest of the game and kept the Lions from scoring for a final score of 41-7.

#### Individual statistics

Tanner Furbush had a career best rushing game, carrying the ball 26 times for 261 yards and a 10 yard average!

Toby Nickell also had an outstanding rushing game, picking up 107 yards on 12 carries for an 8.9 yard average. Other Norton backs were: Jordan Dole, 10 for 51, 5.1 average; Jared Tallent, 4 for 14.

Dole completed 3 of 9 passes for 83 yards. Receivers were Kobie Unterseher, 1 for 61 yards; Gavin Lively, 1 for 25 yards; Tanner Furbush, 1 for minus 3 yards.

Lively had 1 kickoff return for 21 yards and Furbush had 1 for 21 yards. Lively had 4 punt returns for 50 yards.

Nickell punted twice for a 32.5 yard average and Austn Hager kicked off 7 times for a 50.3 yard average.

Trever Lewis had 1 pass interception for 20 yards.

#### Starting lineup

Norton started on offense: senior Travis Cressler, left tackle; freshman Jacob Green, left guard; senior Cole Renner, center; senior Kolton Harting, right guard; junior Breven Sondergaard, right tackle; senior Drew Schrum and junior Kobie Unterseher, wide receivers; junior Mickey Hahn, tight end; sophomore Jordan Dole, quarterback; senior Toby Nickell, fullback; senior Tanner Furbush, tailback.

Defensive starters were: Dole, Sondergaard, junior Stewart Whitney, Renner, Furbush, front five; Nickell, Hahn, linebackers; senior Austin Hager, Unterseher, cornerbacks; sophomore Gavin Lively, senior Trever Lewis, safeties.

#### Tackles

Gavin Lively was leading tackler for Norton with 3 solos, 6 assists, 9 total; followed by Cole Renner, 5 solos, 2 assists, 7 total; Toby Nickell, 4 solos, 2 assists, 6 total; Tanner Furbush, 3 solos, 2 assists, 5 total; Austin Hager, 5 solos; Trever Lewis, 5 solos; Kobie Unterseher, 5 solos; Jared Tallent, 2 solos, 1 assist, 3 total; Christian Boser, 2 assists; Caysean Campbell, 1 solo, 1 assist, 2 total; Jordan Dole, 1 solo, 1 assist, 2 total; Cody Temmel, 1 solo, 1 assist, 2 total; James Berry, 1 solo; Tevin Brown, 1 assist; Derick Campbell, 1 solo; Cameron Heikes, 1 solo; Tyus Henson, 1 solo; Kendall Miller, 1 solo.

#### Next action

Norton will take their 5-2 record to play at unbeaten and No.1 state ranked Beloit this Friday evening in their second of three District contests. Kickoff is set for 7 p.m.

"It will take an unbelievable effort offensively and defensively to beat Beloit," said coach Melvin. "We'll have to limit mistakes and have a tremendous effort from every member of our team."

#### GAME STATISTICS

NORTON		MINNEAPOLIS
16	First Downs	11
422	Yards Rushing	60
83	Yards Passing	167
505	Total Yards	227
3-9-2	Passes Completed	12-33-1
2-3	Fumbles Lost	0-4
2-32.5	Punts	9-33
8-55.5	Penalties	7-45

# Lady Jays run away with the championship again

By DICK BOYD

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For the second straight season, the Norton Community High School girls cross country team is the champion of the very tough Lakeside Invitational Cross Country Meet held Thursday at Downs.

The NCHS boys team placed fifth, the same as last season.

The girls competition was very close again this year. Norton won the title with 67 points, followed by Oberlin, 69; Sacred Heart of Salina, 70; Southeast of Saline, 77; Thomas More Prep-Marian of Hays, 150; Minneapolis, 156; Beloit, 175; Lincoln, 178; Lakeside, 233; Pike Valley, 267.

There were 82 girls in the varsity race.

Thomas More Prep won the boys championship with 93 points, followed by Sacred Heart of Salina, 96; Belleville, 97; Phillipsburg, 140; Norton, 142; Natoma, 161; Southeast of Saline, 163; Beloit, 185; Minneapolis, 222; Smith Center, 265; Tescott, 274; Stockton, 275; Lincoln, 302; Oberlin, 349; Sylvan-Lucas, 369; Southern Cloud, 436.

There were 123 boys runners.

#### GIRLS

Junior Sierra Griffith was fastest for the Norton girls team, placing sixth individually with a time of 16:58. She was followed by senior Darcy Bainter, ninth, 17:09; senior Marisa Maddy, 14th, 17:34; senior Katelyn Engelbert, 23rd, 17:50 and sophomore Molly Maddy, 26th, 17:56.

Also running for Norton were sophomore Raenee Patterson,

18:22, 34th and junior Burgundy Sorter, 61st, 19:49.

Four Norton girls competed in the junior varsity race, which was won by freshman Shania Burns in a time of 18:41. She was followed by freshman Macayla Kent, fifth, 20:02; sophomore Kylie Perez, seventh, 20:19 and freshman Starla Tischhauser, 14th, 24:11.

"The bad thing about cross country is that you don't exactly know how your team does for some time after the race when the results are posted," said Norton head cross country coach George Rossi. "We knew it was going to be close with Oberlin and Sacred Heart but only three points separated the top three teams!

"Our girls ran so determined. We did not have a good start like we wanted but our girls made up spots in the first mile.

"Sierra had a great last half mile and Darcy and Marisa ran very well. Katelyn and Molly moved up making our 1-5 split 58 seconds.

"We need to do a better job of responding to moves other girls make but we are happy with the results.

"Now, we have to turn around the see Sacred Heart and Southeast of Saline again in the Ellsworth regional. We saw several things we need to work on before next week.

"On the junior varsity side, Shania won her fourth race of the year with a fantastic time. Macayla, Kylie and Starla all ran great races, with Shania and Starla both shattering their personal bests."

The top ten girls runners

were: Winter Polivka, Oberlin, first, 15:31; Allison Stutterheim, Southeast of Saline, 16:30, second; Caitie Shields, Oberlin, 16:38, third; Sarena Meier, Rock Hills, fourth, 16:42; Alex Elmore, Sacred Heart, fifth, 16:45; Sierra Griffith, Norton, sixth, 16:58; Lucy Giles, Minneapolis, seventh, 17:04; Kayla Walker, TMP, eighth, 17:06; Darcy Bainter, Norton, ninth, 17:09; Brittini Harlow, Lincoln, tenth, 17:10.

#### BOYS

Senior Marc Miller continued to pace the Norton boys as he finished sixth individually with a time of 18:17. He was followed by freshman Nate Hartwell in 11th with a clocking of 18:41. Senior Alec Hager was third fastest for the Blue Jays with a 37th place and 19:38. Right behind him was junior Dalton Vanover in 38th with a time of 19:39. Rounding out the top five placers for Norton was senior Keith Sander in 64th with a 20:48.

Also running for the Norton boys varsity were senior Garret Otter, 85th, 21:43 and sophomore Weston Erbert, 90th, 21:58.

Sophomore James King finished 10th in the junior varsity race in 22:01, followed by sophomore Skylar Jonhson, 19th, 23:07; junior David Smith, 25th, 24:20; freshman Harrison Woodyard, 28th, 24:53; junior Gin Lee, 36th, 27:52.

"Our guys made some steps in the right direction today," said coach Rossi. "We are moving up into the mix better than we did last week and I think we still have a lot of room to improve.

"Marc and Nate did a great job of getting into the front group and holding onto their positions. Alec and Dalton both did a great job in the last mile and Keith ran his season best time of the year.

"Right now, we are on the outside looking in when it comes to our regional; however, we control our own destiny. This group

has the capability to make it out of our regional but it is going to take everything they have."

The top ten boys runners were: Alex Conn, Beloit, first, 16:39; Caden Callaway, Pike Valley, second, 16:54; Wyatt Ratzlaff, Phillipsburg, third, 17:39; Chris Sandquist, Sacred Heart, fourth, 17:47; Wynter Wiebke, Lincoln, fifth, 18:11; Marc Miller, Norton, sixth, 18:17; Brandon Zenger, Belleville, seventh, 18:26; Stratton Brown, Sacred Heart, eighth, 18:27; Hunter Kline, Smith Center, ninth, 18:30; Andrew Hess, TMP, tenth, 18:31.

#### Next action

Norton will next compete in the Class 3A Regional Cross Country Meet this Saturday on the golf course in Ellsworth.

Friday night's game.  
The 6th grade spelling bee.  
Our county fair.

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your community. your newspaper.

**THE NORTON TELEGRAM**  
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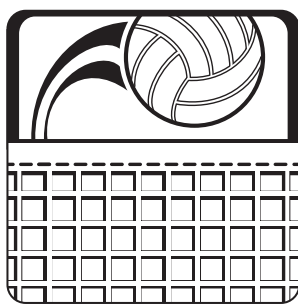
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