

Blue Jays are Bi-District Champions after 28-7 win over Riley County

By DICK BOYD

Coach Bruce Graber's Norton Community High School football team defeated Riley County 28-7 to win the Bi-District championship last night at Travis Field in Norton.

The victory extended Norton's record to 8-2 and extended the Blue Jays' season as well. Norton will play at Southeast of Saline on Saturday for the Regional championship. Kickoff is set for 5 p.m. Southeast of Saline remained undefeated by winning 20-19 over Hoisington last night. They are coached by former Norton griddler Pat Haxton.

Although Norton won 28-7 over Riley County, the game was closer in the first half, mainly due to penalties killing Blue Jay drives. Norton had nine penalties for 70 yards compared to only three assessments for 15 yards against Riley County. Norton led 7-0 at halftime and 14-0 after three quarters but scored again two plays into the fourth quarter and tallied again with 10:20 left in the game to take a 28-0 lead. Riley County scored their only touchdown with 2:49 left in the contest.

Norton's defense was superb against the run again as the Blue Jays limited the Falcons to just 86 yards rushing on 36 attempts for an average of 2.4 yards per carry.

"Offensively, we killed ourselves with penalties and missed some scoring opportunities because of that but we were playing hard," said Coach Graber. "We were much more efficient in the second half.

"Seth Mills had his best game reading the option, Aaron Overlease had a good night running and, of course, the linemen up front were doing a great job.

"Our defense had to make adjustments early because they came out in a formation we hadn't planned on. They hurt us early with misdirection and different formations but, once we made adjustments, they didn't get much.

"Overall, our defense played a

very physical game. Linebackers Ryan Maddy and Kyle Kats had great games with some big hits. Our special teams also played great and were as physical on kickoffs as they have been all year."

Michael Sprigg kicked off for Norton to start the game. Riley County picked up two first downs before punting to the Norton 22. Mills completed a pass to tight end Maddy for a first down on the 34 and fullback Kyle Kats gained seven yards. Mills ran a keeper to midfield but an illegal block penalty against Norton moved the ball back to the 31. Mills was sacked and Chris Davis punted. The ball went out of bounds on the Norton 36, giving Riley County good field position.

With the help of a pass interference penalty on Norton, Riley County moved to the Norton 17 yard line but a delay of game penalty and sack of quarterback Zack Sullivan by Norton linebacker Blake VanEaton stopped the Falcons on the 25. Norton made two first downs and the quarter ended in a scoreless tie.

Norton was forced to punt on the next series of downs and Davis' kick rolled down on the Riley County 20. The Blue Jay defense held Riley County and Luke Pfannenstiel returned their punt to the Norton 38. Mills connected with Nathan Broeckelman for a beautiful 50 yard pass to the Riley County 10 yard line. After Kats plunged for one yard, Mills ran the keeper around right end for the touchdown. William Wilhite kicked the extra point and Norton led 7-0 with 6:31 left in the first half.

Riley County returned Sprigg's kickoff to the 32 and, with the help of a diving, over-the-head catch of a pass from Sullivan by end Justin Glenn on the Norton 33, they drove to the Norton 10 yard line. Sullivan ran a keeper to the 2 but two straight plays netted only one yard against the stingy Norton defense. On fourth and one with just three seconds left in the first half, Sullivan tried another keeper and



Riley County's J.J. Cosh, No. 22, gets stuffed for a loss as the Norton defense completely controls the line of scrimmage.

was stopped short of the goalline, sending the two teams to intermission with Norton leading by just 7-0.

Riley County kicked off to Norton to start the second half. With Aaron Overlease picking up 33 yards on two carries, the Jays moved into Riley County territory but the drive stalled and Davis punted out of bounds on the Riley County 16. On third down, Kats intercepted a Sullivan pass on the 34. Seven plays later, Kats passed to Maddy in the end zone for a five yard touchdown. Wilhite kicked the extra point and Norton led 14-0 with 4:39 left in the third quarter.

Riley County earned two first downs after Sprigg's kickoff but fumbled and Maddy recovered on the Norton 41. Norton drove to the Riley County 18 as the third quarter ended.

On the second play of the fourth quarter, Mills ran a keeper 12

yards around right end to score his second touchdown of the game. Wilhite's extra point kick was good and Norton led 21-0 with 11:38 left to play. After Sprigg's kickoff, Maddy intercepted a Sullivan pass on the Riley County 40 and returned the ball to the 9 yard line. After a holding penalty against Norton on a four yard carry by Kats, Overlease exploded over the right side of the line from 16 yards out for Norton's fourth touchdown. Wilhite's kick made it 28-0 in favor of the Blue Jays with 10:20 left.

After an exchange of punts, Riley County scored their only touchdown on a four yard run up the middle by Velder Booth. Matt Crubel kicked the extra point to make the score 28-7 with 2:49 left in the game. The Norton reserves played the rest of the game and the Blue Jays were victorious by a 28-7 score.

Among the Norton defenders are Justin Shirk, No. 87 and Paul Juenemann, No. 54.

— Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

Norton rushed for 172 yards and passed for 100 yards for 272 yards of offense in the game. Leading rusher for the Blue Jays was Overlease with 98 yards on 16 carries for a 6 yards per carry average. Kats gained 27 yards on 9 carries and Mills picked up 32 yards on 7 carries. Other ball carriers for Norton were: VanEaton, 4 carries for 3 yards; Pfannenstiel, 1 for 4; Chris Davis, 1 for 2; Logan Kats, 2 for 3; Todd Bolt, 1 for 0.

Mills completed 4 of 6 passes for 95 yards and Kats completed 1 for 5 yards. Broeckelman was leading receiver with 1 catch for 50 yards. Maddy had 2 receptions for 17 yards, Kats had 1 for 20 yards and Overlease had 1 catch for 13 yards.

Kats had 2 kickoff returns for 38 yards and Pfannenstiel had 1 punt return for 8 yards. Sprigg had 5 kickoffs for a 40.6 yard average.

Leading rusher for Riley County was Booth with 7 carries for 39 yards. Sullivan had 8 carries for 15 yards. Glenn caught 6 passes for 54 yards.

"It was a great win," said Coach Graber. "I praise my coaching staff for getting our players ready. Our players were focused.

"It's great to have another opportunity to play. Southeast of Saline is undefeated and they have had a great year. It will be a great challenge for us."

GAME STATISTICS

Norton	Riley County
16	First Downs 12
41-172	Yards Rushing 36-86
100	Yards Passing 95
272	Total Yards 181
5-7-0	Passes Compl. 12-21-2
0-1	Fumbles Lost 1-1
9-70	Penalties 3-15
4-24	Punts 3-35

Play by play of Norton's 16-13 win over Phillipsburg Thursday

By DICK BOYD

Coach Bruce Graber's Norton Community High School football team defeated Phillipsburg 16-13 on Thursday to win the District 10 championship when junior William Wilhite kicked a 22-yard field goal with eight seconds left.

First Quarter

The game began in host Phillipsburg's favor when Jarret Abell returned the opening kickoff off 84 yards for a touchdown. Abell also kicked the extra point attempt and missed, giving the Panthers a 6-0 lead just 12 seconds into the game.

The rest of the first half belonged to the Blue Jays who scored 13 unanswered points and did not allow a Panther first down.

After their touchdown, Phillipsburg kicked off to Norton and sophomore back Lance Roe returned the ball to the Norton 44. Senior tailback Aaron Overlease ran for five yards on first down and senior fullback Kyle Kats plunged for two more. On third down, however, Norton tried a pass and it fell incomplete. Sophomore kicker Chris Davis punted and the ball went out of bounds on the Panther 11. Running back Travis Yoxall gained three but quarterback Miguel Mendoza was thrown for a loss of four. Abell lost two more and the Panthers punted.

Norton fumbled and Phillipsburg recovered on their 36. Again, the Norton defense was equal to the occasion. Yoxall was stopped for no gain, Mendoza was run out of the pocket and gained one. Mendoza went back to pass again and was gang-tackled on the 34 by senior defensive end Paul Juenemann, junior defensive back Luke Pfannenstiel and sophomore linebacker Blake VanEaton. Phillipsburg punted and the ball

rolled dead on the Norton 28. Overlease ran for five and senior quarterback Seth Mills ran the option for a first down on the Panther 35. VanEaton replaced Overlease and gained five. Kats ran over the left side for a first down on the 25. Kats got the call again and powered his way for another first down on the 15. Several plays later, Mills sneaked into the end zone from the 1 yard line. Wilhite's extra point kick missed and the score was tied 6-6 with 4:12 left in the first quarter.

Senior Michael Sprigg kicked off for Norton and VanEaton came charging downfield to tackle Yoxall on the 15. Fullback Catlin Zahorsky gained eight on two carries. On third and two, Yoxall took a handoff and VanEaton met him just as he got the ball, tackling him for a two-yard loss. Phillipsburg punted again and the ball rolled dead on the Norton 41. Overlease ran for six, then plunged for a first down on the Panther 48. Overlease lost a yard and Kats was stopped for no gain. A third down pass from Mills to Overlease was limited to just a two-yard gain and Davis punted again.

Abell called for a fair catch on the Phillipsburg 14. Taylor Redinger replaced Mendoza at quarterback. He ran for five yards as the quarter ended with the score tied 6-6.

Second quarter

Zahorsky carried the ball on second down but met a whole host of Norton tacklers and gained nothing. Grant Babcock tried to run around right end and was stopped for no gain. The Panthers punted and Pfannenstiel returned the pigskin to midfield. An illegal block by Norton brought the ball back to the Norton 40. Mills went upstairs and hit Kats for a first down on the

Panther 44. Overlease was stopped for no gain but senior tight end Justin Shirk made a great catch of a slant pass from Mills for a first down on the 27. Overlease ran for three yards but lost five on second down and two Mills passes fell incomplete, turning the ball over to Phillipsburg on the 29.

The Panthers were penalized five for being offside. Redinger gained two but VanEaton tackled Yoxall for a two-yard loss, a pass fell incomplete and Phillipsburg punted. The ball rolled dead on the Norton 41 and the Blue Jays drove 59 for their second touchdown. Kats weaved his way through the Panther defense for a first down on the Phillipsburg 40. Overlease ran for seven yards, lost one yard, then ran for a first down on the 28. Mills ran the keeper for another Norton first down on the 15. Overlease took a handoff from Mills and was stopped but a face mask penalty against the Panthers moved the ball to the 7. Mills sneaked to the 2 and Overlease plunged to the 1. Mills sneaked to the 1-foot line, then VanEaton burst over the right side of the line for the touchdown. This time, Wilhite's extra point kick was good and Norton led 13-6 with 1:08 left in the first half.

Sprigg's kickoff went out of bounds but Norton was offside and had to kick over after a five-yard penalty. This time Abell received the kick and gained nothing as Jason Green stopped him from advancing the ball past the 32. Yoxall ran for three but Phillipsburg lost the yardage due to a delay of game penalty. Shirk and Juenemann sacked Redinger, then Redinger tried to run a keeper but Roe tackled him for no gain as the first half ended with Norton leading 13-6.

Third quarter

Phillipsburg kicked off to Norton to start the second half. VanEaton returned the ball to the Norton 30. Overlease lost six on first down, then a Mills pass fell incomplete. Mills completed a 15-yard pass to Shirk but Norton fumbled and Phillipsburg recovered on the Norton 31. Zahorsky gained one, then Redinger fumbled when hit but recovered for a three-yard loss. Redinger ran around left end to the 25. On fourth down, he passed to Zahorsky in the flat but he gained just a yard and the Blue Jays took over the pigskin.

Overlease gained one. Mills ran a keeper but Norton was penalized back to the 12 for holding. Overlease was stopped for no gain, then Mills was sacked back on the 4. Davis punted but the ball went out of bounds on the Norton 21.

Yoxall ran up the middle to the 15. Zahorsky plunged into the line and got nothing but Redinger found running room around right end and scored Phillipsburg's second touchdown. Abell kicked the extra point to tie the score at 13-13 with 4:55 left in the quarter. Phillipsburg squib kicked the ball on the kickoff and VanEaton returned the ball to the 25.

An illegal motion penalty cost Norton five but Overlease gained five. Mills gained nothing on a keeper but passed to Shirk for a first down on the Norton 37. Kats ran up the middle to the Norton 45. VanEaton plunged for a first down on the Norton 48. Kats gained two yards and a Mills pass fell incomplete. Mills threw a flat pass to Overlease but he was tackled immediately and lost 10. Davis punted and the ball rolled dead on the Phillipsburg 23. Redinger ran for five yards as the third quarter ended with the score tied 13-13.

Fourth quarter

Juenemann and Heath Vincent tackled Redinger for no gain to start the final quarter but Abell ran for a first down on the 33. Yoxall got loose on a trap play over the right side and Overlease made a game-saving tackle on the Norton 30 yard line. Yoxall got the ball again but was stopped this time after just one yard. Senior linebacker Ryan Maddy tackled Redinger for no gain. The Panthers fumbled and Shirk recovered for Norton on the Blue Jay 30. Overlease gained nothing and Kats drove for one yard. A pass fell incomplete and Norton punted. Davis' kick went out of bounds on the Panther 35. Redinger lost one yard and a reverse to Abell netted two yards. The Panthers gained nothing on third down and punted. The ball rolled dead on the Norton 39.

A delay of game penalty cost Norton five and Kats ran for no gain. A pass interference penalty against Phillipsburg gave Norton a first down on the Norton 49. Mills ran a keeper but a holding penalty cost Norton 10. Mills connected with Overlease at midfield. A third down pass was incomplete, however, and Davis punted. A block in the back penalty against the Panthers moved the ball back to the 8 yard line. Phillipsburg was offside and the ball was taken half

the distance to the goalline on the 4. Yoxall ran to the 7 before Maddy tackled him. Redinger ran a keeper but senior defensive tackle Blake Hillebrand tackled him on the 11. A pass was incomplete and Phillipsburg punted out of bounds on the Panther 43 with 1:53 remaining in the game.

Mills passed to Kats and he was run out of bounds on the 23 for a first down. Overlease gained nothing and a flat pass to Clay Madden carried to the 18. Mills went back to pass again and found no receivers open. He tucked the ball and ran around right end. He was finally run out of bounds on the Panther 9 with 36 seconds left. VanEaton plunged to the 5 with 20 seconds showing on the clock. Kats ran up the middle but was stopped for no gain with eight seconds left.

Wilhite was called on to kick a field goal from 22-yards out and he responded in true championship fashion with a perfect booming kick that would have been good from much farther. The Blue Jays led 16-13 but four seconds remained in the game. Sprigg kicked off and Phillipsburg took over on their 38. A flat pass was good from Redinger to Brandon Kaup for a five-yard gain as the whistle blew to end the game with Norton winning 16-13.

Four Team Juco Basketball Jamboree Sat., Nov. 6 & Sun., Nov. 7 WaKeeney High School Gym

Saturday, November 6
5 p.m.-Brown Mackie vs. McCook, NE
7 p.m.-Dodge City vs Independence
Sunday, November 7
Noon-McCook, NE vs Dodge City
2 p.m.-Brown Mackie vs Independence
ADMISSION: ADULTS \$5.00; CHILDREN \$3.00
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