

Twinsburg rallies past Lancaster

by Steve Batko | Correspondent ~ Twinsburg Bulletin

The Lancaster football team had just traveled north about three hours when the Golden Gales starting running again at Twinsburg Tiger Stadium.

After a first quarter that was more like a track meet, Twinsburg settled down defensively for a 44-21 win over Lancaster Sept. 7.

In fact, Joe Schiavone's defense could not stop the Gales' Wing T offense, orchestrated by former NFL running back Rob Carpenter, the coach at Lancaster who has taken his club to the state playoffs six times in the past decade.

The numbers were staggering: Lancaster had 165 yards, five first downs and averaged 11.8 yards a play in the first stanza.

However, after adjustments by Schiavone, Lancaster was held to a paltry 41 yards the rest of the game on 35 plays as Twinsburg won after a 23-21 halftime lead.

Twinsburg created chaos defensively, forcing two fumbles, an interception and a safety by the Tigers' punt team.

"We made some adjustments, but mostly our guys had to settle in and play," said the Tiger coach, whose club moved to 1-2 along with the Gales.

"Simulating the Wing-T is difficult to ask your scout team to do," said Schiavone. "I told our guys all week that they have to be patient and very disciplined against this style of offense."

The Gales scored on their first three possessions -- 190 yards against the Tiger D -- to take a 21-7 lead early in the game.

However, Lancaster's next first down came with 2:24 left in the game.

Set up by a 43-yard pass, Lancaster scored on fourth-and-one from the Tiger 5 on its first scoring drive of 71 yards. Jerry King scored to make it 7-0.

Twinsburg responded with a 4-minute, 11-play, 80-yard drive as senior quarterback Jalen Washington tossed a perfect 20-yard touchdown pass just over Gale safety Ben Bowman to junior wide out Mike Peelman.

Lancaster answered by burning the Tigers with the pass again on the ensuing drive as Riley Theiss hit a wide open King for a 41-yard TD pass with 1:56 left.

A 16-yard punt set up the Gales' next drive at the Tiger 46. Four plays later, King went up the gut for a 21-yard TD burst and Twinsburg was down 21-7 with 11:23 left in the first half.

Schiavone saw his offense then stall on downs at the Gales' 20, but a fumbled snap by Theiss on first down and a recovery by Tiger sophomore Noah Edwards gave the ball right back to the hosts.

Washington then found Peelman again on a roll out pass for a six-yard TD pass. Frank Candau's boot made it 21-14 at the 6:12 mark.

Twinsburg's defense then forced the Gales' first punt.

A 26-yard pass to junior wide receiver Kon Grewal set up a 23-yard TD run by senior Tyrone McGuinea, who broke a tackle by Justin Sharpe and walked in the end zone. Candau's kick made it 21-21 with 3:14 left.

Then, a high punt snap sailed into the end zone on Lancaster's next series. Twinsburg got the safety to lead 23-21.

The Tigers went up 30-21 with 1:10 left in the third as junior tailback Martell Anthony used an eight-yard cut back run to score.

On the hosts next series, Twinsburg broke open the game on the second play as Washington hit Grewal with a 61-yard TD pass. It was 37-21 with 11:06 left in the game.

Anthony, who had 164 all-purpose yards in the win, added a 1-yard TD plunge.

Schiavone dropped a man off of Twinsburg's base 4-3 set with a 3-man front that seemed to help shut down Lancaster's Wing T.

"We did go to 3-man fronts as an adjustment to their offense at times, and we were able to disrupt some of their blocking schemes with it," said the coach.

The defense had a team effort as Scott Tegowski had eight tackles and Ben Bisesi and Cameron Dial each had seven. Edwards had five stops to go with the fumble recovery, plus broke up a pass and had a tackle for a loss.

Linebacker Jacob Turay and Chris Rode also had six stops as Turay had one behind the line. Junior Darion Eiland had an interception and Rob Williams had a fumble recovery.

Washington was superb. He was 16-30 passing for 256 yards, three touchdowns, and no interceptions. He also ran for 37 yards.

"Jalen had a phenomenal game, and he was able to do what he did because our offensive line," said Schiavone. "The line was able to give Jalen plenty of time to read the defense and make the appropriate throw.

Twinsburg's unproven receiving corps, which includes McGuinea and Anthony out of the backfield, is making strides. Washington found six different targets.

McGuinea had four catches for 43 yards while Grewal had a breakout game with three catches for 96 yards and a TD.

Peelman was also impressive with three receptions for 38 yards and two scores. Anthony had three catches for 30 yards, Anthony Ellis had two for 42 yards, and Tallin Johnson added a 7-yard catch.

"The receiving corps is getting better every week as they work with Jalen," explained Schiavone.

"They are improving and so is our depth, but the guys know that they have to make catches and be more consistent. We started to show that this week at times."

On the ground, Anthony had 12 rushes for 55 yards while McGuinea ran nine times for 54. Turay added a 12-yard run while Washington (7-37) and Ellis (1-7) also helped. Anthony had 79 yards in returns.

King led the Gales with 68 yards and two touchdowns rushing, plus 84 yards receiving and a TD. However, King was held to one total yard in the second half.

Twinsburg hosts Stow (1-2) on Sept. 14 at 7 p.m.

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Lancaster Gales let 14-point lead evaporate

Lancaster held to 24 yards after first 3 possessions in falling to Twinsburg

Written by David Bickham ~ Eagle-Gazette Correspondent

TWINSBURG -- After watching Lancaster amass 190 yards of offense on their first three possessions, it's hard to think they would manage just 24 yards the rest of the game.

The Golden Gales scored on their first three possessions to take a 21-7 lead early in the game, but the wheels came off after that, and Twinsburg rolled to a 44-21 nonleague win against Lancaster.

"We made some mistakes and let them back in the game," Gales coach Rob Carpenter said. "They have a good offense. (Quarterback Jalen) Washington is an All-Ohio player, and they have some nice players around him."

Lancaster tried to set the tone early when quarterback Riley Theiss hit Jerry King with a 43-yard pass on the first play from scrimmage. Five plays later, King burst through from the 5-yard line for a 7-0 lead.

Twinsburg answered, driving 80 yards on 11 plays to tie the score. But the Gales struck twice more, racing out to a 21-7 lead. From there, it was all Twinsburg.

"They fought to get back into the game," Carpenter said. "They came in 0-2, but they were like a caged animal. We made some big mistakes, and they capitalized on them and got rolling."

As the Gales were struggling to make anything happen on offense, the Tigers were in high gear. Washington finished the game with 259 yards of passing and three touchdowns on a 16-for-31 night. Running back Martell Anthony added 62 yards on the ground to help Twinsburg roll up 411 yards of offense.

"We fumbled snaps. We snapped it out of the end zone. We just kept giving them opportunities," Carpenter said. "We gave them all the opportunities they needed."

Any hope of a Lancaster comeback was thwarted as the Tigers scored two late touchdowns to secure the win.

With the loss, the Gales fell to 1-2. They begin Ohio Capital Conference-Ohio Division play next week at Pickerington Central.

"We have a lot of good players on this team," Carpenter said. "But we have guys making mistakes, and that has cost us the past few weeks. We need to eliminate those mistakes."

King led the Gales offense with 65 yards and two touchdowns rushing and 84 yards and a touchdown receiving.

Nordonia football stuns Tigers

by Steve Batko | Correspondent ~ Twinsburg Bulletin

First-year Nordonia football coach Jeff Fox had nothing to say about himself after his squad after a 36-12 win over rival Twinsburg in the third annual Bob Evans Backyard Brawl Aug. 31 at Twinsburg Tiger Stadium.

But Fox had plenty to say about his team.

"This is not about me," said Fox. "I think this is a huge win for the program, and for these kids," he stressed. "Twinsburg is a big cross-town rival and our kids battled."

Twinsburg, which lost 28 seniors to graduation, moved to 0-2 as this was their first game since All-Ohio back John Barton had a season-ending knee injury.

Costly turnovers, mistakes and penalties riddled the Tigers. Nordonía (1-1) came in hungry after a heartbreaking one-point overtime loss to Mayfield.

"We just did not execute in all phases of the game," said Twinsburg coach Joe Schiavone. "This is a good football team, but we have to become a better team and stop shooting ourselves in the foot."

Leading 19-6 at halftime, the Knights had many big plays on offense and cashed in two Tiger turnovers into 13 points.

Twinsburg senior free safety Cooper Rea had an interception on the first play of the game.

After new Tiger tailback Tyrone McGuinea just broke two tackles to convert a first down on fourth-and-1, senior Jalen Washington passed to Mike Peelman to move Twinsburg to the Knight 1-yard line. However, the play was called back due to a holding penalty,

The Tigers' next possession saw a Washington pass get tipped and Nordonía senior Ben Halkowski grabbed the loose ball. Two plays later, junior Jordan Nobles scored on a 27-yard touchdown run and it was 6-0 after a missed PAT.

Nobles had a breakout game with 27 carries for 156 yards and three touchdowns.

After an 18-yard punt by Twinsburg, Nordonía had a 65-yard touchdown pass from senior quarterback Tyler Alders up the middle to his sophomore brother, Alex Alders. The wide out beat safety coverage and outraced the Tigers.

A bobbled snap on the extra point kept it at 12-0.

Twinsburg fumbled the ensuing kick off as sophomore Denzel Ward got the loose ball to give Nordonía the ball at the Tiger 19.

A 12-yard strike from Tyler Alders to Ward put the ball at the Tiger 2.

Two plays later, Nobles had a 1-yard touchdown burst to make it 19-0 with 2:48 left. Senior placekicker Ryan Bauer nailed the rest of his extra points from that point and added a 34-yard field goal late in the game.

Keyed by a 38-yard pass to junior tailback Martell Anthony, Twinsburg got to the Nordonía 8-yard line early in the second period. However, the Tigers fumbled again and Knight linebacker Alex Woichevich recovered.

The Tigers fumbled the ensuing punt, but Noah Edwards jumped on the ball for the hosts. That led to a 30-yard catch by McGuinea to set up a Frank Candau 26-yard field goal with 7:37 left in the first half.

Candau added a 34-yard field goal on the Tigers' next possession to cut the lead to 19-6. It was set up by a 14-yard pass from Washington to senior Rob Williams on a fake punt.

Schiavone's troops had their best drive of the game to start the second half as the 10-play, 83 yard drive was culminated with a 10-yard TD scamper by Washington, who was 5-for-5 passing.

The PAT was blocked by Alex Alders, but Twinsburg cut the lead to 19-12 with 8:17 left in the third quarter

Washington got hot with his receivers despite not having Barton's big-play potential.

"We didn't overhaul our offense with John's loss," said Schiavone. "We decided that we're going to do what we do."

Alex Alders returned the kick off 29 yards. In the third play from scrimmage, Nobles busted loose up the middle on a belly read option by Tyler Alders. Nobles went 56 yards for the TD and it was 26-12 with 7:31 left.

After a three-and-out by Twinsburg, Nordonía responded with a 62-yard scoring drive ñ its first drive of the game that featured more than one first down.

Tyler Alders used a play-fake and ran around left end for an 8-yard TD run to make it 33-12 with 3:35 left in the third. He passed for 107 yards and a score overall and rushed for 43 yards and a score.

Washington was 13-30 passing for 187 yards plus he had 13 carries for 11 yards and a touchdown. Washington hit seven different receivers, but was hurt by four drops.

Anthony provided a spark for the Tigers with 99 all-purpose yards.

McGuinea added 61 total yards while banged-up junior Cameron Dial had three sacks on defense.

Nordonía hosts Parma in non-league play on Sept. 7 while Twinsburg hosts Lancaster.

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