

## 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. Nordonia (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 Nordonia 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, Nordonia 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 Nordonia 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 Nordonia 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, Nordonia 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.

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

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## **[Greenmen hang on to win 29-23; Twinsburg loses Barton for the season Tigers fall in thriller vs. Aurora](#)**

by MICHAEL LEONARD | SPORTS EDITOR - Twinsburg Bulletin

Twinsburg -- Another year, another classic played between Twinsburg and Aurora football.

This year's game, however, could prove more costly to the Tigers than just one loss.

Aurora hung on late to preserve a 29-23 win over the Tigers Aug. 24 at Tiger Stadium in a game that featured many changes in momentum.

However, the biggest news coming out the contest was the fact Twinsburg running back John Baton has been lost for the season.

Twinsburg athletic director Mark Maslona confirmed Aug. 27 that Barton suffered a season-ending knee injury. Maslona noted Barton's long-term prognosis is excellent and he should be working out by spring.

The injury happened during a punt return early in the third quarter.

Prior to his injury, Barton had rushed for 79 yards and two touchdowns.

"My heart goes out to John Barton," said Aurora coach Bob Mihalik. "You hate to see any player go down like that, especially a player of that caliber."

Twinsburg coach Joe Schiavone noted that his team made too many mistakes, as it had three turnovers and 98 yards worth of penalties.

"We have to cut out the mistakes," Schiavone said. "I told the boys I was very proud of our effort. Ever since I came here, we always fight to the very end."

Although Aurora won the turnover battle, it was Twinsburg who snagged the first takeaway.

Ben Bisesi intercepted Aurora quarterback George Bollas on the game's first drive and returned it deep into Greenmen territory.

Seven plays later, Barton plunged in from two yards out, giving Twinsburg a 7-0 lead with 7:32 left in the first quarter.

Bollas completed only one pass in the game, but it was a big one. He found tight end Zach Smerciak open in the flat. Smerciak turned it into a 55-yard touchdown with several nice cutbacks.

Smerciak also grabbed two interceptions in the game.

Bollas finished 1-of-5 for 55 yards through the air, while he also ran for 59 yards.

Aurora's second touchdown came on another one-play drive, as Zach Quinn ran 38 yards for a touchdown with 3:07 left in the first half.

With Aurora in quick-strike mode, Twinsburg grounded out a sustained drive.

Barton capped a 14-play, 79-yard drive by plunging in from 1 yard out with 2:28 left in the half. However, Aurora blocked the extra point to keep it at 14-13 at halftime.

Mihalik made some of his trademark halftime adjustments. After playing a traditional pro-set offense in the first half, Aurora switched to a three-man I-formation in the second half. The result was Aurora getting its running game going, as Bollas didn't throw a pass in the second half.

Twinsburg struck first in the second half, as Frank Candau booted a 27-yard field goal with 4:33 left in the third quarter.

However, Aurora struck right back. A five-play, 80-yard drive was capped by Quinn's second touchdown of the night from two yards out.

After Smerciak returned an interception to the Tiger 29-yard line, Quinn ran in his third touchdown of the night with 10:49 left from eight yards out. Twinsburg blocked the extra point, but still trailed 27-16.

Quinn finished the night with 121 yards rushing and three touchdowns on 19 carries. He did most of his damage in the second half.

However, Twinsburg didn't give up.

On the next play from scrimmage, Tiger quarterback Jalen Washington hit Tyrone McGuinea for an 83-yard touchdown to cut it to 27-23.

It was an up-and-down night for Washington. He went 17-of-33 for 307 yards and a touchdown through the air, but also was intercepted three times and sacked five times.

"Jalen is a heck of a ball player," Schiavone said. "He makes plays. I'm certain he'll bounce back."

Twinsburg had several more chances to win it, but a pair of huge punts by Quinn tilted the first position against the Tigers.

First, Aurora sacked Washington in the end zone to force a safety, as the ball rolled out of the back of the end zone with 7:11 left. Aurora's Patrick Dougherty put the pressure on.

On Twinsburg's next drive, Washington was sacked on fourth down near midfield.

Twinsburg's defense held Aurora, but Twinsburg didn't get the ball back until 49 seconds were left.

The Tigers had a chance to pull it out, however, after Washington found Talin Johnson open near midfield. The pass play, plus a 15-yard roughing the passer penalty on Aurora, set Twinsburg up at the Greenmen 30 yards line with 12 seconds left.

However, the Greenmen sacked Washington on the next play and time ran out.

Nordonia will visit Tiger Stadium Aug. 31 at 7 p.m.

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### **Frank Orteca, Twinsburg '09 Named Captain for Mount Union**

Frank Orteca '09 has been named co-captain for this year's football team at the University of Mount Union. Frank, who is now in his senior season for the Purple Raiders playing defensive tackle was a second team all OAC selection in 2011. Frank is joined by other Twinsburg alumni Matt Fechko '10, Mike Maier '10, Urban Lee '11, and Tre Jones '12.

### **Injury removes Twinsburg's John Barton from field, but not from leadership role**

Tim Warsinskey, Plain Dealer Reporter, August 28, 2012 3:29 a.m.

On the field, Barton himself knew he was in a bad way.

"It felt like somebody wiped my knee out with a baseball bat," he said. "My lower leg went one way and my knee went the other, and it tore my knee apart.

"I knew right away it was bad. It was very painful. I couldn't get up and I couldn't straighten my leg. It was awful."

Barton had worked most of his young life for this moment, this season. He was among the top running backs after compiling nearly 1,800 yards offense and scoring 31 touchdowns last season. A significant amount of Twinsburg's high hopes for this season rested on his shoulders.

Barton thrived in big games and clutch situations.

"It's the feeling I love after you come through for the team," he said. "There's nothing that feels better in the world, especially in big games and big moments. You dream about those moments, and when they happen, it's amazing."

In an instant, the dream ended Friday against Aurora. He scored two touchdowns in the first half and his team trailed, 14-13, in the third quarter when a punt return on which he wasn't tackled - he simply tried

to change directions - was his last play. He ripped the anterior cruciate and medial collateral ligaments in his left knee, a devastating injury for a football player, especially a tailback. He will have surgery and will never play high school football again.

It's always a terribly sad moment for a player, a team and a community, especially in the first hour of the season, when a player is carted off the field and heads to a hospital. But last Friday, something else happened that said a lot about Barton and the Tigers.

He was loaded up on the cart, his leg in an air cast and his knee covered in ice. The cart crept toward the bench, then stopped on the track. Barton propped himself up so he could see the field, and he stayed.

Doctors gave him the choice of going to a hospital for immediate pain treatment, or stay and watch.

He stayed.

He watched the third quarter and the fourth, in which his team obviously missed him on the field and was unable to sustain a comeback in a 29-23 loss. One by one, players and coaches checked on him, and it was Barton, still the co-captain, who was encouraging them throughout the game, and consoling them afterward.

This went on for a full 30 minutes following the game. The stadium emptied and players who had gone to the locker room and changed came back out and found Barton still in the cart, still pointed toward midfield, still in full pads, still being the co-captain his teammates elected him to be. He was assuring them they will rebound from the loss. He was proving leadership never suffers a season-ending injury.

"I wasn't going to miss [the second half] for the world," Barton said. "It was pretty painful when I was sitting there, but I wasn't thinking about it.

"After the game, I started to realize how bad it hurt. But I wanted to talk to my teammates. I could tell they were hurting. I wanted to be there for them in that moment. Basically, I felt horrible about the whole situation."

Twinsburg coach Joe Schiavone said it was "heartbreaking" to lose a player of Barton's talent and character. On Saturday, Barton promised coaches he will not miss a practice, meeting or a game the rest of the season. He volunteered to be team cameraman.

This came as no surprise. Throughout the summer, Barton often had to be ordered off the field to rest while the first-team defense practiced against the scout offense. He wanted to be the scout running back, to give the defense a better challenge. Now, he won't be that guy.

"I've thought about that a lot," he said. "It's definitely hard. It's sad, you know, but I've accepted it. Stuff happens in life."

On Monday, Barton woke up in too much pain to go to school, but in a few hours it subsided enough that he went anyway, attending half the day on crutches because there are no injury timeouts in calculus. Barton has a 3.9 grade point average and hopes to study medicine in college.

He began the season with one college football offer, from Harvard, and was hoping to attract more. He said Monday he won't give up on playing football in college.

"Hopefully," he said, "some school will take a chance on me."

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## [Aurora's 'Zach Attack' leads Greenmen to football win over Twinsburg](#)

Tim Warsinskey, Plain Dealer Reporter, August 24, 2012 11:22 p.m.

TWINSBURG, Ohio - Everyone talks about the lights on Friday nights, but what no one in the stands can see, no one on the sidelines can know, and no one listening on the radio can hear are the nerves of teenage football players going haywire with excitement, fear, pain and intensity.

On the first Friday, especially, it's like sticking a wet finger into a socket. Those who regulate the energy for 48 minutes more often find victory in the end, and so it was for a poised Aurora football team that survived numerous jolts to beat host Twinsburg, 29-23, in front of a near-capacity crowd.

The game ended with Twinsburg snapping at the Aurora 30-yard line and, as he was most of the night, quarterback Jalen Washington chased down for a sack. The previous play was a 47-yard pass by Washington, plus a 15-yard roughing the passer penalty, typifying the seesaw of emotions and fortunes.

"There were so many turning points, turnovers and big plays, and we were losing guys left and right," Aurora coach Bob Mihalik said.

Two steady hands who were plugged-in throughout the night were Aurora's "Zach Attack" - senior running back/inside linebacker Zach Quinn and senior tight end/linebacker Zach Smierciak.

Quinn, a Toledo recruit, rushed for 121 yards and three touchdowns on 19 carries and he contributed two sacks, a blocked extra-point attempt and a key, 62-yard punt.

"I'll do whatever they want me to do and play where they need me," said Quinn, a linebacker recruit.

Smierciak turned a swing pass into a 55-yard touchdown in the first half and intercepted two passes.

Aurora was missing its top three cornerbacks to injuries and a suspension while facing an offense that used four-receiver sets, but the Greenmen covered up by blitzing speedy quarterback Washington, who passed for 307 yards and a touchdown, but he threw three interceptions and was sacked five times for a net minus-13 yards rushing on 14 carries.

"We had a bunch of young guys and they did a great job. They're athletic kids," Quinn said.

Aurora keyed in on Washington in the second half when Twinsburg lost standout running back John Barton to a knee injury on a punt return. He scored two first-half touchdowns and rushed for 76 yards on 16 carries, but he watched the rest of the game from a cart with his leg immobilized.

Barton's replacement, state wrestling qualifier Tyrone McGuinea, caught an 83-yard touchdown pass that cut Aurora's lead to 27-23 with 10:21 remaining.

Aurora wasn't able to score again, but it added two points on defensive end Patrick Dougherty's safety, a sack of Washington. Dougherty, an Indiana recruit, later suffered a separated shoulder.

Twinsburg responded, and McGuinea recovered an Aurora fumble on the ensuing free kick. An Aurora unsportsmanlike conduct penalty put the Tigers at the Aurora 38. On first down from the 21, a Washington pass off a scramble was intercepted by defensive back Jake McVay at the 2, though Twinsburg coaches argued the ball hit the ground. The Tigers' defense held and allowed them to get the ball back in the final minute for the last, unsuccessful drive.

"They fight till the end," Twinsburg coach Joe Schiavone said. "Our guys are resilient and they bounce back from things. We'll bounce back from this."

Aurora led at the half, 14-13, with Barton scoring twice for Twinsburg, but Quinn blocked an extra-point attempt. Quinn scored on a 38-yard run and Smierciak caught his TD pass.

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### **[Watch the 2012 Cable 9 Football Preview!](#)**

Local Cable Station "Cable 9" who's covered the Tigers for many seasons has their 2012 football preview. Click [here](#) to see it!

### **[High school football conference previews for Northeast Ohio teams for 2012 season](#)**

Bob Fortuna, Joe Maxse and Tim Rogers, Plain Dealer Reporters, August 22, 2012 11:30 p.m.

#### VALLEY DIVISION

PD projected finish

1. Solon (10-2 overall, 4-1 league in 2011)
2. Mentor (11-2, 4-1)
- 3. Twinsburg (7-3, 4-1)**
4. Brunswick (6-4, 1-4)
5. Medina (4-6, 2-3)
6. Strongsville (1-9, 0-5)

#### Preseason awards

Preseason offensive MVP: Mitch Trubisky, Mentor, QB, Sr., 6-3, 200.

Preseason defensive MVP: Darian Hicks, Solon, CB/WR, Sr., 5-10, 172.

Preseason most valuable lineman: Ryan Pastor, Solon, OT/DE, Sr., 6-3, 215.

Other key players: Drew Barksdale, Solon, WR/QB/S, Sr., 6-0, 180; **John Barton, Twinsburg, TB, Sr., 5-10, 185**; Clay Caruso, Strongsville, DE, Jr., 6-3, 220; Khoury Crenshaw, Solon, TB/CB, Sr., 5-10, 155; Jaylen Dowdy, Mentor, CB, Sr., 6-2, 190; Danny Eller, Medina, WR, Sr., 6-1, 170; Brandon Fritts, Mentor, WR, Jr., 6-4, 210; Tyler Galosi, Medina, DE, Sr., 6-2, 230; CJ Hanna, Solon, LB/FB, Sr., 5-7, 185; Al Kamczyc, Strongsville, OT, Sr., 6-3, 285; Conner Krizancic, Mentor, WR, Jr., 6-2, 190; Nick Roberts, Brunswick, TB, Sr., 5-11, 185; **Jalen Washington, Twinsburg, QB, Sr., 6-0, 175.**

Outlook: Defending tri-champs Solon, Mentor and Twinsburg again are so close in talent. Solon's offense will be balanced thanks to Barksdale, a Boston College recruit, Hicks (Michigan State), Crenshaw and RB/LB George Berry, and its lines are always technically sound. Mentor has rebuilding to do on defense. Mentor's edge rests in its no-huddle, spread offense. Trubisky (North Carolina) and a group of standout receivers will score at will but someone has to step up in the running game. **Twinsburg has one of the better 1-2 punches on offense with Washington and Barton, and don't forget the Tigers ruined Mentor's bid for an unbeaten season last year with a 38-35 Week 10 win.** Brunswick will challenge from a distance because of Roberts and TB/WR Keith Yohman. Medina has its third coach in as many seasons with Dan Sutherland. Strongsville's defense will be improved.

Top 3 games: Oct. 5, Solon at Mentor; Oct. 12, Twinsburg at Solon; Oct. 26, Twinsburg at Mentor.

### **[Twinsburg football seeks to reload, return to playoffs](#)**

by Steve Batko - Correspondent ~ Twinsburg Bulletin

Yes, the Twinsburg football program returns an All-Ohio running back and an All-Ohio quarterback this fall.

However, developing chemistry and some quality depth will be the deciding factors for the 2012 season.

Second-year head coach Joe Schiavone is back and is excited about this upcoming season, but the 36-year old mentor also has some concerns.

Twinsburg loss 28 seniors from a strong 7-3 squad last year and is working to fill its two-deep position charts.

While the Tigers had a three-year state playoff berth snapped in 2011, Twinsburg did gain a share of its fourth straight division championship, as it tied with Solon and Mentor for the Northeast Ohio Conference Valley Division title.

"We had a very productive off season," said Schiavone. "Our speed and athleticism are our cornerstones of success. Our systems on offense and defense are in place and the players are comfortable with it.

"Our offense will be leaned on heavily with the return of [quarterback] Jalen Washington and [running back] John Barton on offense. Replacing 28 seniors to graduation will be major concern. How fast this team can gel will determine how well we do early on."

Twinsburg's staff will include a run game coordinator in assistant Jim Lipinski (coach of the offensive line) and Matt Witting is the pass game coordinator. Witting coaches the backs and slots.

Other returning coaches are Jeff Tomko (defensive secondary), Mark Mole (defensive line and special teams coordinator), Chris Shaffer (wide receivers), plus freshmen coaches Bryan Kover and Mike Henderson.

"I think the 2012 schedule may be tougher than ever, but we are looking forward to it," said Schiavone, who faces a brutal slate in the NOC Valley Division with Mentor, Solon, Brunswick, Strongsville and Medina.

The Tigers host their first four games, starting with the Aug. 24 season opener against Aurora.

Only three athletes return to the balanced Tigers' spread set. Last year, Twinsburg averaged 35 points, 186.7 yards passing and 181 yards on the ground per game last year.

Barton is back after making second-team All-Ohio. The 5-10, 185-pound Barton is a two-time All-NOC pick thanks to 2025 all purpose yards last year to go with 32 touchdowns.

The versatile back used his speed and cutting ability to rush for 1307 yards on 204 attempts. He is also climbing the all-time receiving charts as he led the team with 32 catches for 486 yards and four TD's.

Another senior to watch is Washington, who was a second-team All-Ohio quarterback -- the school's first since Robert Davis, almost two decades ago.

Washington (6-0, 175) is a dual threat college prospect after he amassed 2109 total yards in 2011. He was 146 of 224 for 1850 yards passing with 13 touchdowns and only four interceptions. He added 259 yards rushing.

The third returning starter on offense is senior tackle Bob Liu (6-0, 250). Liu is the only returning offensive lineman from 2011.

"I think our offensive line is improving every day," said Schiavone.



Schiavone stated that senior Brandon Faun (5-10, 230) will man a spot in the trenches and will be one of the top newcomers on offense this year.

Two other promising newcomers to the offense are juniors Michael Peelman (5-11, 177) and Anthony Ellis (5-11, 167).

Peelman, the junior varsity player of the year in 2011, will play wide receiver while Ellis should also vie for one of the wide out spots. Both have good speed.

"I think that Peelman is a hardnosed kid and he will fill in one of the wide receiver slots," he said.

Senior running back Tyrone McGuinea (5-6, 160) is also back and lends depth as Barton often may be flanked out. Junior Martell Anthony (5-10, 169) can also be used.

Schiavone is the defensive coordinator and his Tigers have ranked among the top defenses in Division I, Region II the last few seasons.

Four starters return on defense in senior inside linebacker Scott Tegowski (6-2, 198), senior strong safety Ben Bisesi (5-10, 175), senior defensive end Rob Williams (6-2, 180), and junior defensive lineman Cameron Dial (6-3, 235).

Tegowski was in on 62 tackles a year ago with four pressures, one sack, one tackle for a loss, and one pass break-up.

Dial has the ability to pressure the passer as does Williams (1.5 sacks, two tackles for losses, and 28 tackles) and Bisesi (46 stops), who had 11 tackles for losses, two sacks, six pressures, two interceptions and a forced fumble.

According to Schiavone, top newcomers on defense are senior free safety Cooper Rea (5-11, 170), junior inside linebacker Jacob Turay (5-11, 245), and junior cornerback Kon Grewal (5-8, 160).

Rea was the team's nickelback last fall and was a special teams ace.

"Cooper will be our starting free safety and is a fine three-sport athlete (basketball, baseball)," said the coach.

Schiavone praised Grewal for a solid off season after a good JV season. Turay was a sub at backer last year and has bulked up with a nice off season.

Other seniors returning include linemen Chris Rode (5-11, 212) and Aaron Shaffer (6-2, 210).

Rode has been in on 22 tackles in the last two years on defense while Shaffer can help on offense and defense along with senior Onome Omobien (5-10, 230). Two other seniors on the roster are wide receivers Eddie Govang and Nick Elnikar.

Promising juniors on defense are lineman John Colovas (6-0, 186), defensive back Darion Eiland (5-8, 160), linebacker Mike Mickovic (5-6, 160), and lineman Dillon Gilbert (5-6, 190).

This is a strength for the Tigers as senior place kicker Frank Candau (6-1, 194) returns while Barton is always a threat in the return game.

Candau hit 41 of 44 extra points last year and was 4-of-6 in field goal attempts with a long of 30 yards.

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## **2012 High School Football NOC preview: Twinsburg hopes to continue its success in Valley Division**

By Jim Isabella, Special to the Beacon Journal  
Published: August 22, 2012 - 09:17 PM

The Valley Division of the Northeast Ohio Conference is considered one of the strongest top to bottom in the area with Solon, Mentor, Twinsburg, Strongsville, Brunswick and Medina.

Last season was a year of good news and bad news for Twinsburg. After moving up from the River Division, where the Tigers had won three consecutive titles, they earned a share of their fourth consecutive title, taking the Valley Division crown with Solon and Mentor.

However, the Tigers, under new coach Joe Schiavone, missed the playoffs after three consecutive appearances because of a 27-24 double-overtime loss at Stow and a 27-21 overtime loss to visiting Solon.

The Tigers are replacing 15 starters. Returning players on offense are all seniors: quarterback Jalen Washington, a second-team All-Ohio pick and co-offensive Valley Division player of the year who runs the no-huddle offense; offensive tackle Bob Liu; and kicker Frank Candau.

The four returning defensive starters are seniors Scot Tegowski (inside linebacker), Ben Bisesi (strong safety) and Rob Williams (defensive end) and junior Cameron Dial, a defensive lineman.

## **Ranking of Top 50 high school football players in Northeast Ohio for 2012 season by The Plain Dealer**

Bob Fortuna, Joe Maxse and Tim Rogers, The Plain Dealer, August 22, 2012 10:14 p.m.

16. John Barton, Twinsburg, TB, Sr., 5-10, 185

Tallied 1,307 yards rushing for 27 TDs and 486 yards receiving for four scores. Averaged 17.7 yards on punt returns, 35.5 yards on kick returns.

23. Jalen Washington, Twinsburg, QB, Sr., 6-0, 175

Passed for 1,850 yards, 13 touchdowns and just four interceptions, while connecting on 146 of 224 attempts. Also ran for 259 yards and a touchdown.

## **High school football Top 25 preseason poll for 2012 season by The Plain Dealer**

Bob Fortuna, Joe Maxse and Tim Rogers, Plain Dealer Reporters, August 22, 2012 10:02 p.m.

### THE PLAIN DEALER TOP 25 FOOTBALL POLL

1. St. Ignatius (13-2, Division I state champion last season): Can the Wildcats record an unprecedented 12th state crown? With the return of tailback Tim McVey (Buffalo recruit) and defensive standouts Kevin Kavalec (Boston College) and Dave Katusha (Air Force), anything is possible.

2. Solon (10-2, Northeast Ohio Conference Valley Division tri-champion, Division I regional semifinalist): Comets again will be in the thick of the conference race and will advance deep into the postseason thanks to seasoned veterans Drew Barksdale (Boston College), Darian Hicks (Michigan State), Khoury Crenshaw, CJ Hanna, George Berry and Ryan Pastor.

3. Mentor (11-2, Northeast Ohio Conference Valley Division tri-champion, Division I regional finalist): Passing game, paced by QB Mitch Trubisky (North Carolina) and WRs Conner Krizancic, Brandon Fritts and

a healthy Corey Plavcin, will put up a bunch of points, but a running attack is needed, and the defensive unit was hit hard by graduation.

4. St. Edward (8-4, Division I regional semifinalist): The Eagles, vying for their second state title in three seasons, will need RBs Dwayne Aaron and Ken Butler to help open up the passing attack -- and safety Solomon Warfield (Iowa) and linebacker Lavonte Robinson to keep opponents out of the red zone.

5. Hudson (10-2, Northeast Ohio Conference River Division champion, Division I regional semifinalist): The Explorers, who returned to the postseason for the first time since 2004, have a marquee player in Michigan recruit Ben Gedeon, but linebacker Adam Coberly, speedster Leighton Antonio and two-way lineman Jason Idoine can't be ignored.

6. Chagrin Falls (13-1, Chagrin Valley Conference Chagrin Division champion, Division III state semifinalist): Tigers, who had no problems moving up to Division III last season, are primed to make a state championship run with quarterback Tommy Iammarino and running back/linebacker Jack Campbell back in the mix.

7. Aurora (12-2, Division II state semifinalist): It's going to be tough to score against the Greenmen, with the return of defensive stalwarts Zach Quinn (Toledo), Patrick Dougherty (Indiana) and Zach Smierciak (Miami of Ohio), but a quarterback needs to step up in order for them to earn a ninth straight postseason bid.

**8. Twinsburg (7-3, Northeast Ohio Conference Valley Division tri-champion): The Tigers failed to make the playoffs despite handing Mentor its lone regular-season setback. Quarterback Jalen Washington and tailback John Barton are determined not to let that happen again.**

9. Cleveland Heights (9-1), Lake Erie League champion, Division I regional quarterfinalist): The Tigers, coming off the program's postseason debut, need plenty of support for four-star wide receiver Shelton Gibson and linebacker/Shaker Heights transfer De'Niro Laster to make a deeper postseason run.

10. Lake Catholic (10-2, Division III regional semifinalist): The offensive line, headed by Evan Grosel, Casey Davis and Sean Wynne, will again give quarterback Mark Baniewicz ample time to throw the Cougars into the North Coast League Blue Division race.

11. St. Vincent-St. Mary (10-3, Division III regional finalist): The Fighting Irish graduated 10 starters, but they'll survive another tenacious schedule if flashy two-way players Jordan Hargrove and Franshon Bickley stay healthy and get their hands on the ball as much as possible.

12. Walsh Jesuit (10-2, North Coast League Blue Division champion, Division II regional finalist): Crissean Caver and Doug Lewis accounted for nearly 1,000 yards in receptions and 10 touchdowns, but it's seven returning starters on defense, led by tackle D.J. Aguilar and linebacker Bryan DiCillo, who have the Warriors excited.

13. Willoughby South (8-3, Premier Athletic Conference champion, Division I regional quarterfinalist): The Rebels return premier tailback Kareem Hunt, and quarterback Casey Klicman is older and wise enough to keep defenses honest by finding receiver Andrew Venclauskas whenever the 6-1, 185-pounder is open.

14. Kent Roosevelt (10-2, Portage Trail Conference Metro Division champion, Division II regional semifinalist): Two "treys" -- quarterback Tra'Von Chapman (Pitt) and primary receiver Trei Thomas -- could add up to three consecutive postseason appearances for the Rough Riders.

15. Glenville (7-3, Senate Athletic League champion): The Tarblooders missed the Division I postseason last fall for the first time in nine seasons. They could be better this year because they've scrapped the two-quarterback platooning system.

16. Brecksville-Broadview Heights (6-4): The Bees have the talent to break their two-year postseason drought. Two-way end Mike Tyler (Vanderbilt) will be an enforcer, and receivers Paul Karthan, Tim Tupa and Tyler Tarnowski return, but they need quarterback Tommy Tupa to have an injury-free senior season.

17. Avon Lake (8-2, Southwestern Conference champion): Look for the Shoremen to make the Division I playoffs for the first time after moving up from Division II last season, as fullback Collin Lucas and receiver Jimmy Hessel will provide a balanced offense behind 6-3, 250-pound lineman John Lancione.

18. Kirtland (15-0, Chagrin Valley Conference Valley Division champion, Division V state champion): The Hornets are equipped to defend their state title with the return of triple-threat Damon Washington, quarterback Scott Eilerman, linebacker Josh Iammarino, safety Ryan Loncar and budding two-way standout Cannon Schroeder.

19. Avon (13-2, West Shore Conference champion, Division II state runner-up): RB/CB Ross Douglas (Michigan) and WR/CB Ralph Smith (Ball State) are standout returners on a team that will be a handful in the trenches. Eagles will be tested early, as 10 players are suspended for two games for violating undisclosed team rules.

20. Midview (8-2): The Middies made a tremendous turnaround a year ago under veteran coach Bill Albright and should maintain their winning ways with 10 returning starters, including quarterback Cody Callaway, receiver Eric Lauer, offensive linemen Steven Best and Patrick Forrer and linebackers Brett Bartone and Devon Crum.

21. Euclid (4-6): The Panthers have 15 returning starters and a large senior class, headed by linebacker Myles Alexander, receiver Rakeesh Nolden and offensive guard Matt Blaha. Winning the Lake Erie League and reaching the Division I postseason for the fourth time in six seasons is realistic.

22. Elyria (7-3): The Division I Pioneers have 15 returning starters to help them make a run at their second postseason berth. Defensive end Tracy Sprinkle (Ohio State) is nearly unstoppable, and Jumar Neeley and Keon Neeley are seasoned running backs, but the team needs to fill its quarterback vacancy to reach its goal.

23. Tallmadge (9-3, Suburban League champion, Division II regional semifinalist): The Blue Devils have an offensive machine returning in QB Anthony Gotto, the defense is intact with the return of linebackers Jacob Wood, Logan Banks and Zach Skraba and the kicking game is superb thanks to Kody Edwards.

24. Archbishop Hoban (1-9): Injuries ravaged the Knights a year ago, but one benefit is that quarterback Dominick Orsini, tailback Darshawn James, receiver Aaron Abernathy, tight end Jimmy Martter and linebacker Charlie Emrick received an abundance of varsity experience.

25. Olmsted Falls (7-4, Division II regional quarterfinalist): Safety Mike Gib, along with linebackers Brandon Friedrich, Sean Fallon and Logan Ballard, headline a defensive corps with seven returning starters in what could be the Bulldogs' 20th straight winning season and 12th postseason appearance.

**[2012 Gridiron Preview: Twinsburg](#)** article link: [here](#)

4:07 PM, Aug. 21, 2012

Despite posting a 7-3 overall record and earning at least a share of the Northeast Ohio Conference Valley Division championship for the fourth consecutive year in 2011, the Twinsburg High School football team failed to qualify for the Division I playoffs for the first time in three seasons under first-year head coach Joe Schiavone.

The Tigers graduated 28 seniors from the squad that shared the division crown with Solon and Mentor with a 4-1 league mark last fall, but with the return of All-Ohio selections Jalen Washington and John Barton, Twinsburg is projected to remain one of the NOC's elite squads in 2012.

Washington, a 6-foot, 175-pound quarterback, threw for 1,850 yards and 13 touchdowns as a junior while also rushing for 259 yards and another score.

Barton, a 5-foot-10, 185-pound senior running back, rushed for 1,307 yards and 27 touchdowns last season while also racking up 486 receiving yards and four scores.

Twinsburg kicks off the season on Friday at home against Aurora.

Schiavone answered questions earlier this preseason about this year's squad and its upcoming season for WKYC's [usatodayhss.com](http://usatodayhss.com) Web site.

WKYC's [usatodayhss.com](http://usatodayhss.com): What was your message to your team during your first meeting of fall camp?

Twinsburg football coach Joe Schiavone: Last year was last year. We need to find out this team's identity and build our own.

WKYC: What is the biggest question/uncertainty about your team that you hope to have answered by the start of conference play?

Schiavone: Can we handle adversity and can we find ways to win football games?

WKYC: What are your goals for your team this season?

Schiavone: Same as every season - win the conference, qualify for the playoffs and win a state championship.

WKYC: What must happen for your team to be able to accomplish those goals?

Schiavone: Limit turnovers, find some inexperienced players to fill necessary spots and play together as one unit.

WKYC: Who are your team's projected leaders/captains this season? What do you expect each to bring to the team?

Schiavone: John Barton, Jalen Washington, Bob Liu, Ben Bisesi, Cooper Rea and Scott Tegowski. I expect a lot from my captains as I am in constant communication with them and they need to be with me. I expect them to lead in a positive manner and represent their teammates accordingly.

WKYC: What do you expect to be your team's greatest strength this season?

Schiavone: Our speed and athleticism has always been our cornerstone of success. We had a very productive offseason. The offense will be leaned on heavily with the return of Jalen and John. The offensive and defensive schemes are in place and the players are comfortable with each.

WKYC: What is your team's biggest weakness right now?

Schiavone: Depth and limited numbers along our offensive and defensive lines. We need to find the right people to replace eight starters on offense and seven on defense.

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