**NORSEMEN EDGE HART 29-18**

The Norsemen defeated a well-drilled Hart eleven 29-18 in a game whereby the statistics of time of possession played fool’s gold on the Hart gridiron. The win was the 13th straight NM win over Hart and the 20th victory in the last 21 meetings between the two old-time rivals, but the win was not your traditional walk in the park conquest as in the past. Pirate head coach Joe Tanis has groomed a formidable team built around a unique offense that closely resembles the old single wing used during your ‘ole announcers’ childhood.

Although I don’t have the actual time of possession stat at my disposal, it was clear after watching the film of this contest from my home far to the south in the Sunshine State, that it looked like Hart had the ball forever. But veteran Norse head coach Larry Witham, who once was the JV coach at Hart and helped turn the Hart football program into a competitive unit, used his ‘bend but do not break’ defense to pull off the victory.

The Prates wasted no time in showing the Norsemen that they came to play as they picked off a rare Bryce Colbert pass on NM’s first possession in NM territory. After several running plays that churned up time as well as first downs Pirate quarterback – err tailback – Kolt Rockwell surprised the Norse defense geared up to stop the run, with a pass in the endzone to a wide-open Logan Jorrisen. Surprisingly in today’s era of a soccer style kicker Hart went for the two-point conversion that was stopped by the Norse.

The Norse took the lead after the Pirate score on an 18-yard sweep of right end by Hunter Wilder. Drew Gabriel than kicked the extra point to give the Norse a slim 7-6 lead. The big play on the drive was a 42-yard pass play to Cullen Bartos.

The Pirates than mounted a 90-yard drive that ate up the remaining minutes of the opening quarter and well into the second before Kyle Greener powered in from five yards out to give the lead back to the Pirates at 12-7.

After it appeared that Hart had forced NM to punt on fourth and long, the Pirates were penalized on Bryce Colbert’s punt that kept the drive alive. Colbert than connected on a 45-yard bomb to Drew Gabriel that set up a Wilder run off tackle as the Norsemen regained the lead at 14-12. Hart drove deep into NM territory but with time running out in the first half NM defensive back Beckett Hoppa game up with a key interception that preserved NM’s ever slight advantage at halftime.

The Pirates received the second half kickoff and chewed up half of the clock in the third quarter before scoring on a well-designed pass play to regain the lead at 18-14. Fortunately, for the many Norse fans who journey to Hart, it would the last points earned by the pesky Pirates.

When times are at their toughest the Norse can always turn to their brilliant versatile all state candidate Cullen Bartos. The top NM defensive play Bartos is no slouch on offense. A short pass out in the flat to Bartos became a long 32-yard pickup setting up the touchdown that would give NM the lead they would not relinquish. The TD did not come easy for the visiting Norsemen as they scored on a fourth and 10 play on a well-executed pass from Colbert to Becca Hoppa. On a busted play for the extra point Bartos took the mishandled snap from center and connected with Hoppa for the two-pointer to make the scoreboard in Hart read: NM 22-Hart 18.

Until the Norse scored their final touchdown on a 37-yard burst up the middle by Bartos to give NM the lead at 29-18, the difference in the game was the difference in extra points.

With the victory NM will return to Fred Jacks field next Friday to host Montague in the 93rd meeting between the long-time rivals who have met every year since their initial matchup in 1933.

**Stats: NM vs Hart**

PASSING

Player Comp Pass INT Total TD Longest

 Passes Attempts Yards Passes

#3 Bryce Colbert 9 15 1 168 1 45

#6 Drew Bartos 1 1 3

Totals 10 16 1 171 1

RECEIVING

Player Total Total Longest Touchdowns

 Catches Yards Catch

#1 Braylen Burrel 2 22 12

#2 Beckett Hoppa 2 17 14 1

#5 Hunter Wilder 1 0 0

#6 Cullen Bartos 4 87 42

#11 Drew Gabriel 1 45 45

Totals 10 174 1

RUSHING

Player Total Total Longest Touchdowns

 Carries Yards

# 3 Bryce Colbert 2 10 6

# 5 Hunter Wilder 11 64 18 2

# 6 Cullen Bartos 6 85 37 1

Totals 25 421 3

PUNT RETURNS

Player Return Total Longest Fair

 Attempts Yards Return Catch

None

PUNTS

Player Total Total Longest AVG

 Punts Yards

#3 Bruce Colbert 1 43 43 43.0

SCORING

 TDS Ex Pts Field Goals Longest

#6 Cullen Bartos 1

#5 Hunter Wilder 2 2

#2 Beckett Hoppa 1

# 11 Drew Gabriel 3

NM Defensive Stats vs. Hart

PLAYER Tackles Ast T TFL PD H Sacks Int FC F Rec

#0 Jourdon Ealom-Yff 6 3

#2 Beckett Hoppa 3 1 1

#5 Hunter Wilder 5 3 1

#6 Cullen Bartos 9 3

#7 Carlton Williams

#11 Drew Gabriel 8 2

#20 Keefe Kersman 7 2 1

#52 Oliver Fricke 8 2

#54 Jace Thompson 1

#55 Clint Villapando 6 4

#65 Brennen Slayton 1 1 1

#72 Jackson Dye 3 2

#79 Kael Gunby 2