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**NIAGARA LANDMARK WINDOW SPEARS OFF TO
GREAT START IN SEASON OPENERS**

Both the Junior Varsity and Varsity Niagara Landmark Window Spears teams kicked off their Ontario Varsity Football League seasons with wins on Saturday. The Junior Spears hung on for a dramatic 26-23 overtime victory over Hamilton's Steel City Ironmen, while the Varsity Spears upset their Steel City counterparts 14-6. Both games were played at West Park High School in St. Catharines before crowds of approximately 400 fans.

The Junior Spears got off to a quick 20-1 lead, thanks to an early 15 yard touchdown reception from Jedd Gardner and two rushing touchdowns from Jordan Barker. But the Ironmen responded with two quick touchdowns of their own, closing the gap to 20-15 at halftime. Julian Tropea extended the Spears lead to 23-15 with a 22 yard field goal in the third quarter, but a Steel City touchdown and two-point conversion knotted the score at 23 at the end of regulation. In the overtime shootout, Tropea again kicked a clutch field goal to give the Spears a 26-23 lead. On the ensuing Steel City possession, victory seemed certain as the Ironmen surged to the Spears two yard line. But two plays later, Spears Linebacker Ryan Chmielewski jarred the ball loose from an Ironmen running back and linebacker Steve Cecchini pounced on the ball to secure the Spears win.

Spears head Coach Randy Nunn was grateful to escape with the victory. "It was a great win for us, but not our best game", said Nunn. "Our goal is to get better with each game and this one showed us a lot in terms of what we need to work on".

The Varsity match-up which followed was largely a defensive battle, with Spears cornerback Blake Allen having a career day, with three interceptions, returning one for a touchdown. Quarterback Ben Wilsack connected with Brett Maitland for Niagara's other major and kicker Carlo Turavani converted both PATs.

Varsity Head Coach Dave Howe was pleased with the win and proud of how his players executed. "Steel City was a very solid team and our defense really made the difference. They turned it up and made the adjustments when they needed to", said Howe. "Our goal was to earn some respect and I think we accomplished that. I think the Junior Varsity win helped us as well; we carried that momentum into our own game and played with a lot of heart."

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Saturday was a “landmark” game for the Varsity Spears. This is the inaugural season for the senior squad, after the Junior Varsity team was launched in 2004.

Next Up... Both Spears teams travel to Oakville’s Nelson Stadium next Sunday, June 5th for a doubleheader against Horseshoe Division rivals, the Halton Invictas. Game time is 2:30pm for the Junior Varsity game and 7:00pm for the Varsity match-up.

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Both Head Coaches would be pleased to speak with the media and may be contacted directly. Junior Varsity Head Coach Randy Nunn may be reached at (905)685-0135 (h), (905)980-1210 (c), or via e-mail at rnunn@niagaraspears.com. Varsity Head Coach Dave Howe may be reached at (905)937-4699 (h), (905)321-0973 (c), or via e-mail at howe@niagaraspears.com.

Additional information on the Niagara Landmark Window Spears may be found at www.niagaraspears.com.

Additional information on the OVFL, including standings, schedules and comprehensive individual and team statistics may be found at www.ovfootball.ca.

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