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SPEARS SPLIT DOUBLEHEADER IN ETOBICOKE

The Niagara Landmark Window Spears Junior Varsity squad pushed their record to 5-0 with a narrow 27-19 win over the Etobicoke Eagles, while the Varsity Spears (4-1) suffered their first defeat of their inaugural season, falling to the senior Eagles 34-13. Both Ontario Varsity Football League games were played in extremely hot and humid conditions Saturday at Etobicoke Collegiate.

In the Junior game, Spears kicker Julian Tropea opened the scoring with his first of two field goals on the day from 24 yards out. A subsequent Etobicoke major was quickly answered when Spears QB Jordan Nunn connected with Jedd Gardner for a 17 yard touchdown reception. Etobicoke tailback Jacob Appiah then scored his second of three touchdowns on the day and the Eagles took a 13-10 lead into halftime. The second half was a shootout, marked by turnovers both ways and Niagara rushing touchdowns from fullback Nick Moreau and running back Jordan Barker. The Eagles missed a chance to tie the score late in the fourth on a two point conversion, before Barker's 55 yard TD put the game away.

While Head Coach Randy Nunn conceded that the weather may have been a factor for both sides, he gave full credit to an underrated Eagles team. "They're the best 0-4 team I've ever seen", said Nunn. "They played with so much heart, and they were definitely ready for us. It was a great win on a very challenging day".

Offensive Highlights (Junior Varsity):

QB Jordan Nunn (Holy Cross): 8/13 passing for 117 yds, 1 TD, 1 INT

RB Jordan Barker (Sir Winston Churchill): 11 carries for 97 yds, 1 TD

WR Jedd Gardner (St. Michael): 1 carry for 32 yds, 2 receptions for 19 yds, 1 TD

FB Nick Moreau (Stamford): 12 carries for 62 yds, 1 TD

K Julian Tropea (St. Michael): 2 FGs (24 & 22 yds), 1 rouge, 2/3 PAT

Defensive Highlights (Junior Varsity):

DB Jon Quagliariello (Westlane): 8 tackles, 1 INT, 1 BB

CB Jordan Johnson (St. Paul): 6½ tackles, 1 INT, 44 yd punt return

DB Jared Nunn (Holy Cross): 3 tackles, 1 INT

DB Mat Stayzer (Holy Cross): 2 tackles, 1 INT

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Later in the day, the Varsity Spears had their work cut out for them, trying to contain league-leading Etobicoke running back Matt Henry. Niagara turnovers set up two Eagles touchdowns early in the game and the Spears twice had to settle for field goals after long drives down the field. Niagara closed the gap to 20-13 in the third quarter on QB Ben Wilsack's 55 yard touchdown pass to Adam "Elmo" Petrina. However, two fourth quarter Etobicoke scores put the game out of reach for the Spears. Henry finished the game with 185 yards rushing and 1 touchdown.

Despite the loss, head Coach Dave Howe remained upbeat. "No one likes to lose, but it's only a bad thing if you don't learn from it or take away something positive", said Howe. "We see some things we need to improve on, getting it done in the red zone for instance. But they were a very solid team and I hope we'll see them again come playoff time".

Offensive Highlights (Varsity):

- QB Ben Wilsack (Blessed Trinity): 8/17 passing for 175 yds, 1 TD, 1 INT
- FB Rick Savage (Port Colborne): 22 carries for 96
- WR Adam Petrina (Blessed Trinity): 4 receptions for 131 yds, 1 TD
- K Carlo Turavani (Holy Cross): 1/1 in PATs, 2 19 yd FGs

Defensive Highlights (Varsity):

- LB Dan Egerter (Blessed Trinity): 9 tackles
- LB Kirstyn Carruthers (Blessed Trinity): 8 tackles, 1 blocked kick
- LB David Wilkie (A.N. Myer): 6 tackles

Next Up... Both Niagara Spears teams travel to Wentworth for a doubleheader on Thursday June 30th against the Wentworth Panthers (Junior record: 2-3, Varsity record: 3-1).

Scheduling Note: The July 16th Spears Varsity game against the Brampton Bulldogs has been cancelled due to the folding of the Brampton Varsity program. The Spears will instead travel to Sudbury to face the Northerners on Sunday, July 10th at 3:0pm.

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Pictures are available upon request. 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 .

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 rnuhn@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 .