



Media Release – June 12, 2006.

Niagara Spears Earn Split in Wentworth

Close, but no cigar. The Niagara Spears Junior Varsity (0-3) squad came within inches of grabbing their first win of the season Saturday, losing in quadruple overtime to the Wentworth Panthers 50-48. Meanwhile their Varsity counterparts (3-0) notched their third straight win of the year, handling the senior Panthers 34-7. Both games were played at the Beverly Community Centre in Rockton.

In the Junior game, two TD passes got the Panthers got out to a quick 14-0 first quarter lead that held until halftime. But the Spears made a game of it in the third quarter, as QB Derrick Peachey connected with receiver Gary Spero on an 18-yard TD pass to make it 14-7. After Wentworth returned the favour, the Peachey/Spero tandem kicked into high gear connecting on two more fourth quarter TD catches from 20 and 56 yards out, knotting the score at 21 and sending the game into an overtime shootout. The teams then proceeded to trade touchdowns on the next eight possessions. Niagara's majors came on a 5-yard run from Devon Egerter, an 8-yard run from Josh Hipperson and two more TD catches from Peachey to Spero. Spero shattered the OVFL record for TD catches with five on the day, and finished the game with a team record 178 receiving yards. However, Niagara failed on their two-point convert attempt, after Wentworth made theirs, ending the game two points shy, 50-48.

Despite the loss, JV Head Coach Brian Duguay saw a lot of positives. "We'd love to have come away with the win, but the single point (earned for an overtime loss) could make a difference come playoff time", said Duguay. "More importantly, the boys really stepped it up in the second half. The O-line held their ground and we showed a more balanced offensive attack. This game was a real confidence builder for the boys".

Offensive Stats (Junior):

QB Derrick Peachey (Denis Morris): 10/20 for 230 yds, 5 TDs, 2 INTs

WR Gary Spero (Sir Winston Churchill): 8 catches for 178 yds, 5 TDs (OVFL Record)

RB Devon Egerter (Notre Dame): 34 carries for 138 yds, 1 TD

RB Josh Hipperson (Denis Morris): 7 carries for 47 yds, 1 TD

Defensive Stats (Junior):

LB Jamie Singleton (St. Paul): 12 tackles

LB Adam Grilj (Blessed Trinity): 10 tackles

DL Jordan Weldon (Lakeport): 4½ tackles, 2 sacks

DB Alex Hunchak (Centennial): 5 tackles, 2 batted balls

DB Jay Maksenuk (Governor Simcoe): 2 tackles, 1 batted ball, 1 INT

OVER → → →

In the earlier game, Varsity Spears kicker Carlo Turavani's 23-yard field goal and quarterback David Benner's 16-yard TD pass to Giancarlo Rampanaro vaulted the Spears to an early 10-0 first quarter lead. Jeremy Hipperson's 5-yard TD rush to start the second quarter and another Turavani field goal, this time from 27 yards out, stretched the lead to 20-0 before Wentworth finally got on the board with a 9-yard rushing TD to close out the first half down 20-7. Two more Hipperson rushing TDs, from 9 yards and 1 yard out cemented the 34-7 win. Hipperson finished the game with 200 yards rushing and three touchdowns on 28 carries. Quarterback Brian Fortier played the fourth quarter and completed all four of his passes.

Despite giving up their first points of the season, Head Coach Dave Howe was pleased with his team's performance. "Our goal was to have the offense put some drives together and control the pace of the game", said Howe. "Our offensive line played great, and Hipperson really capitalized. He hit the hole hard and was very tough to bring down". Howe also credited Carlo Turavani's kicking game for helping to win the battle for field position. "Carlo had another perfect day (2 field goals and 4/4 on conversions) and some really deep kick-offs really helped keep the Panthers in their own end".

Offensive Stats (Varsity):

QB David Benner (Lakeshore): 3/6 passing for 36 yds, 1 TD
QB Brian Fortier (St. Paul/York University): 4/4 passing for 50 yds
RB Jeremy Hipperson (Denis Morris): 200 yds rushing on 28 carries, 3 TDs; 1 reception for 15 yds
RB Jordan Barker (Sir Winston Churchill): 27 yds rushing on 7 carries
WR Giancarlo Rampanaro (St. Paul): 36 yds receiving on 3 catches
K Carlo Turavani (Holy Cross): 4/4 PAT, 2 field goals (23/27 yds)

Defensive Stats (Varsity):

DE Steve Cecchini (Denis Morris): 4 tackles, 1½ sacks
LB Martin Pytlewski (Lakeshore): 2 tackles, 1 sack, 1 INT
DB Sebastien Howard (St. Michael): 2½ tackles, 1 INT

+++++

Next Up... Both Spears teams are on the road to visit the Brampton Bulldogs next Saturday, June 17th. The Varsity game gets under way at 1:00pm and the Juniors take the field at 5:00pm.

Both Head Coaches would be pleased to speak with the media and may be contacted directly. Junior Varsity Head Coach Brian Duguay may be reached at (905)687-9396 (h), (905)327-2465 (c), or via e-mail at duguay@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 Spears may be found at www.niagaraspears.com. **Gameday pictures are available upon request.** Additional information on the OVFL, including standings, schedules and comprehensive individual and team statistics may be found at www.ovfootball.ca .

Niagara Spears Media Contact:
Jamie Saunders
(905)684-5785 - home
(905)988-2104 - cell
saunders@niagaraspears.com