



Media Release – June 18, 2006.

Senior Spears Survive Scare, Juniors Post First Win

The Niagara Varsity Spears overcame a 21-13 third quarter deficit to beat the Brampton Bulldogs 26-21 in Ontario Varsity Football League action Saturday in Brampton. Meanwhile, the Junior Spears notched their first win of the season, taking the Bulldogs 28-14.

Establishing a strong ground game, the Varsity Spears jumped out to a 13-0 first half lead on rushing touchdowns of 6 and 2 yards from running back Jerimy Hipperson. But big plays from the Bulldogs, including a 104-yard rushing touchdown from Steve Turner and Erol McIntyre's 70-yard fumble recovery and return for a touchdown gave them a 14-13 halftime lead. Brampton extended the lead to 21-13 with a 4-yard rushing touchdown in the third quarter. It was all Spears in the fourth quarter however, as Hipperson ran the ball in from 1 yard out and quarterback David Benner connected with receiver Jedd Gardner on a 12-yard TD pass for the 26-21 lead. From there, the Spears defense took over, forcing Brampton to turn the ball over on downs on their next possession, and intercepting a fourth down pass deep in Spears territory with seconds remaining on the clock on their final possession.

While grateful for the win, Head Coach Dave Howe characterized the game as “a wake-up call” for the 4-0 Spears. “They adjusted very well to our running game and our offense didn’t capitalize on scoring chances”, said Howe. “But the true test of a team is how they handle adversity. Fortunately, our defense stepped up when they had to, and (quarterback David) Benner had his most productive passing game of the year. The most important thing is we never quit”. Benner finished the day 17/21 and 205 yards passing.

Offensive Stats (Varsity):

QB David Benner (Lakeshore): 17/21 passing for 205 yds, 1 TD
RB Jerimy Hipperson (Denis Morris): 84 yds rushing on 17 carries, 3 TDs
WR Giancarlo Rampanaro (St. Paul): 89 yds receiving on 6 catches
WR Jedd Gardner (St. Michael): 30 yds receiving on 2 catches, 1 TD
K Carlo Turavani (Holy Cross): 2/3 PAT

Defensive Stats (Varsity):

LB John Surla (St. Michael): 7 tackles, 1 BB
DE Steve Cecchini (Denis Morris): 7 tackles, 1 sack
DB Martin Pytlewski (Lakeshore): 8 tackles, 1 INT
DT Shane Baxter (Governor Simcoe): 6½ tackles
DB Blake Allen (A.N. Myer): 4 tackles, 1 fumble recovery, 1 INT

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In Junior action, kicker Julian Tropea got the Spears (1-3) on the board with a 33-yard field goal in the first quarter and scored a single on a missed attempt from 34 yards in the second. Bulldogs running back Martin Tremaine responded with a 75-yard TD run, giving Brampton a brief 7-4 lead. Then it was Tropea once again, this time hauling in a 20-yard TD pass from Spears quarterback Derrick Peachy. Running back Tyler Decou's 9-yard rushing TD gave the Spears an 18-7 halftime lead. Tropea's 29-yard field goal to open the third quarter, and a fourth quarter 31-yard rushing TD from fullback Joshua Hipperson gave the Spears a 28-7 lead. Brampton added a late touchdown for a 28-14 final score.

The Junior squad's first win of the season was bittersweet for Head Coach Brian Duguay, after watching Tropea go down with a knee injury during the Spears' final TD conversion. "Julian had a career day today, a touchdown, 2 field goals, 3/3 on conversions and his kickoffs and punts were a huge factor in the battle for field position", said Duguay. "But it was nice to get that first win. You can feel the confidence growing and the players are showing a lot of heart".

Offensive Stats (Junior):

QB Derrick Peachy (Denis Morris): 4/12 for 72 yds, 1 TD
RB Tyler Decou (St. Michael): 26 carries for 132 yds rushing, 1 TD
RB Josh Hipperson (Denis Morris): 4 carries for 51 yds, 1 TD
K/TE Julian Tropea (St. Michael): 1 catch for 20 yds, 1 TD, 2/3 FG (33,29, miss from 34), 3/3 PAT
WR Gary Spero (Sir Winston Churchill): 2 catches for 47 yds

Defensive Stats (Junior):

DB Justin Hipperson (Denis Morris): 5 tackles, IBB, 1 INT
LB Adam Grilj (Blessed Trinity): 6 tackles
DL Jordan Weldon (Lakeport): 1 tackle, 1 sack

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Next Up... Both Spears teams are on the road to visit the Toronto Thunder next Sunday, June 25th. The Junior Varsity game gets under way at 1:30pm and the Varsity squad takes the field at 4:30pm.

NOTE: The Varsity Spears home game against the Steel City Ironmen, originally scheduled for Saturday, July 8th has been rescheduled to **Friday, July 7th at 6:30pm** at West Park High School in St. Catharines.

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