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Spears Sweep Halton (June 8, 2008)

The Niagara Spears swept both ends of a doubleheader with the Halton Invictas Saturday at West Park in St. Catharines. A dominating performance from running back Sandro Sferrazza sparked 22 unanswered second half points, giving the Junior Spears a 28-17 victory. In Varsity action, the Spears jumped out to a 21-0 first quarter lead and easily coasted to a 55-14 win over a depleted Halton squad.

In the opening quarter of the Junior game, Spears running back Sandro Sferrazza gave the Spears a 6-0 lead, scoring his first of four touchdowns on the day on a 5-yard rush. In the second quarter, Halton quarterback Mikael Andrews connected with Kaleb Sang on a 30-yard TD pass and kicker Jeff Hill added a 15-yard field goal to give the Invictas a 10-6 lead. After driving deep into the Halton red zone, Spears quarterback John Krzeczkowski was intercepted in the end zone by Denzil John, who returned the ball 112 yards for the touchdown and a 17-6 halftime lead. It was the Sandro Sferrazza show in the second half however, racking up three more rushing majors of 10, 32 and 10 yards behind strong blocking from the Spears offensive line and receivers. The St. Francis running back finished the day with 252 yards on 33 carries. Spears DB Jack Rush's fourth quarter interception snuffed out a late Invictas drive, and a Justin Hipperson 85-yard punt for a single point late in the game sealed the 28-17 win for the Spears.

CAMPBELL'S PLAYER OF THE GAME *Niagara: RB Sandro Sferrazza; Halton: LB Michael Davis Kelly*

POST-GAME COMMENTS FROM SPEARS JUNIOR HEAD COACH BRIAN DUGUAY:

"It's nice to get that first win. John (Krzeczkowski) did a nice job running the offense today...I think it took him a while to adjust to the speed of the game. The running game was really working for us today. Sandro (Sferrazza) ran hard and hit the holes fast, but he also had some great blocking out front from the O-line and the receivers. The defense started off slowly, but they played a great second half. We were finally able to get some pressure on their quarterback (6'7" Mikael Andrews). At halftime, we challenged the players to "make a statement" in the second half, and we outscored them 22-0, so I guess they listened. We need to start seeing four quarters of that kind of play."

OFFENSIVE STATS - JUNIOR

QB John Krzeczkowski: 2/5 for 8 yds, interception
RB Sandro Sferrazza : 33 carries for 252 yds, 4 TDs
RB Jordan Kewll: 11 carries for 62 yds
RB Caleb Travis: 3 carries for 25 yds
K Mitchell McMullen: 3/4 PAT

DEFENSIVE STATS - JUNIOR

LB Justin Hipperson: 5½ tackles, batted ball, rouge (punt)
DB Jack Rush: 3½ tackles, interception, fumble recovery
DL Ian Marouf: 4 tackles
LB Patrick Brunet: 3 tackles
DB Matt Furguele: 2 tackles, interception

Running back Nathan Zavarella got the Varsity Spears rolling on their first possession with an 8-yard rushing TD, and quarterback Nick Coutu ran one in from the same distance on the Spears' second drive to give Niagara an early 14-0 lead. On the Invictas' next drive, Ryan Miller fell on a Halton fumble in the end zone to extend the lead to 21-0. After kicker Julian Tropea's 17-yard field goal in the second quarter, Halton finally put up some points when quarterback Ryley Wright connected with receiver Todd Speakman for a 65-yard catch and run to cut the Spears lead to 24-7 at halftime.

Spears quarterback Kyle Mataya, who took over for Coutu in the second quarter, opened the third frame with a 39-yard TD pass to Jake Harper. A 1-yard TD plunge from Josh Hipperson on the Spears' next possession extended the Niagara lead to 38-7. The Invictas' problems in their own end continued on the ensuing kick-off, when Spears defensive back Jordan Duncan fell on yet another Halton fumble in the end zone for the second Spears defensive TD on the day. Tropea added another point when his kick-off sailed through the back of the end zone, and Spears running back Devon Egerter made it 55-7 when he rumbled across the goal line from 4 yards out. A late 34-yd TD pass to Halton's Aaron Alston provided little consolation to an overworked Invictas squad that dressed just 22 players for the game.

CAMPBELL'S PLAYER OF THE GAME *Niagara: LB Zack Davis; Halton: LB Tyler Mills*

POST-GAME COMMENTS FROM SPEARS VARSITY HEAD COACH DAVE HOWE:

"With the short bench, Halton really had their work cut out for them, especially on such a hot day. We were able to rotate a lot of players in and out of the game. We've got a lot of depth across many positions and this will serve us well as the season rolls along. It's important to maintain focus and intensity in a game like this. We're happy to take the two points and escape relatively injury free. We'll have a much tougher game next week in Wentworth. It's always a challenging environment and they always field a big, hard-hitting squad. This upcoming week of practice will set the tone."

OFFENSIVE STATS - VARSITY

QB Nick Coutu: 3/5 passing for 32 yds, 1 rushing TD
QB Kyle Mataya: 2/4 passing for 35 yds, 1 TD
RB Nathan Zavarella: 9 carries for 81 yds, 1 TD
RB Devon Egerter: 8 carries for 69 yds, 1 TD
RB Josh Hipperson: 10 carries for 40 yds, 1 TD
RB Andrew Barry: 4 carries for 31 yds
WR Jon Quagliariello: 2 catches for 22 yds
WR Jake Harper: 1 catch for 39 yds, 1 TD
K Julian Tropea: 7/7 PAT, 17-yd FG, rouge

DEFENSIVE STATS - VARSITY

DB Jordan Duncan: 1 tackle, interception, fumble recovery for TD
LB Adam Grilj: 2 ½ tackles, batted ball
LB Ryan Saunders: 4 tackles, forced fumble
DL Jordan Weldon: 1 sack, forced fumble
DB Ryan Miller: 2 tackles, fumble recovery for TD
LB Zack Davis: 2 tackles

NEXT UP: The Spears travel to Wentworth next Sunday, June 15th for a doubleheader against the Wentworth Panthers at McRae Field. The Junior Spears (1-1-1) take on the Panthers (1-2) at 2:30pm and the Varsity Spears (2-1) face Wentworth (1-2) at 5:30pm.

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)682-3754 (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 may be found at www.ovflontario.com (**note new website address**).

Thank you for your continued support. For more information, please contact:

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