

**Babylon Football:
PANTHERS REBOUND, ZAP MUSTANGS, 22-16**

by Tony Spota

The Babylon Panthers came from behind and scored 15 points in the final quarter to take the Mount Sinai Mustangs 22-16, last Saturday afternoon at Randall Field in Mount Sinai.

The previously unbeaten Mustangs capitalized on a few Panther first half lapses and carried a 13-0 lead into halftime. An interception by Jake Carlock stopped Mount's initial possession. It was his fourth pick in as many games. Babylon's ensuing drive went to the Mount 13-yard line, but the Mustang defense clogged it up at that point and Mount took over at their own 20. They drove 80 yards on eleven plays and scored when quarterback Billy Tartaglia hit Brandon Drumgole on a fly down the left side. The play went for 29 yards and a touchdown. Chris Prestia kicked the extra point.

Mount's second score followed an interception by Zach Wolfe at the Mustang 40. Five plays later, tailback Mark Donadio took a handoff, started right and cut sharply through right guard, racing fifteen yards for the score. Donadio took advantage of Babylon's soft outsides and carried for 128 yards in the first half.

In the second half, Babylon transformed into the real Panthers and took the game back. Eric Schweitzer took the kickoff at his 19, blasted through a middle opening, cut left, followed a super block by Joe Mankiewicz and zipped left. He was knocked out of bounds at the Mustang 32, a return of 49 yards. That play set the second half pace. Four plays later, Schweitzer raced through a gap provided by Matt Pinto and Joe Cosby and scored from the 7. Alex Malhas kicked the first of his two extra points.

Mount's next possession began at their 20. They got as far as the Babylon 5, but the Black D stifled the attack and Mount settled for Prestia's 23-yard field goal, making it 16-7. Babylon responded with a 68-yard scoring drive on eleven plays with Nick Santorelli hitting Ray Wardell on a left slant for 7, Carlock on a shovel pass for 18 and Luke Zappia on a left flair for 8. Santorelli followed Pinto and John Dertinger in from the 1 for the TD on the first play of the final quarter.

Again, the Black D rose to the occasion and stopped Mount with a three-and-out. Alex Pintabona's punt went all the way to the Panther 38 where Carlock took it home on a zigzag TD return for 62 yards. Babylon went for two on the extra point attempt and scored with Santorelli firing over the middle to Carlock and Babylon took the lead with 9:25 remaining on the clock. The D allowed only one first down from that point. Mount's final possession was killed when Schweitzer shot up the middle, nailed the ball carrier, stripped the ball loose and pounced on it for a fumble recovery. Santorelli took a pair of genuflects to end it.

Coach Rick Punzone was thrilled with the result. “I very proud of the character our players showed. After a poor first half, we came back to what we really are. We bent, but didn’t break. Holding them to a field goal was a very big play. We were down by nine and we know we can score. That’s a very good football team [referring to Mount Sinai]. We’re four and oh, but there’s a long way to go. We hope we can keep going.”

Other stuff: Babylon’s special teams have been outstanding. So far this year, they’ve returned 16 punts and kickoffs for 393 yards. Carlock has five for 200 yards and two TDs. Schweitzer has seven for 139 yards. Carlock also has four picks for two TDs. His punts have averaged over 30 yards and six of ten have resulted in opponent’s possessions inside their own 20-yard line. Malhas has fourteen kickoffs, eight into the end zone. His average kick goes to the 3-yard line. That provides a tremendous advantage to the D, who now have seven sacks, five recoveries and six interceptions. The D has scored four TDs.

In this game, Santorelli completed seven passes in fourteen attempts for 82 yards. He added a net 27 yards rushing for a total 109 all-purpose yards. Mount’s Mark Donadio carried 28 times for 171 yards and a TD. Their fine offensive line was excellent – Zach Devlin, Joe Barone, Bryan Reed, Nick Kelly and Ryan Clark. Mount Sinai students Andrew Ortoloni and Jacob Wright sang Our National Anthem to begin the day’s event.

Next up: The Panthers (4-0) play the Bayport Phantoms (1-3) at Bob Sullivan Field in Bayport, this Saturday, October 6th. Game time is listed at 1:30 pm.