

Babylon Football: PANTHERS TROUNCE WILDCATS, 36-14

By Tony Spota

In a battle of the cats, the Babylon Panthers outclawed the Shoreham Wildcats 36-14 last Friday night at Williams Field. Babylon dominated the line play on both sides of the ball. Center Matt Pinto was flanked by guards Ryan Matthews and Joe Cosby and tackles Tyler Christiansen and Shea Amdur and these Big Cats provided the blocking required for Babylon's super passing attack.

Quarterback Nick Santorelli was 14 for 16 in the air, good for 200 yards and three touchdowns. In the process, Santorelli set a number of school records. His 14 completions surpassed the previous mark of 12 by Mike Parrinello vs. Amityville in 2004. He also now has 20 lifetime TD passes. The previous mark was 18 by Chris King (2005-2006).

The Black D was also very effective. Joining Christiansen and Cosby on the defensive line, Rich Wilson, Jon Bell, Tazon Rogers, Shawn Tripp and John Visgauss stifled Shoreham's inside game with linebackers Luke Zappia and Nick Crawford picking up the loose pieces. Cornerbacks Juawun Porter and Joe Savastano shadowed the outside receivers as the Wildcat passing attack was held to only three completions and 44 yards.

Babylon scored on its first possession with Santorelli gunning to Eric Schweitzer on a left flair, Ray Wardell on a right square out and Jake Carlock on a left slant. Schweitzer banged it in from the 1 yard line between Matthews and Christiansen. Santorelli added the first of his four extra-point kicks. On the next drive, Santorelli again took to the air and capped it on a 30-yard right fly to Wardell at the goal line. Rogers recovered a fumble at the Shoreham 38 on the ensuing kickoff. Three plays later from the 13, Schweitzer blasted through a hole provided by Cosby at right guard. He then cut right and raced it in for pay dirt. The Panthers added a two-point conversion with Santorelli firing to Carlock making a diving catch in front of the goal post.

Babylon's next drive went 80 yards on five plays. Following a block by Amdur, Schweitzer scampered 54 yards off the right side to the Shoreham 20. The drive was capped on a 19-yard left flag from Santorelli to Carlock. The defenses plugged up the remaining action before the break as Rogers and Tripp combined for a sack, Shoreham's Isreal Squires picked off a pass to stop a Panther drive and Wardell grabbed a deep pass at the Babylon 30 and ran it back to the Shoreham 28 to end the half.

The Panthers opened the third quarter going 65 yards on nine plays. The drive was capped on a 5-yard right square out to Carlock. A shared sack by Christiansen and Jack Kresek ended Shoreham's next try. But the Wildcats weren't dead. They hit for successive 80-yard runs on the first play of their next two possessions. Tailback Tyler Anderson swept the right side and fullback Aaron Harley blasted up the middle. Both raced the distance. Zack MacAuley kicked the two extra points. But the gasps were too little too late as Carlock picked off a pass at the Babylon 12 to end Shoreham's last possession.

Coach Rick Punzone commented, “We had a perfect first half and I’m proud of our guys. Shoreham is a well-schooled, well-coached team. Their back [Anderson] played a great game.”

Other stuff – Santorelli had nine carries for 70 yards for a total 270 all-purpose yards and had two end zone kickoffs. Schweitzer carried 18 times for 132 yards and two TDs and caught two passes for 39. Twin Towers Wardell and Carlock caught six passes apiece and combined for 161 receiving yards and three TDs. For Shoreham, Anderson had 14 carries for 146 yards and a TD. Harley had six carries for 89 yards and a TD. Right tackle Jack Choinski was key to their offensive blocking game.

Next up – This Saturday, September 28, the Panthers go out to meet the Port Jefferson Royals. The two last met in 2011, won by Babylon 40-0. Port Jeff will want to avenge that one. Game time is listed at 2 pm.