

HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL: Northern York shuts out Greencastle-Antrim

Saturday

Posted Oct 29, 2016 at 12:15 AM

By Ben Destefan

GREENCASTLE — It's been a theme all season. Unfortunately, Friday night was another difficult example.

Greencastle-Antrim's offensive struggles again held the Blue Devils back during a 34-0 loss to Northern York, falling behind 21-0 by halftime en route to a fifth straight defeat.

In contrast, Kyle Swartz scored three touchdowns while Aidan Alves kicked a pair of 42-yard field goals for the Polar Bears (6-3), who extended their winning streak to four and remained in the hunt for a District 3 playoff berth.

Although comparable statistically, G-A's inability to sustain drives continually had the defense on the field, as the Blue Devils (1-8) went three-and-out on their first five possessions of the game. The result was a tired defensive unit tasked with trying to stop a physical opponent routinely starting near midfield. Despite limiting Northern to 258 total yards, the scoreboard told the story.

"It's frustrating," G-A head coach Chuck Tinninis said. "Offensively, we have to score points, period. If you're getting shut out, it's hard to win football games. Then defensively, we're missing some keys and assignments that allowed a few big plays. Our kids are playing hard, but they gotta play smart too."

Following a 26-yard scramble by quarterback Curtis Robison, Swartz put Northern on the board with an 8-yard touchdown run for a 7-0 lead at the end of the first quarter.

Beginning at their own 47 after G-A's fourth punt in as many drives, the Polar Bears extended their advantage five plays later when Robison connected with Swartz for a 26-yard scoring strike, making it 14-0 early in the second.

Continuing to be stuck in neutral, the Blue Devils quickly returned possession to Northern at the Polar Bear 45. Facing third-and-long, Robison hit AJ Lodovici for 24 yards before Swartz broke loose off right tackle for a 28-yard trip to pay dirt, pushing the margin to 21-0.

A 33-yard circus catch by Tanner Bain down the right sideline finally provided G-A a spark on its ensuing drive, only to have Robison intercept a pass in the end zone to keep the shutout intact heading to the locker room.

Alves' first of two booming field goals capped Northern's opening possession of the second half, padding the lead at 24-0. The senior kicker's second 42-yard beauty was set up when G-A muffed a punt at its own 29, allowing Alves to convert the try just 12 seconds into the fourth.

After the Blue Devils turned the ball over on downs at the midfield stripe, Swartz powered forward on a trio of nice runs prior to Robison lofting a 20-yard pass to Joey Razzano for the 34-0 final.

"We have one game left, and we want to finish the year on a positive note," Tinninis said of next week's finale against winless James Buchanan. "We're going to get back to work on Monday, focusing on both sides of the ball."

Swartz rushed for a game-high 97 yards in the win while Robison finished with 80 through the air and 55 on the ground.

Demetrius Burton led G-A with 69 yards on 14 carries. The junior tailback also caught five passes for 56 yards, including a trio of nice screen plays from backup signal caller Thomas Hebert. Defensively, Hayden Rhoe had seven tackles and Antwoine Carter recorded an interception for the Blue Devils.

Greencastle hosts JB next Friday at 7 p.m.