

Sep. 24 Football: Hornets win the Backyard Brawl



WWW.BGSPORTSHOTS.COM
EMAIL - JBSPORTSPHOTO @AOL.COM

Ayoub Kamara takes off on an 89-yard kickoff return that gave Nottingham some momentary momentum against Hamilton today (Photo by John Blaine/purchase photos by e-mailing jbsportphoto@aol.com).

Hard running Hamilton makes sure to keep Northstars down this time

By Rich Fisher
Fish4Scores.com

Sep. 24: As Nottingham's football team began to mount another comeback against Hamilton West today, the Northstar players began firing up on the sidelines, dreaming of 2009.

That's when a 28-point deficit turned into a 'Stars win on a last-play miracle.

But while Nottingham tried to draw on that unbelievable event after they cut a 22-point deficit to 10 with over 10 minutes left, the Hornets stayed focused on the present.

"It was nothing," said defensive end Karif Collier after Hamilton finally took a 37-19 victory. "It was like 'OK, they scored, well it looks like we gotta score again.'"

His quarterback agreed.

"We knew we had to put points on the board," said Mark Acquaviva, who did just that by throwing a 20-yard touchdown pass to Greg Williams on fourth down to cap a 74-yard drive and seal the victory.

It snapped Hamilton's frustrating three-game losing streak to Nottingham in the Backyard Brawl.

It also capped a strong day for Acquaviva, as the junior quarterback completed 3-for-6 for 67 yards and three touchdowns. The first two TDs came in the first half to high-rise receiver Damar Russell.

"I told him you got a 6-5 receiver, get it in there and he'll make a play," said coach Tom "The Lord of Lambeau" Hoglen.

"When your receiver is that big and you see him in one-on-one coverage, you look for it," Acquaviva said. "And our offensive line did a great job today."

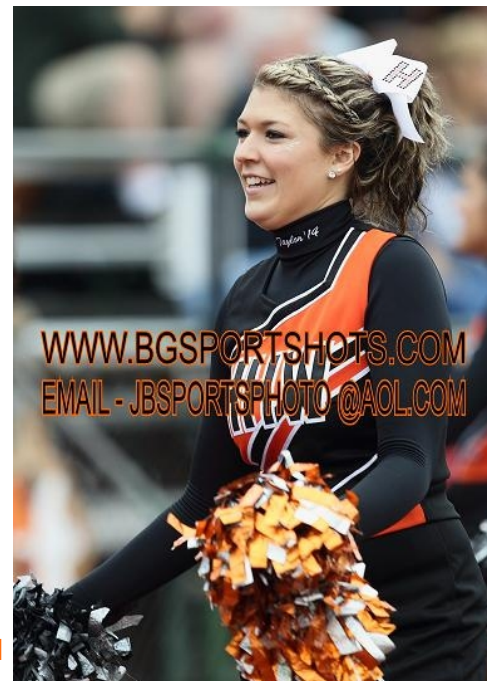
Despite the Northstars second-half rally, the game was decided in the first half.

Russell caught a 27-yard touchdown pass and Ruben Desane, who had a breakout game with 69 yards on just five carries, rolled in for a 30-yard TD run. Bret Stroman ran in the first of his two-point conversions (West is struggling on PAT kicks) and Hamilton led 14-0

Ayoub Kamara then stunned the Hornets with an 89-yard kickoff return, which looked like it could be a game-changing play as Nottingham made it 14-7.

But Jamar Hall responded with a 44-yard kickoff return, and Stroman scored on a 30-yard run, capping a binge of 22 points in a 38-second span.

On Nottingham's next possession, Williams grabbed his second interception of the year and the Hornets turned it into a 20-yard TD pass to Russell.



The effort of the Hamilton football team today made it a lot easier to cheer (above) and allowed the band to blow some winning notes (Photos by John Blaine/purchase by e-mailing jbsportphoto@aol.com).

“We seized control of the game, well, we seized a moment for a split second on the kickoff return and were feeling good about ourselves,” Nottingham coach Jon “Big Dawg” Adams said. “Then our kickoff coverage stinks the joint up and we let them return one, and one play later they break a tackle for a touchdown. Then they get an interception and our guy doesn’t react to the ball and they get another touchdown.

“The story of the game was broken tackles. We did not tackle today and they ran the football down our throats.”

They did indeed. Hoglen said last week he wanted to get more players involved than just Stroman, who had 116 yards on 20 carries (his first sub-200 game this year).

Along with Desane’s 69 yards, Javed James rushed for 48 on eight carries and Acquaviva had 29 on five carries.

“They saw some things how to spread us out, create match-ups for their players,” Adams said. “We had some mental errors on some kids we covered and they had some wrinkles that were pretty nice.”

Hoglen said at halftime, he emphasized the 2009 collapse from the time his team entered the lockerroom to the time it left.

“It was nothing about X’s and O’s, it was about “Let’s not let this happen again, keep the pedal to the medal,”” the coach said. “When we needed big plays we were able to grind it out and our defense came up with big plays down the end too.”

Nonetheless, Nottingham tried making it game after intermission, as Esayah Obado ran for touchdowns on the Northstars first two possessions to get it within 10. Missed PATs on both TDs hurt the cause, but became moot when Hamilton scored its final touchdown.

West ratcheted up its pass rush in the final five minutes, as Collier led the charge with 2-1/2 sacks.

“I knew they were gonna throw,” Collier said. “I guess the whole stadium knew they were gonna throw. It was like ‘OK, this is it, we need to make this play, we can’t let them score again.’”

Hamilton’s defense did a nice job for most the game. The Hornets were put in a tough hole several times on short kickoffs but held Nottingham to 120 passing yards and 74 rushing.

“We just didn’t want to give up the big play,” Hoglen said. “Watching (Kamara) on film, he’s going vertical, going by people. We’re trying to double him up at times and we were able to get good pressure on the quarterback.

“I don’t care who you are, if you’re getting pressure in your face it’s hard to throw good footballs and we were able to do that today.”

Thus, the Northstars could not duplicate their legendary (or infamous, depending who you root for) 2009 comeback.

“Hey,” said Adams with a laugh. “You can’t expect miracles.”

Not this time, at least.