

# Westphalia Wins Football Opener

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The Westphalia Blue Jays opened their season with a 26-20 victory over the Coupland Cougars last Thursday in Westphalia. Tied 20-20 at halftime, Westphalia's defense stymied the Cougars in the second half, and Ross Ashford scored on a 40-yard run with 5:38 remaining in the fourth quarter to put the Jays ahead for good. The Blue Jays were able to stop Coupland on downs and ran the clock out in the final three minutes of the game to seal the victory.

Ashford led the Blue Jay charge with 4 touchdowns on the night. Ashford scored on runs of 50-, 35-, and 40-yards and added a 57-yard touchdown reception from Blue Jay quarterback Dawson Hering. Lane Dach was able to add an extra point after the first touchdown of the evening, and Brady Hering scored an extra point on a reception from 6<sup>th</sup> grade quarterback Rowdy Baker. Also providing strong efforts for the Blue Jays were running back Teran Willberg, and the offensive line of Joe Arney, Latham Hoff, and Brady Hering. The line was able to open big holes for the running game while not surrendering a sack on the night.

Defensively, the Blue Jays were led by the strong pass rush of Brett Willberg, who made several tackles in the backfield, and solid defensive line play of Marshall Kahlig. Ends Arney and Ashford led the defense in tackles, while the secondary of Hoff and Teran Willberg were solid and also made several key tackles. Also contributing in the defensive effort were Chris Burns, Garrett Reid, and Dach.

Despite appearing to be in better condition than the obviously winded Cougars, the Jays had various self-inflicted mistakes that made the game closer than it should have been. Coupland's three touchdowns were all scored by one big running back that was able to power through some poor tackling by the Blue Jay defense and break off three long runs. The Blue Jays two offensive fumbles also hurt as the Cougars were never able to stop the Jays otherwise.

After the game, Blue Jay Coach Mark Vaught said, "We were sloppy and need to do a better job controlling the ball on offense and wrapping up on defense. We also need to improve our vertical passing game. However, it was the first game of the year for the team and we'll be able to take the lessons learned from the first game and improve. I was impressed at our ability to run the ball and the fact that our line was able to control both sides of the line of scrimmage. At the end of the day, an ugly win is still a win, and I'm proud of our team's effort."

The Blue Jays next game will be at home versus Mount Calm on September 13<sup>th</sup>. Kickoff will be at 5:30pm.