

# PIRATES READY FOR HOME DEBUT

Lee Stubbs  
Editor

The Platte County football team will make its 2007 debut at Pirates Stadium Friday night. Too bad for the Pirates' opponent, Van Horn, which accepted the game after originally-scheduled Westport backed out a few weeks ago.

The Falcons, a member of the Interscholastic League, will likely be overmatched on the field. They will also have to take the brunt of a Platte County effort sure to be stronger than last week's sloppy season-opening win at KC O'Hara. In that game, Platte County overcame early defensive miscues and 10 penalties for a 31-7 victory.

The second-ranked Pirates are confident the mistakes and penalties are just examples of early season rust which can be scraped away quickly.

"I thought we were in control the whole way (at O'Hara)," Platte County senior quarterback Jake Crawford said. "We made some mistakes and penalties killed us, but it's easy stuff to fix. Overall, I thought it was a good first game."

Platte County was in control throughout — except for the game-opening possession by O'Hara. The Celtics, using a shotgun/misdirection offensive formation the Pirates had not seen, moved 76 yards in just five plays and took a 7-0 lead two minutes into the game.

Platte County responded with an 11-play, 65-yard drive, which gobbled up nearly four minutes off the clock. Crawford capped the drive with a two-yard TD plunge.

From that point on, it was all Pirates. O'Hara mustered just 83 offensive yards the rest of the game. Platte County took the lead early in the second quarter after Tyler St. Louis's interception and nifty return gave the Pirates good field position. Eight plays later, Jerome Spearman rumbled into the end zone from five yards out for a 14-7 PC lead.

That was the tally at intermission, though Platte County wasted a chance to tack more points on the scoreboard late in the second period when it was flagged for roughing Celtics punter Dan Hernandez near the O'Hara goal line.

But, it did not matter. In the second half, Platte County ripped off 17 unanswered points while stuffing the O'Hara offense. A 25-yard Erik Odegard field goal opened the second-half scoring and a midseason-form 25-yard strike from Crawford to wide-out Kyle Knox capped it.

Platte County posted 383 total yards on offense. Crawford finished the game 12-of-19 passing for 138 yards, two touchdowns and one interception. Knox reeled in four passes for 60 yards and Nick Maxwell had three catches for 35 yards. Jerome Spearman rushed for 72 yards on seven carries. Marccus Spearman had three carries for 47 yards and Eric Barmann had 39 yards on seven carries.

Defensively, Jerome Spearman had eight total tackles, including three for losses. Buddy Carr, Dru Moses and Collin Wittmeyer had five total tackles each. Carr notched the only sack.

Van Horn replaces Westport

There's always a risk inherent with scheduling Interscholastic League (IL) schools for an early-season non-conference game. Most of those schools do not start classes until the last week of August or even after Labor Day, and IL coaches often need a little time to get their teams in order. Such was the case with Westport, which called Platte County athletic director Phil Dorman Aug. 23 and backed out of its Sept. 7 commitment to play at Pirates Stadium. Fortunately, Dorman's call to Van Horn was promptly returned and the Falcons agreed to fill the Pirates' open slot.

On paper, Friday night's 7 p.m. kickoff looks like a colossal mismatch between two teams that have never played each other. Platte County was 10-1 in 2006, is 1-0 this year and ranked No. 2 in Class 3. Van Horn, a Class 4 school, was 1-8 last season and lost its Sept. 1 opener 51-0 to Sumner Academy.

Platte County coach Chip Sherman said his team will be focused on correcting its mistakes from Week 1 and improving on the field.

"(No matter the opponent) we have things to fix from the first game," Sherman said. "It was a good win, but we want to get better."

PIRATES 31, O'HARA 7

PC	7	7	3	14	-	31
O	7	0	0	0	-	7

First quarter

O: Joe Pepple 4 run, Bryce Scovill kick, 9:45

PC: Jake Crawford 2 run, Erik Odegard kick, 6:04

Second quarter

PC: Jerome Spearman 5 run, Odegard kick, 8:05

Third quarter

PC: Erik Odegard 25 FG, 7:14

Fourth quarter

PC: Tucker Smith 12 pass from Crawford, Odegard kick, 10:52

PC: Kyle Knox 25 pass from Crawford, Odegard kick, 7:34

## Panthers look to start season 2-0

Jerry Keuhn

Reporter

The North Platte football team can mark “win season opener against King City” off its list of 2007 goals, but head coach Jim Brockhoff knows that is just the beginning.

“I thought we played real well in the first half, but we didn’t come out with the same intensity in the second half,” Brockhoff said. “We have to be able to finish games better.”

The Panthers and Brockhoff will get their chance to show second half improvement this week against Maysville, which also won its first contest with a 24-0 win over Polo. The Wolverines have a new coach in Greg O’Connor, who replaces Jason Melnick. Last year, Maysville finished with a 2-8 record overall and a 2-6 record in the Grand River Conference, but did finish the season with a 33-20 win over King City. One of those 2006 losses was to North Platte, which defeated the Wolverines 35-14 in Maysville in the second week.

Last week, Maysville picked up its first win of 2007, with running back Skyler Cline running for 140 yards on 18 carries, including a 61-yard run in the first quarter.

Panthers use strong first half

to de-claw Wildkats

Brockhoff wishes every scoring drive for the Panthers could be as simple as the first offensive drive was for North Platte, which took the lead after quarterback Wes Johnson scrambled into the end zone for a 2-yard touchdown run. The touchdown was the culmination of a 15-play, 69-yard drive.

“I thought that first drive was great, especially for the first game of the season,” Brockhoff said. “We didn’t have any mistakes and were able to take it right to them.”

The Wildkats tried to keep the Panthers honest, however, and came right back with a trick kickoff play which took them to North Platte’s 22-yard line. Then a 17-yard Thomas Slayden pass to Phillip Eiberger tied the game.

On the ensuing kickoff, North Platte regained the lead with a 76-yard return from Anthony Morse, and added to it when Sam Trave snagged a fumble recovery and rumbled 15-yards for a score. Then another fumble on the kickoff, and a 29-yard touchdown pass from Johnson to Adam Shore on the first play from scrimmage, and it was 26-6.

The Panthers finished the game with 200 yards rushing on 45 carries, 155 of which came in the first half. They also lost halfback and linebacker Ben Crumley to a broken collarbone, after he had racked up 34 yards on eight carries. North Platte then resorted to a running attack by committee — Johnson had 13 carries for 52 yards, Trave was 5-for-31 and Trent Arnold had nine rushes for 31 yards.

C.J. Blomquist led the defense with 10 tackles, while Trave had seven tackles, an interception and a fumble recovery for a touchdown. Mitch Giger and Morse had eight tackles apiece, while Nick Domingo had seven tackles.

PANTHERS 32, KING CITY 14

NP	26	6	0	0	- 32
KC	6	0	0	8	- 14

First quarter

NP: Wes Johnson 2 run, kick failed, 4:25

KC: Phillip Eiberger 17 pass from Thomas Slayden, run failed, 3:10

NP: Anthony Morse 76 kickoff return, 2-pt. pass failed, 2:56

NP: Sam Trave 15 fumble return, Adam Shore run, 2:38

NP: Shore 29 pass from Johnson, run failed, 2:28

Second quarter

NP: Trave 15 run, kick failed, 10:07

Fourth quarter

KC: Macon Allan 5 run, Allen run, 2:06

## **West Platte spikers off to rough start**

Citizen Staff Report

The West Platte volleyball team started its season in an 0-2 hole after facing two good teams in its first two matches.

Against defending District 15 champion Orrick Aug. 30, the Lady Jays struggled with its serving and lost to the Lady Bearcats in two games, 13-25 and 14-25.

“We played with a bit more confidence in ourselves, but we still served horribly and had 10 service errors,” said West Platte coach Cindy Bond.

Katelyn Keith and Melissa Clemens led West Platte with three service points apiece.

The Lady Jays began the season on the road at Savannah, a match in which West Platte appeared to be overmatched and lost 1-25 and 13-25.

“It was a rough start to the season, but things will definitely improve with more experience and many more matches to play,” Bond said.

West Platte will host the KCI Tournament this Saturday, with matches scheduled to begin at 9 a.m. with: game 1 — No. 1 Lawson at No. 7 North Platte, north gym; pool play game 1 — No. 2 West Platte vs. No. 6 Lathrop, south gym; pool play game 3 — West Platte vs. East Buchanan, south gym. Other games and times will be determined.