



**WALSH JESUIT 34,
HIGHLAND 0**

Streaks halted

Hornets blanked
in season opener

Rick Noland
The Gazette

GRANGER TWP. — The Highland football team has a lot of work to do prior to a Week 2 meeting against Strongsville, especially on offense.

The Hornets turned the ball over three times, had eight plays go for negative yardage and accumulated just 71 yards total offense Friday night in losing 34-0 to Walsh Jesuit at North Gateway Tire Stadium in the non-league season opener for both teams.

The Warriors are coming off an 11-2 season that saw them reach the Division II state semi-finals before falling to eventual repeat champion Avon, while the Hornets were 12-1 a year ago and lost to the Eagles in the D-II, Region 6 final for the third straight year.

Friday was the Hornets' worst loss since falling 42-6 to Toledo Central Catholic on Nov. 11, 2022 and the first time they were shut out since losing 31-0 to Medina on Sept. 6, 2019. A 16-game home winning streak **Foust** also ended.



"We can't shoot ourselves in the foot like that on offense, especially against a really good team," Highland coach Mike Gibbons said. "That's a recipe for disaster."

The Hornets actually played well on defense for a good chunk of the game, but the offense, which lost two fumbles on its first four plays, continually gave the Warriors great field position. Walsh Jesuit started drives on the Highland 12-yard line on two occasions as well as the Hornets 26 and 42.

Highland's deepest penetration was the Walsh Jesuit 32 as the visitors outgained the host Hornets by 277 yards. The Warriors had 50 plays to Highland's

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rots had 30 plays to Highland's
32, never punted and didn't
commit a turnover.

"We made a lot of mistakes,"
Highland H-back/linebacker
Evan Foust said. "We had some
good plays, but we also had
some really bad plays. It's Week
1. We've got to bounce back
against Strongsville.

"It's definitely a lot of pres-
sure, them being on our side
of the field, but I thought our
defense did a good job with it."

See **HORNETS**, C2

HERNETS C2

Walsh Jesuit 34, Highland 0

WALSH JESUIT	6	11	3	14	—	34
HIGHLAND	0	0	0	0	—	0

First

W — Oliver Nonno 25 field goal, 3:55.

W — Nonno 51 field goal, 1:28.

Second

W — Dominick Courtad 11 run (Ben Biel run), 8:32.

W — Nonno 18 field goal, 0:00.

Third

W — Nonno 28 field goal, 3:38.

Fourth

W — Mason Rodgers 1 run (Nonno kick), 8:29.

W — Jayden Kainec 4 run (Nonno kick), 4:47.

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First downs 15 8

Rushing	38/190	20/24
Rushing average	5.0	1.2
Passing	8/12	7/12
Passing yards	158	47
Total offense	50/348	32/71
Punting	0/0.0	3/37.3
Penalties	7/60	2/25
Fumbles	1/0	4/2

RUSHING: Walsh Jesuit — Rodgers 11-86, Courtad 14-68, David Ternosky 9-21, Kainec 3-10, John Wolschleger 1-5. Highland — Colton Wadle 3-19, Levi Clark 2-17, Anthony DePompei 5-17, Colton Winston 3-6, Ben Radigan 1-(-1), Jonathan Prucha 6-(-34).

PASSING: Walsh Jesuit — Ternosky 8-12-158. Highland — DePompei 3-4-35, Prucha 4-8-12-1.

RECEIVING: Walsh Jesuit — Cayden Levert 3-94, Cameron Brunson 2-37, Sam Barrett 1-13, Campbell Lann 1-12, Wolschlege 1-2. Highland — Winston 2-19, Jake Weber 2-15, Radigan 2-15, DePompei 1-(-2).

HORNETS

From C1

Walsh Jesuit's first possession ended when Foust made a crushing tackle of quarterback David Ternosky (8-for-12, 158 yards passing; 9 carries, 21 yards) for a 1-yard loss on fourth-and-1 from the Highland 18.

On the Hornets' first play, quarterback Johnny Prucha and running back Colton Winston didn't complete the exchange and the Warriors were right back in business at the Highland 12.

The Hornets defense again held tough, with Walsh Jesuit settling for the first of four field goals by standout kicker Oliver Nonno, this one from 25 yards. The junior also connected from 51, 18 and 28 yards and went 2-for-2 on extra points.

"We've got to work harder," Highland linebacker Nathan Capotosto said. "There were a lot of mistakes that shouldn't be happening. We worked hard all offseason and we had this game marked on the calendar. We've just got to work harder for Strongsville."

Following a lost fumble after a short completion to Ben Radigan on Highland's second possession, the Warriors took over at the Hornets 25 and got pushed back to the 34, but Nonno easily made a 51-yarder to make it 6-0 with 1:28 left in the opening quarter.

Walsh Jesuit then got its first touchdown, an 11-yard run by Dominick Courtad (14 carries, 68 yards) that was set up by a 33-yard scamper by Mason Rodgers (11 carries, 86 yards), and added a two-point con-

version by backup QB Ben Biel to go up 14-0.

The Warriors got to the Highland 1 with less than 25 seconds left in the first half, but Capotosto got the first of his two tackles for loss — Foust also had two and was all over the field — and Jake Weber broke up a pass in the end zone, leading to an 18-yard field goal by Nonno as time expired.

Another Nonno field goal made it 20-0 in the third period, and the Warriors erased any lingering doubt when Rodgers scored from the 1 to make it 27-0 with 8:29 left in the game.

A Prucha interception paved the way for a 4-yard TD run by Jayden Kainec, instituting the running clock with 4:47 remaining.

"They're a really good team," Foust said of the Warriors. "They're very big, fast, disciplined and they've got good skill. I give props to them."

Prucha struggled in his first varsity start, going 4-for-8 for 12 yards and the interception. Counting sacks and missed handoffs, he finished with six carries for minus-34 yards.

Backup Anthony DePompei provided a momentary spark in the second quarter and finished 3-for-4 for 35 yards while rushing five times for 17 yards, while the Hornets' top pass catchers were Winston (2 for 19 yards), Weber (2 for 15) and Radigan (2 for 15).

"We definitely have to fix the handoffs," Foust said. "There were a lot of mistakes. Overall, we've just got to fix everything."

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