

# Hornets rise to occasion

## ***Powerful Mansfield runs roughshod over offense-starved Warriors to earn third win***

By PETER GOBIS

MANSFIELD — It was another step toward the Kelley-Rex Division championship of the Hockomock League.

For all of the imperfections that appeared by not playing a game for two weeks, and with only five practice sessions due to COVID-19 protocols in place, the Mansfield High football team achieved its objective of taking victory No. 3 of the season, a 28-0 conquest of King Philip Saturday in a Hockomock League at Alumni Field.

Senior tailback Cincere Gill rushed for 100 yards, including a 59-yard jaunt for one of the three Hornet second-quarter touchdowns, in addition to tossing a 10-yard TD pass.

Senior tight end Everett Knowlton caught four passes, good for 88 yards, two of which were for touchdowns from the fingertips of Matt Boen and Gill, respectively.

“It was really kind of dominating win, but we were so sloppy,” Mansfield coach Mike Redding said of his Hornets, who crossed midfield on three of four second-half drives, but failed to score. “You get first-and-30s and second-and-25s. We overcome it, some of the time.” The Hornets tallied 21 second-quarter points, owned a 28-0 advantage by intermission and allowed KP past midfield on just one of four second-half series. It was the second straight shutout setback for the Warriors of KP (2-2), who mustered merely 66 yards of offense.

The Mansfield defense was so stifling that KP did not complete a pass, limited the Warriors to gains of three yards or fewer on 13 of their 25 rushing attempts, and to just 11 net yards of offense during the second half.

The Warriors gained more yards from Mansfield penalties (13 for 131 yards), but also suffered from the weight of eight penalties too (for 67 lost yards).

“We were outclassed,” KP coach Brian Lee said of the Warriors being unable to make a play on offense, defense or specialty teams. “It’s been a long time since we’ve had a good butt-kicking like that.”

The Warriors had their third series of the game snipped short when the Hornets’ Anthony Comer intercepted a pass at the Mansfield 35-yard line with just over two minutes left in the first quarter. Then the Warriors’ fourth series ended abruptly when Hornet junior Dana Johnson blocked a KP punt and Nick Bertolino recovered the ball at the KP 10-yard line.

The Hornets had all sorts of play-making. Knowlton grabbed a 30-yard pass from Boen three plays into the game, and the duo capped off a 60-yard, seven-play scoring series with an 11-yard scoring strike. Comer had a 39-yard punt return to the KP 19-yard line, then his pass interception set up the second Hornet TD, an 80-yard, eight-play sequence. In that drive, Nico Holmes bolted for 16 yards, Boen completed a 37-yard pass to Knowlton advancing the ball to the KP 5-yard line, and a play later Gill pranced through the Warrior defense for six points. A QB sack by the Hornets’ Braeden Veno and a 26-yard punt return by Gill to the Hornets’ 46-yard line set a third Hornet TD drive in motion. And that was a dandy, first-gear, second-gear, third-gear overdrive run through the KP secondary by Gill for a 59-yard TD romp.

The Hornets' defensive front, with Michigan-bound T.J. Guy, Mark DeGirolamo and Veno, terrorized KP, such that Warrior junior running back Crawford Cantave was held in check to 32 yards, while Mike Malatesta had but 21 yards. One of the lone Warrior highlights was an 18-yard punt return by Joseph Jonathan to the KP 43-yard line in the fourth quarter.

"Mansfield is really the class of the league, they're a different caliber," Lee said in praise of the Hornets. "They're at a different level than everyone else."

The Hornets were flagged for 41 penalty yards in the first quarter and had losses of 75 yards on six second-half flags.

"We wanted to get the early lead and get them out of their run game," Redding added. "It was one of those games; it's 13-0 and they started driving. We did what we had to do."

The Hornets return to action at home Friday with a 6:30 p.m. kickoff against Attleboro, while King Philip has a 4:30 p.m. kickoff that afternoon in Canton.

## **Mansfield 28, King Philip 0**

### **KP Msf.**

First downs 6 13

Total yardage 54 297

Rushing yardage 66 220

Passing yardage 0 88

Sacks-yds. 1-3 1-11

Comp.-Att.-Int. 0-8-0 4-9-0

Punts-Avg. 7-20.6 3-36.3

Fumbles-lost 0-0 1-0

Penalties-yds. 8-67 13-131

**King Philip 0 0 0 0—0**

**Mansfield 7 21 0 0—28**

## **SCORING SUMMARY**

### **First quarter**

Msf. — Everett Knowlton 11 pass from Matt Boen (James Gilleran kick), 8:33.

### **Second quarter**

Msf. — Cincere Gill 5 run (rush failed), 10:12.

Msf. — Gill 59 run (Gill rush), 4:21.

Msf. — Knowlton 10 pass from Gill (Gilleran kick), 1:30.

## **INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS**

**RUSHING: KP** — Cantave 14-32, Grant 1-4, Malatesta 4-21, Gately 4-12, Zagrodny 1-minus 3, Astorino 1-0; **Msf.** -- Gill 9-100, N. Holmes 8-53, Comer 4-18, Sacco 3-8, Boen 2-13, Bell 2-30, Scarpellini 1-1, Hennessey 1-0, Walsh 1-minus 2, Zukowski 1-minus 1.

**PASSING: KP** — Grant 0-9-1--0; **Msf.** -- Boen 3-8-0--78, Gill 1-1-0--10.

**RECEIVING: Msf.** — Knowlton 4-88.

**MISSED FIELD GOALS:** None.