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[Turnover troubles help GI beat NT](#)

Football: The Jacks hang tough against Vikings but mistakes cost them the game.

By MATT PARRINO [Niagara Gazette](#)

Niagara Gazette — Missing two key cogs on defense in Taylor Mellott and Leroy Goldsmith, North Tonawanda put forth its best effort against Grand Island but couldn't come up with enough stops.

The Vikings controlled the game and made big plays, sustaining drives en route to a 35-14 win at Masters Field on Saturday afternoon.

After the Vikings (2-0, 2-0 Class A) finished off their opening drive on a 2-yard run by Danny Blocho, the Jacks (0-2, 0-2 Class A) struck right back on an impressive, long drive of their own. Trailing 8-6 at that point after a failed two-point conversion, Grand Island scored 14 unanswered points and took a commanding lead into halftime.

“It's definitely frustrating. They came out on the first drive and went right through our defense,” said senior cornerback and wide receiver Ian Gilhousen. “We have to find ourselves on defense.”

The Vikings ran for over 300 yards and dominated the line of scrimmage. Blocho rushed for 179 yards on 22 carries and Mitch Fachko added 94 yards on 12 carries and a touchdown.

Gilhousen is the only returning starter on defense and without two of the unit's more dynamic players in Mellott and Goldsmith, he said that other guys have to step up, dig deep, and make plays.

Jacks coach Tony Truilizio pointed to two untimely turnovers as one of the deciding factors in the game. The Jacks lost two fumbles and the Vikings made them pay near the end of the second quarter. Grand Island had a short field and quarterback Quinn Corrao found tight end Chris Connors — who caught six balls for 72 yards — on a 30-yard TD pass right before halftime.

Jacks running back Josh Brosius had a big day for NT. He took a handoff 60 yards in the second quarter all the way into the endzone. The run was impressive mainly because he seemed wrapped up by about four Vikings defenders at the line of scrimmage, but he found a way out and bolted down the left sideline for six.

Brosius also caught sophomore quarterback Chris Woodard's only touchdown pass of the game in the fourth quarter from 16 yards out.

Corrao threw for 147 yards on 13 of 17 passing and two touchdowns. Grand Island coach Dean Santorio said he was happy with the balanced attack his offense displayed and was particularly impressed with his young offensive line.

"I can't say enough about the offensive line," Santorio said. "We ended up with over 300 yards on the ground and they played particularly well. Early in the season you hope you can move the ball pretty well."

Grand Island fullback Anthony Zogaria scored two touchdowns in the game — one rushing and one receiving.

Jacks senior cornerback Luke Topolski echoed Truilizio's sentiments about the team's turnover woes, but thinks the expected return of Goldsmith will help the Jacks sure up the back of their defense.

"We started off pretty good but two turnovers killed us," Topolski said. "We should get some guys back next week and hopefully they'll help turn this defense around. We have to stop making big mistakes."