



Jr Skyland Conference Championship

The Hillsborough Jr. Raiders JV team (5th & 6th grades), defending Jr. Skyland champions, defeated the Hunterdon Central Jr. Red Devils, 16-12, Saturday night (11/16) at Warren Hills High School. The Jr. Raiders, winners of 19 straight games, are now back-to-back Jr. Skyland JV champions.

The Raiders jumped on the Devils to open the game, with Tommy Ramsey taking the first play 61 yards. Three plays later Ramsey slammed it in from 1 yard out. He completed the "Ramsey show" with a kicked extra point making the score 8-0. After forcing a Hunterdon Central punt the next series, Boro methodically marched down the field in a drive that featured an Andrew Rygiel 4th and 1 QB sneak for a first down and a Matt Michinard 25-yard scamper around right end for the 2nd score of the game. Following another Ramsey kick, the score was 16-0 heading to halftime.

In the second half, the Jr Raiders withstood a furious Central assault that saw them climb back to 16-12 late in the 4th quarter. Defensively, Coordinator Paul Popaduik's strategy kept the Red Devils bottled up most of the game. Linebackers Mike Swetz, Alex Marsh, and TJ Schultz, as well as cornerbacks Anthony Shields and Ramsey, led the way as Central tried continuously to run the edges of the Boro defense. Defensive End Kevin Klein, Shields and Michinard each came up with big

4th down stops to thwart Red Devil drives.

The Jr. Raiders JV team wishes to thank the team parents and all the fans for their tremendous support throughout the season.

The Hillsborough Jr. Raiders Varsity team (7th & 8th grades) took on the Ridge Jr. Devils also at Warren Hills High school in Washington Twp. The Jr. Raiders entered the game undefeated and having beat the Jr. Devil team in their last three meetings, including an overtime thriller 2 years ago. But this night would prove to be the Jr. Devils night. Both teams battled in what was a physical game of football of the top two programs in the Jr. Skylands Football Conference. Ultimately, the Jr. Raiders lost their first game of the 2013 season in the Jr. Skyland's Conference Championship game, falling to the Ridge Jr. Devils 14 – 8 in overtime.

The defense held off the initial Ridge drive with a goal line stand resulting in a fumble recovery. Hillsborough returned the favor and fumbled ball back to Ridge. Hillsborough defense led by J.R. Metallo (7 tackles), Jackson Parham (6 tackles, 1 Caused Fumble, 1 pass break up, 1 sack), Ryan Wheaton (6 tackles, sack), Jack Edwards and Tyler Boatwright (4 tackles) caused another fumble that was scooped up by Charles Amankwaa. The half would end on another defensive stop and Charles Amankwaa intercepted a pass and returned it to the Ridge 25-yard line before being pushed out of bounds to end the half with both teams scoreless.

The first drive of the second half is a very important drive to get the team rolling. The Jr. Raiders would start with Ryan Wheaton picking up the squib kick and returning it 20 yards to the Ridge 48 yard line. The offense, led by Matt Moore, put together a 8 play drive that include pass completions by Moore to JR Metallo, runs by Tyler Boatwright and Jackson Parham and finished by a Metallo plunge behind the offensive line anchored by Pat Vinchur, Ryan Wheaton, Nolan Washbourn, Greg Koll, Jack Edwards, Brandon Melendez and Tom Zdroik. The Metallo extra point kick was good to put the Jr. Raiders up 8-0.

Ridge scored in the fourth quarter to tie the game at 8. Hillsborough put together another drive that included converting two successful fourth down plays. The drive ended with the ridge defender making a great interception on the goal line. The game would go into overtime.

Hillsborough turned the ball over on the first play of overtime. Ridge would score 4 plays later to end the ballgame and give the Jr. Raiders their first loss of the season 14-8. The boys played their hearts out, left nothing on the field. Any one of many plays could have been the difference in the game.

The Jr. Raiders organization is very proud of both of our Jr. Skylands football teams and all the volunteer coaches and parents that make it happen for the kids and the kids making it happen to give us all something to cheer for and have pride in. A special thanks to JV head coach Don Marsh and Varsity head coach Jamie Moore.

It is possible that Hillsborough Varsity will still be invited to play in the NJ Unlimited Weight Playoffs due to the great season they had in the very competitive Jr. Skylands Football Conference.