

Tigers' Comeback Falls One TD Short

by Matt Swift

With playoff hopes dimmed after losing their homecoming game to Lindenhurst last week, Northport Tigers struggled to maintain morale on the field this weekend. After coming out completely flat in the first half of Saturday's game, the Tigers posted a valiant comeback effort, but ran out of time and lost to the Longwood Lions, 27-21.

Longwood started off with the ball, and ran through Northport's defense easily. On third down-and-3 just inside their own territory, Longwood pushed the ball to Northport's 32-yard line on a run by DJ Holmes. Another run to the 6-yard line was followed by a Jermaine France touchdown run, putting Longwood up, 7-0, after their first offensive series.

Kyle Dowd then returned the kickoff to the 30-yard line, but Anthony Carbone was stopped in the backfield for a loss, and Trevor Campbell was sacked on the next play. The Tigers were at third-and-25 on their own 15, yet the decision was made to run the ball up the middle. Needless to say, the Tigers made only a short gain on the play and were forced to punt.

The punt didn't even push play out of Tiger territory, and the Lions started on the Northport 45-yard line. A pass lofted into Northport's end zone from 34 yards out made the score 13-0, Longwood.

The Tigers then turned the ball over on an interception, giving the ball back to Longwood on Northport's 40-yard line. The Tiger defense forced Longwood to punt, however, and they started the second quarter with the ball. Northport was forced to punt right back, however, and Longwood received the punt at their own 46-yard line. After tackles by Lenny Colucci and Cono Cimino made it third-and-

6 around Northport's 30, a dubious call was made by the referee, which eventually turned out to be the defining moment of the game. Anthony Carbone was called for pass interference at the 11-yard line, although Longwood's receiver appeared to have merely run into him from behind. The ball was advanced to the 11-yard line, and Longwood soon pushed the ball into the end zone, making it 21-0 after a 2-point conversion (an eight point advantage was given to Longwood because of the questionable call, and the Lions wound up winning by only six).

Starting on their own 20, the Tigers put together an offensive drive, only to be thwarted again. Campbell ran the ball to the 40, and threw a pass on the next play to Rob Newell, who took the ball to Longwood's 39 by bowling over half of Longwood's secondary before being brought down. Carbone then drew a pass interference call, advancing the ball to the 26. Campbell fumbled on the following play, however, and Longwood recovered.

Vinny O'Reilly and Mike Rosenthal sacked the Lion quarterback to make it second-and-17, but another questionable pass interference call gave the Lions a first down on their own 47. Disheartened, the Tigers allowed a 53-yard touchdown run on the following play. The Tigers went into the locker room at half-time disappointed and frustrated.

After half-time, it appeared as if the two teams had traded attitudes. On the kickoff, Carbone ran the ball to Northport's 45, and a facemask penalty against Longwood put the ball on the Longwood 40. Kyle Dowd took a pass from Campbell to the 28. Cimino ran the ball to the 15, and into the end zone. The touchdown was called back by the referee because of a holding penalty, but the Tigers refused to be phased again: Campbell lofted a touchdown pass to Carbone.

The Tigers attempted and missed an onside kick recovery, but quickly pushed Longwood back and forced a punt. A fumble turned the ball back to the Lions, but on second-and 20, Billy Mallon stopped the run. Colucci then nabbed an errant pass with ease, returning it to the 36. Carbone broke away, taking the ball to Longwood's 30-yard line, and Campbell threw a pass to Dowd, bringing play to



Trevor Campbell scored two second-half touchdowns for Northport but a heroic comeback attempt against Connetquot fell one TD short.

Record Photo/George Wallace

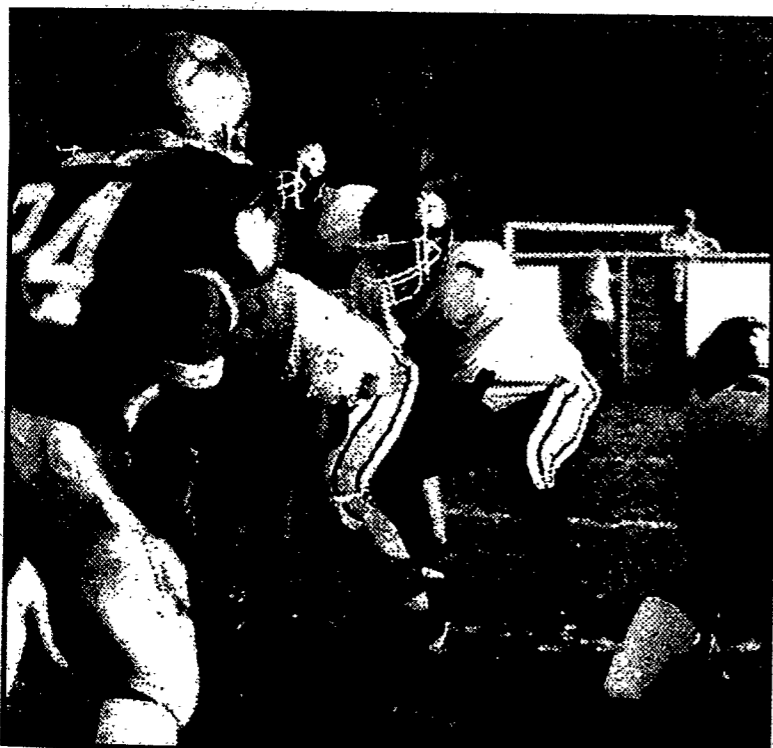
Longwood's 8. Northport was held, however, and turned the ball over. Longwood turned the ball back over at the 50-yard line, and on fourth down Campbell ran to the 30-yard line, giving the Tigers a first down. After squeezing over the line for another first down, Campbell punched the ball into the end zone on a sneak, making the score 27-14.

On Longwood's ensuing drive, Campbell knocked a Longwood runner out of bounds, and two clipping calls against the Lions made it second-and-35. Dowd broke up a pass on fourth down, and the Tigers recovered. Starting on the 43, the Tigers pushed the ball to the 30 on a Cimino run, Dowd ran the ball to the 3-yard line, and Campbell ran it into the end zone, to bring the Tigers within a touchdown.

After another attempt at an onside kick by Northport, Longwood recovered. By then, the late-surgings Northport team had run out of time, and Longwood was left to run out the clock, frustrating the Tigers and putting them below .500 after their strong start to the season. Their record is now 3-4.

Northport parents lamented the loss from the stands. Vincent O'Reilly Sr. decided, "It's the curse of the colors: we'll never win unless we go back to blue and gold," referring to the Tigers' abandonment of school colors to play in black.

Chris Mele's father declared, "These are the frustrations of a parent, year after year." Going on to speak of his son's frustration in dealing with the worsening situation of the team, Mele continued, "One can only hope that better days are coming."



Connetquot's line gets set as Tiger QB Trevor Campbell anticipates the snap.

Tourney Champs

The varsity girls' tennis team at Commack High School won the second annual Smithtown Invitational Tournament, held recently at Smithtown High School. Competing against teams from four schools, the Cougars got nine of ten participating members through the early rounds — and in a long and intense all-Commack doubles final, saw Kerri Latuso and Melissa Grodin defeat teammates Dani Palatt and Jessica Anzalone 4-6, 6-4, 63. Commack eighth grader Elizabeth Broomfield finished third in singles competition. Shown here congratulating the team is Commack High School Assistant Principal Russel Stewart. Team members are (top row, l-r) Kim Reilly, Diana Tafone, Dani Palatt, Melissa Grodin, Kerri Latuso, Rachel Nesenoff, and coach Roslayn Lindsey; and (bottom row, l-r) Jessie Anzalone, Alexis Wiener, Elizabeth Broomfield, Erica Elmer, Pooja Desai, Jamie Christoforou, and Sherri Stein. Missing from the photo are team members Rachel Doyle and Amanda Elsner.

