



HIGHLAND 50, NORTH ROYALTON 20

Look who's talkin'

Online posts fire up Myser, who rushes for 281 yards

John Urchek
The Gazette

GRANGER TWP — Highland junior Casey Myser has a pretty good left-handed fastball and can hit with the best of them.

He's a pretty good football player, too.

Fueled by social media messages from North Royalton football players that he was just a baseball player, the 6-foot-2, 205-pound Myser made defenders whiff all night Friday and ran over the Bears for 281 yards and four touchdowns on 23 carries in the Hornets' 50-20 non-league victory.

"Earlier in the week, my buddies were telling me their team was saying, 'He's just a baseball player. He's soft and overrated,'" Myser said. "I used that as motivation all week and really had to come out here and show them I'm not just a baseball player."

The Hornets are now 12-4 since renewing the annual rivalry with the Bears.

Myser scored the last three touchdowns for Highland (2-0), which really did not put away feisty North Royalton (0-2) until he broke free for a 70-yard score with 3:26 left in the third quarter for a 42-20 advantage. He finished North Royalton with an 11-yard run on the first play of the fourth quarter.

"He's a special player, a special talent," coach Mike Gibbons. "I'm glad he's on our team."

The back was quick to credit his starting offensive line of tackles Carson Noonan, who also had three of his team's five sacks, and Ben Coyne, guards Ryan Zywiec and Brady Bendau and center Ben Nowack for his success.

See **HORNETS**, C2



Myser



Noonan

for 23 yards. "We did a lot more Follow him @RickNoland on X.

HORNETS

From C1

which also included a 17-yard score in the first quarter and a 36-yard TD on third-and-8 with 1:00 left before halftime.

"They're amazing," Myser said. "On one of my touchdowns, I didn't even get touched. They work so hard day in and day out. We come out here and they are just a bunch of dogs."

With Myser leading a 401-yard rushing effort, that opened plenty of room to



Borla

operate for Dylan Borla. The first-year varsity quarterback didn't have to throw often, but when he did he was automatic. In the first half he was 6-for-6 for 172 yards and touchdown strikes to Lucas Gerding, Evan Foust and Kyle Williams.

Borla hit Gerding on a 53-yard wide receiver screen on the first drive of the game, then Williams over the middle for 28 yards and Foust for 68 yards on a broken coverage on back-to-back possessions in the second quarter for a 28-13 lead.

Borla also ran for 40 yards on seven carries — all in the first half — and added a two-point conversion on Myser's final touchdown to start the running clock.

"Even though this is my first year as the starter, I've been throwing to these guys ever since I was young," Borla said. "The chemistry has always been there. This is just my time to show it."

Highland was nearly perfect on offense, scoring touchdowns on the first five drives of the game and seven of eight before running out the final 7:53 with a running clock on the final possession.

That allowed the Hornets to live with a somewhat up-and-down performance

Highland 50, North Royalton 20

NORTH ROYALTON 7 6 7 0 — 20
HIGHLAND 14 21 7 8 — 50

First

H — Lucas Gerding 53 pass from Dylan Borla (Jonah Kowza kick), 8:53.
N — Nicholas Piazza 6 pass from Joe Kinney (Sasha Sunjevaric kick), 7:35.
H — Casey Myser 17 run (Kowza kick), 0:51.

Second

H — Kyle Williams 28 pass from Borla (Kowza kick), 9:10.
N — Joseph Calarco 7 pass from Kinney (kick failed), 5:00.
H — Evan Foust 68 pass from Borla (Kowza kick), 3:37.
H — Myser 36 run (Kowza kick), 1:00.

Third

N — Nicholas Safranek 18 pass from Kinney (Sunjevaric kick), 4:58.
H — Myser 70 run (Kowza kick), 3:26.

Fourth

H — Myser 11 run (Borla run), 11:54.

	N	H
First downs	12	21
Rushing	25/50	46/401
Rushing average	2.0	8.7
Passing	13/22	6/8
Passing yards	207	172
Total offense	47/257	54/573
Punting	5/45.0	0/0.0
Penalties	3/30	3/30
Fumbles	0/0	2/0

RUSHING: North Royalton — Cameron Saul 9-46, Mannix Wasco 9-18, Grady Baugh 1-2, Kinney 6-(-16). Highland — Myser 23-281, Borla 7-40, Dylan Lazar 3-32, Gerding 2-20, Foust 3-12, Mohamed Abuhamedeh 1-11, J.P. Quinn 2-6, Team 5-(-1).

PASSING: North Royalton — Kinney 13-22-207-0, Highland — Borla 6-8-172-0.

RECEIVING: North Royalton — Piazza 4-109, Wasco 4-73, Safranek 1-18, Calarco 3-15, Owen Bartczak 1-(-8). Highland — Foust 2-83, Gerding 2-60, Williams 1-28, Luke Berkmeier 1-1.

— by their lofty standards — on the defensive side of the ball.

North Royalton quarterback Joe Kinney was 13-for-22 for 207 yards and three touchdowns and came out firing on his first drive with a 48-yard bomb to Nicholas Piazza, setting up 6-yard connection for a touchdown on the next play between the two.

After Highland shut down the Bears on two drives, North Royalton broke out a Wildcat formation with H-back Mannix Wasco, which helped drive the team down the field before Kinney found Joseph Calarco for a score midway through the second quarter.

The Hornets quickly fixed the issue, and that ability to adapt and plug holes kept Highland in front.

"At halftime we're always fixing things," Noonan said. "We're always getting better, and that helped us get the win."

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