

Indiana High School Athletic Association

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Blake Ress, Commissioner

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NORTHWOOD CLAIMS FIRST-EVER FOOTBALL STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

NorthWood became the first team in the history of the IHSAA Tournament Series to win a state championship with six losses Saturday with a 7-0 win over Indianapolis Bishop Chatard. ♦ The title for the Panthers was its first in six appearances at the RCA Dome, and the second state championship in any sport. It was also the first victory over Bishop Chatard in three previous championship game meetings.

The Panthers used a stingy defense and timely offense in posting the shutout. ♦ Bishop Chatard, which came into the contest averaging 300 yards of total offense, was held to 156 yards on the day and NorthWood was successful on six of 13 third down conversions.

The game's lone score came 35 seconds before halftime when NorthWood freshman quarterback Skyler Titus connected with junior Brant Ehret for a 10-yard touchdown pass. ♦ The touchdown capped a nine play, 47-yard drive that included two key third down conversions.

The third quarter saw NorthWood hold Bishop Chatard to just 11 yards of offense on four plays from scrimmage. ♦ The teams traded punts throughout the fourth quarter until Bishop Chatard sustained a drive with sophomore backup Rob Doyle at quarterback. ♦ The Trojans drove 52 yards on 15 plays from scrimmage only to see time expire as Doyle's desperation pass intended for sophomore Kyle Dietrick fell incomplete in the end zone. ♦

Titus, who completed seven of 10 passes for 98 yards and a touchdown, became the second freshman quarterback to lead his team to a state championship, as Sheridan's Nick Zachery had called the signals for the Class A champion Blackhawks 24 hours earlier.

Sophomore Kent Biller and senior Darren Lengacher rushed for 48 and 33 yards, respectively, to lead the Panthers. ♦ Bishop Chatard junior Joe Holland had a game-high 89 yards on 22 carries.

NorthWood, which started the season 1-4 en route to a 3-6 regular season, finishes the year with a 9-6 record. ♦ Bishop Chatard, which had previously been 7-0 in state championship contests, finishes 12-3. It was the first time Chatard had been held scoreless since losing to Indianapolis Cathedral 21-0 on Aug. 24, 2001.

BISHOP CHATARD'S KEVIN BALL HONORED WITH MENTAL ATTITUDE AWARD

Kevin Ball of Bishop Chatard High School was selected as the winner of the Phil N. Eskew Mental Attitude Award by members of the IHSAA Executive Committee.

At the conclusion of each state championship game, the IHSAA Executive Committee presents the award to an outstanding senior participant in the football state tournament. ♦ The recipient of the award, who was nominated by his principal and coach, must excel in mental attitude, scholarship, leadership and athletic ability. The award is named in honor of the third commissioner of the IHSAA who served from 1962 to 1976 and oversaw the beginning of the state football tournament.

Ball was the Trojans placekicker and was a backup wide receiver as well. He's also a three-year member of the school's baseball team as a second baseman.

Academically, he ranks fourth in his class of 188 students. He has been a student council representative all four years, including class president as a freshman and has done volunteer work with St. Luke's Youth Ministry, youth baseball and St. Augustine's Home for the Aged.

Ball plans to study Pre-Med in college but is deciding between Yale, Princeton, Stanford and Notre Dame.

He is the son of Dr. Michael and Mary Ellen Ball of Indianapolis.

Indiana Farm Bureau Insurance, the IHSAA's corporate partner, presented a scholarship check for \$1,000.00 to Bishop Chatard High School in the name of Ball.

VSN MEANS ACTION PHOTOGRAPHY

Visit our friends at [Visual Sports Network](#), the IHSAA's official photographer for all state championship events and one of the leading action photographers in the Midwest. VSN, which was on site on Saturday, has captured hundreds of images from this year's State Finals and will have them ready for viewing and purchase beginning Tuesday.

STATE FINALS PROGRAMS AVAILABLE

Couldn't be in there for the state finals? You can still purchase a copy of the official souvenir program while supplies last! Programs are \$3.00 if you purchase in person at the IHSAA Office (9150 N. Meridian Street in Indianapolis) or \$5.00 by mail (postage included). To order, have your Visa or MasterCard ready and call us at 317-846-6601 during business hours (Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-4 p.m. EST).

Quotes from the Class 3A Game

NorthWood Head Coach Rich Dodson

(On freshman quarterback Skyler Titus) He has played in a few wars playing in our conference and obviously playing some very good football teams throughout the tournament. He's a great kid with a lot of composure. He's grown up quite a bit. I tried to relate to him that it's no different than playing in the backyard. I'm not sure if he really bought it or not.

(On the Scoring Drive) We thought we might be able to throw the ball a little bit. We tried to throw a few formations at them and maybe we got a little conservative in the second half, but we were the one's with 7 and they weren't. We were driving the football a couple of times and we got a sack against us when we did try to throw. Later on we fumbled and that probably cost us a field goal.

We had just enough offense but we brought a lot of defense and that was the difference.

(On the 3-6 start) We tried to convince the kids all year long that we were not a terrible team, we just weren't playing the way I thought we could. We started believing in ourselves a little bit better, changed our attitude, and we were able to get here just a great group of kids. We really don't have any true Division I kids, but they sure played like a bunch of Division I kids today. The kids really started believing a couple of weeks ago that we could make this run.

A lot of credit does go to our defense. Anytime you can pitch the ball to Joe Holland there is always the threat of a big play. You just can't give them (Chatard) too many 2nd and shorts and we put them in some 3rd down situations they have not been accustomed to, they just had not had many all season long. We did a great job of not giving up the big play.

Indianapolis Bishop Chatard Head Coach Vince Lorenzano

Defensively they were faster than we were on offense. That's the bottom line. Overall as a team, they were faster than we were. They were reading and running on defense and that disrupted our offense.

We might have needed to throw the ball earlier to open things up. We normally run the football and they stopped us from doing that.

(Rob) Doyle can throw the ball well. We just didn't execute well offensively.

NorthWood did a great job and I did a poor job of play calling. I'll take responsibility for that. But they are a well-coached team and they came well-prepared to play the game.

Our defense was on the field a lot but they played well. The offense didn't get it done today. They had a little more offense than we did.

◆◆ve been involved in a lot of these first-time ball games. Congratulations to coach Dodson. They showed why they made a great run in the tournament.◆