



Northern Lights Jamboree Tournament Play – Aug. 26 & 27, 2011

Ardrossan Bisons used speed and a stouthearted defense to defeat Peace River on Friday in the first -ever meeting between these two perennial powerhouses in their respective tiers. Ardrossan had a 7-0 lead after the first quarter on an impressive run by Jimmie Airey after being sprung by a Derek Longhe block. In the second quarter, Airey scored again on a goal line plunge. The Bisons led 14-0 before the Pioneer QB scored on a long scramble after evading a sack attempt. Following a fumble recovery by the Bisons, rookie QB Kyle Boyko took two plays to find Cody Sanford alone at the back of the end zone. The half ended 20-7 Bisons.

In the second half the Pioneers, undefeated in the Mighty Peace Conference for the past three years and Tier 3 Provincial finalists the last two years, fought back strongly scoring first while Ardrossan answered quickly with a pass over the middle to Jeremy Kerr who ran 8 more yards into the end zone to make the score 26-14. In the fourth, the larger Peace River team started to wear down the Bison defense with their grinding double wing offense. With less than 3 minutes to go, the Pioneers went ahead on an unconverted touchdown after recovering their own short punt keeping a grueling drive alive. Boyko showed tremendous poise in guiding the Bisons down the field. It appeared the Bisons would grind out the clock for a final field goal attempt, when Jimmie Airey scampered for a twenty-yard touchdown with 42 seconds remaining. The Bisons reclaimed a seven-point lead with a two-point conversion. There was no quit in the Pioneers. They moved the ball quickly down the field against a staggered defense. With 5 seconds left on the clock, Peace River stood at the Ardrossan one-yard line and prepared to smash over for a chance to tie. The Bisons held strong with a final heroic surge and stuffed the Peace River attempt as the final seconds ticked away. Sweet victory!

This was an exciting match-up that was well played by two teams that have only practiced 8 or 9 times since the pre-season began. Who knows? If the Bisons were ever moved into Tier 3 (school population over 450) provincially, fans might be treated to another nail biter!

Players to keep an eye on this year: Rookies Cole Christianson, Kyle Boyko, and Brendan Friesen performed very well in Grande Prairie. So too did speedy Dylan Hartling who was brought down after an impressive run one yard shy of the goal line. He demonstrated his toughness too, bouncing up from a spectacular full-speed clothesline after he had hit full stride. Jimmie Airey was also impressive and the Bisons are expecting big things from their second - year offensive line. Keep watch on Drake Kremer and Wade DeBeurs too.

The Bisons next exhibition tilt will be no small challenge. They take on the Ross Sheppard T-Birds Thursday night, Sept. 1st at 7:30pm at Clarke Park in preparation for their first league action September 8th.

Roll, thunder, roll!