



# WEEK TWO RECAP



## PANTHERS DEMONSTRATE THEY'RE NOT AFRAID OF HEIGHTS, BUT UPSET BID FALLS JUST SHORT

*"It is sometimes better to travel with hope than to arrive."*  
-- From a fortune cookie

It is said that gold is where you find it. Same goes for wisdom. As disappointing as it was to see Paschal's mighty upset bid against the loathed Arlington Heights Yellow Jackets fall short, what fun it was to watch the effort. The Panthers were in the game all the way, and indeed had leads at crucial junctures. The Panthers and their fans traveled with hope, and what a joy the journey was.



Playing before a large and often frenzied homecoming crowd, the Panthers took a great leap forward Sept. 14, instilling a sense of fear into the Yellow Jackets, affirming the faith of purple-bleeding Panther Nation, and perhaps more importantly, proving to themselves that all the blood, sweat, toil and tears they've shed since spring have made them a competitive force.

So in a sense, the Panthers both traveled with hope and arrived. It's not just a slogan anymore, a whispered hope. The Panthers aren't anyone's homecoming dupe, and any team that plays the Panthers better come to play because it's on, and it's for keeps.

Consider this: the Panthers had three rushing TDs and two through the air, while utilizing a two-headed monster approach at quarterback. Robert Gallagher rushed for a game-high 221 yards, averaging 8.1 yards per carry, mostly out of the QB position. RB Derarian Leonard added 31 yards on 10 carries, and RB William Hix tacked on another 20 dearly fought for yards. All told, the Panthers rushed for 281 yards.

QB Tyler Nurdin was masterful in leading the air attack, going 15-for-25 for 177 yards. He hit WR Gerrick Flores for one touchdown, and also struck paydirt with a nifty pass and amazing catch by TE Michael Schroeder.

Leonard, Gallagher and Zach Waters all broke off kick returns of 10 yards or better, and Kirby Campbell had a 27-yard punt return. To round out the kicking game, K Alex Koger was a perfect 4-for-4 in PAT attempts.

The defense, too, played with fire and determination. Though it again found itself the victim of the big play on occasion, the defense also was forced to defend a short field more often than is generally considered healthy. But at the end of the day, the defense had played well enough to be ranked 9th overall among area 5A schools, an accomplishment unto itself.

The 2007 Paschal Panthers are a work in progress. But so is life itself. Indeed, it has oft' been said that life is a journey, not a destination.

The journey continues when the feisty Panthers take on South Hills at 7:30 p.m. Friday at Clark Field. Come early, be loud, wear purple. And go Panthers!



## WHOA, NELLIE! JV PANTHERS WIN A BARN BURNER AGAINST HEIGHTS

It was a game for the ages, a perfect sequel to last year's dramatic last-minute freshman victory over Arlington Heights. It was awesome squared. And dadgum fun to boot.

The JV Panthers on Sept. 13 pushed Heights over the edge with a thrilling come-from-behind win in the contest's waning seconds.

Paschal had the ball but was staring at fourth and a mile. Moreover, the Panthers had no time outs and there were just 10 ticks left on the clock. But just like Wonder Dog, the Panthers had no fear. Playing as cool as the other side of the pillow, QB Kevin Deal hit Rochelle Johnson over two defenders for a touchdown with just 1.3 seconds remaining in the game.

All told, Deal and Johnson teamed up for two TD passes. Deal and RB Marcus Kindles also hit paydirt on the ground.

It was the last touchdown, of course, that created bedlam in Panther Nation. The crowd erupted like Vesuvius, and the celebration was on. Meantime, the Heights crowd groaned and then remained silent -- a perfect ending to a perfect evening of football.

The scene was reminiscent of last year's freshman contest between the two schools. Paschal trailed Heights with less than a minute to go before scoring a lightning strike touchdown to send the Yellow Jackets home dejected.

The JV squad is now looking to continue the magic when it hooks up against South Hills at 7:30 p.m. Sept. 21 at Paschal. The team is expecting another sea of purple in the stands, and full-throated roars, as it seeks to squash the South Hills Scorpions.



## FROSH PANTHERS SHOW MOXIE AND PROMISE, BUT COME UP JUST SHORT V. HEIGHTS

In the movies, especially Disney pictures, the good guys always prevail in the end, overcoming adversity and claiming their way to hard-earned respect. Alas, life is not the movies.

The freshmen Panthers A-team on Sept. 13 gave the Arlington Heights Yellow Jackets all they could handle and then some. Though Heights won, the team limped home carrying souvenirs they won't soon forget -- including a new-found respect for Paschal Panther football.

Aaron Stafford and Chris Solarano found paydirt for the Panthers, and on defense Jonathon Weiss was a force to be reckoned with. Overall, the Panthers played like champions and deserved a better fate.

Indeed, as the JV Panthers were clawing their way to a dramatic comeback win, the freshmen squad was mounting a comeback of its own. QB Marshall Norment hit Corbin Hopper for a nice gain, but ultimately the clock became a 12th man for Heights, and the rally was cut short.

Nevertheless, fans couldn't help but give out atta' babies and high fives like celebratory cigars for a job exceptionally well done. The B-team Panthers likewise played with distinction. Highlights included an Alex Flores touchdown and a thrilling 35-yard reception by Chris Smith.

Next up for the freshmen is a grudge match with South Hills. The A-team is scheduled to take the field between 5 and 5:30 Sept. 21 at Paschal, with B-team action following. The JV game will take place at the conclusion of the freshmen contests.



### Join the PHS Football Booster Club

If you have not already done so, please consider joining the PHS Football Booster Club. Please encourage others in the Panther family to join. Just complete the attached application.

*Special thanks to Geoff Campbell for his insightful game day analysis.*