

28-7 win over Orangeville ? Express Varsity team captures OMFL Championship

By Brian Lockhart

It was a stellar season that saw the TNT Express Varsity team suffer only one loss while steam rolling through the league and winning seven games.

The team capped it Sunday with a 28-7 win over the Orangeville Outlaws to capture the Ontario Minor Football League championship.

Their impressive season included a 65-6 semifinal win over the Cambridge Lions.

The final game was played at Esther Shiner Stadium in Toronto.

The Express entered the final game as a first-place team, having scored 259 points for the season while allowing only 61.

They opened the scoring in the first quarter with a long pass from quarterback Andrew Tee to receiver Colin Hall who ran down the sideline to score.

The game was tied at seven when the Orangeville squad made it to the one-yard line then scored on the next play.

A second Express TD late in the half gave the TNT squad a seven-point lead when a successful convert gave them the extra point.

Running back Brian Palmer scored in the second half on a wild run through the pack and the convert gave the Express a 21-7 lead heading into the fourth quarter.

The final push late in the game placed the ball in Express' possession when Tommaso Morelli snagged an interception with 5:05 left on the clock.

The final blow came with just 38 seconds left when Hall notched his second touchdown of the game on another long pass that carried him through to the end zone.

?The wind played a big factor, it took away the passing game,? said Express head coach Mario Addorisio. ?It was a great game, we had a solid team. They played hard right to the end. We did what we thought we could do, we knew we could run the ball, and we did run the ball very well.?

This is the third time in four years that Addorisio has lead the team to the final game. The varsity division has only been around for four years and the Express has made it to the final three times, also winning the title in the 2011 season.

They lost last season in the final, but the return this year made the victory even sweeter.

?Last year wasn't our year. We weren't even supposed to be in the championship,? said Express Varsity quarterback Andrew Tee.

?This year, I felt it. There is something about the team, there's something about the chemistry. We ran the same play a lot, but what ever is working, it's working. As long as we're winning, it doesn't really matter. Whether we're passing or running, it doesn't matter to me.?

Tee has been with the Express for five years, working his way up through the divisions. He's still eligible for one more year at the varsity level.

The win says a lot for the Express organization, who is drawing from a relatively small area compared to some of the teams in the OMFL who have larger population centres.

The team has a dedicated coaching staff and a skilled roster of players who dug down deep and produced the results to bring the championship cup home.



TNT quarterback Andrew Tee looks for a receiver during the Ontario Minor Football League championship game held Sunday at Esther Shiner Stadium. The Express claimed the Varsity championship with a 28-7 win over Orangeville. Photo by Brian Lockhart