

The Milk Can Story

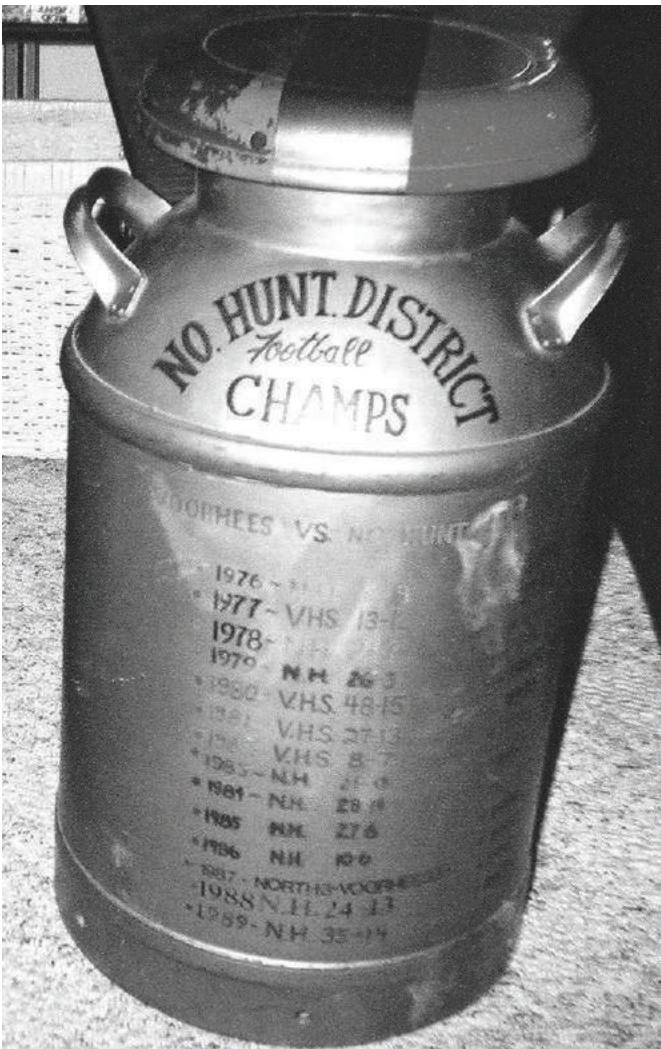
Here's The Real Story About The Milk Can!

How did the tradition start?

This unique trophy was the brainchild of Hunterdon Democrat sports columnist Lowell M. Snare. His enthusiasm served as the catalyst in 1975, the year that Voorhees opened its doors and moved students from 6 of the 12 sending districts out of North Hunterdon into the Voorhees building. He conferred with then-North Hunterdon superintendent Clifford Singley, after whom Singley Field is named. After considering many options, the two landed on the concept of a gold Milk Can to honor the farming heritage of Hunterdon County. The Milk Can is a trophy given to the winner of each annual North Hunterdon vs. Voorhees game. It is analogous to the Old Oaken Bucket of Big 10 fame, or the Commander In Chief Trophy for the winner of the service academy championship. And its similar to Paul Bunion's Ax that goes each year to the winner of the Wisconsin vs. Minnesota game.

Then What?

Snare, along with fellow Hunterdon Democrat writer Gene Robbins and long-time Clinton barber Tony DiPietro (who was then a member of the North/



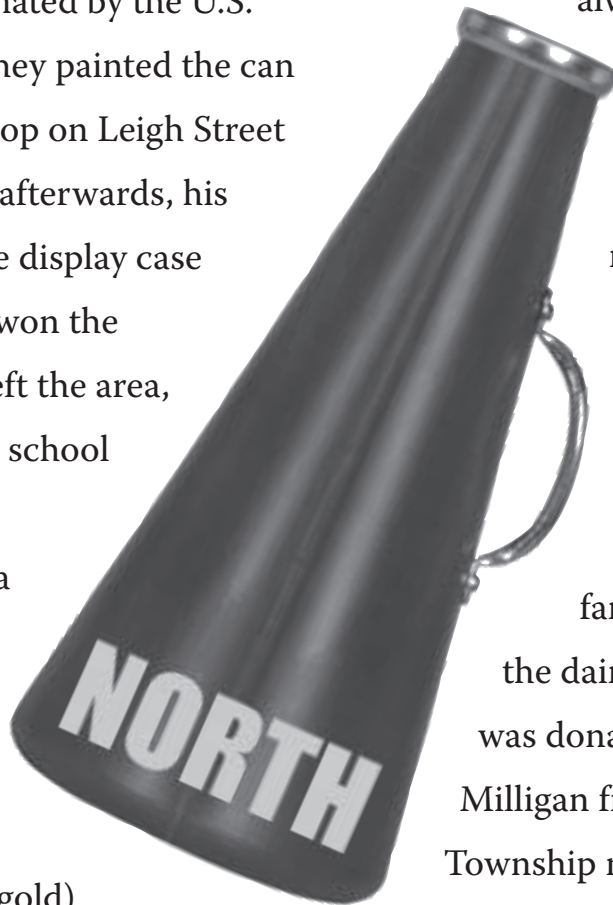
Let's Make it a Win

Voorhees Board of Education), worked together to get it done. They painted the can with three coats of primer, then three coats of 18 carat gold paint donated by the U.S. Bronze in Flemington. They painted the can right in Tony's Barber Shop on Leigh Street in Clinton, and for years afterwards, his barber shop served as the display case when North Hunterdon won the trophy. Tony has since left the area, and we now use our own school display cases. The Can lettering was painted by a professional sign painter, Tom Rosinski of High Bridge, with the colors of both schools (green and cardinal, along with gold) on the lid. The words "North Hunterdon District Champs" were painted below the lid. Early on, it was decided that the score of each year would be painted on the side of the Milk Can so that the results would live on for all to know. It was further decided that the winning school would receive the Milk Can to display as they so chose for the year following their victory. The Milk Can is symbolic of the North Hunterdon/Voorhees

District Football Champions. So every year, regardless of the each team's respective records going into the game, there is always a championship on the line with the Milk Can game. After all, this game delivers the bragging rights of the district.

Milk Can Facts

The can is a 44-quart stainless steel milk can that was used by Hunterdon farmers to take their milk to the dairy to be processed. The can was donated by Bert and Emma Milligan from their farm in Union Township next to the Bethlehem Presbyterian Church. Bert and Emma's son, Joseph, was then a prisoner of war in North Vietnam. He was a captain and US Air Force pilot shot down over North Vietnam and was a POW for nearly seven years. He was also a wrestler at North Hunterdon in his high school days. He presented the Milk Can at the third game after his release.



Beat Voorhees

How old is the tradition?

This will be the 41st annual Milk Can Game, and has been played every year since the second year of Voorhees football. The first season of Voorhees football, 1975, was played as a JV season with no seniors. That is the year that North Hunterdon won a state championship. The first Milk Can game was played in 1976.

What is the series record?

The record stands at 27-12-1 in favor of North Hunterdon. We beat the Vikings



at Voorhees High School last year and kept the Milk Can where it belongs!

We won convincingly with a score of 39-32. **A victory this year will make it 5 in a row** and we'd like that! We have proudly displayed

the Milk Can for the past four years and we'd like it to stay. **This year's game takes place at North Hunterdon on November 4, 2016.** Don't miss it!

Who won the first Milk Can game?

North Hunterdon won the initial can game, 31-8, back in 1976 when Dave Smigelsky earned the first MVP award in the game's history. Smigelsky went on to be an All-American punter at Virginia Tech and went on to punt in the NFL for the Baltimore Colts, Atlanta Falcons and Washington Redskins. Dr. Clifford Singley, for whom Singley Field is named, presented the Milk Can trophy to Lion captains Dave Smigelsky and Bob Bartnett after that initial game.

What was the most points scored in the game?

North pounded Voorhees 45-0 in 1993 for a resounding victory, but Voorhees returned the favor when they beat us 62-14 in 1995. In that lopsided game, the Vikes ran for 350 yards and did not throw a single pass. Perhaps the most painful loss that North suffered was a 48-15 loss in 1980 to a Halfacre-coached Voorhees team, because Halfacre was a beloved North coach who had led North to a state championship just 3 years earlier.



Let's Keep it in 2016!

How many one point games?

Voorhees won the second game in the series, 13-12, in 1977 when Jim Cregar booted a conversion kick with no time left in the game. It was the only win of the year for the Vikes who upset the 5-2-1 Lions in their second varsity season. The Vikes also won by a point, 8-7, as Kevin Spiedel ran in for two points with 19 seconds left in the game on a "Water-Bucket extra point play". North edged the Vikings by one point, 41-40, in 1997 as Lion standout Chris Loftus scored his fifth TD of the game with 1:09 left in the game on a 59-yard TD run. Loftus ran for a school record 304 yards in that win on 30 carries.

How many shut outs?

There have been just six shutouts in 33 years. The Vikes were also winners of back-to-back shutouts in 1990 and 1991 by scores of 27-0 and 26-0. Cahill set the Voorhees single game rushing mark in that game, with 280 yards on 31 carries. North owns three shutouts, in 1992 (28-0), in 1993 (45-0) and in 2002 (24-0).

How many ties?

There has been just one tie, a



3-3 game back in 1987 when North standout tailback Duane Grade was headed into the end zone for the game-winner with 24 seconds left in the game when he was stripped of the ball by Voorhees Ahsley Stayskal. Stayskal then recovered the ball in the end zone to preserve the tie. There can be no more ties in the future, as the NJSIAA has an overtime rule in effect that

applies.

How many cans are there?

There is a replica can displayed in the North trophy case in the lobby of the new North gym, and the North Hunterdon band has a replica as well. And there are variations of the can as well! The frosh game between the two schools is called the Milk Bottle game, while the JV game has been called the Milk Jug Game. There is also a Junior Milk Can given to the winner of the Junior Lions and Junior Vikings game in the Junior High Skyland Conference game. But, there is just one original Milk Can and the history of the game will surely continue.