

Cougars Pass First Test to Stay Alive

By Alex Crook

Apparently, a season-ending visit to Concord wasn't the end of the line for Campolindo varsity football.

It started a couple weeks ago, when Campo took their turn in the opening round of the 2007 NCS 2A Championships. They were scheduled to face heavily favored Heritage High School on their home turf in Brentwood at Patriot Stadium. Before the game in the locker room, Cougar coach Kevin Macy told his guys that not them, but Heritage should be under pressure that night. It was their home turf, and they were expected to win. And Heritage did everything-except win.

On the opening kickoff, Campo's Michael Hoffman, one of several junior varsity players to move up to varsity next year, returned the kick all the way to the Heritage 17. About 4 minutes later, senior wide receiver Nick Mascheroni caught a 6-yard touchdown pass from future varsity quarterback Tommy Stephens, one of 4 of the wide receiver's touchdown catches in Campo's 42-14 rout of the "host" Patriots. Mascheroni's longest touchdown reception that night was a 30-yard bomb from Stephens. Nick later took a break from the spotlight to let lightning fast fullback Andreas Antono pound his way 15 yards into the end zone for yet another Cougar score.

The half ended 28-7 in favor of Campolindo but for Coach Macy, that wasn't good enough. At the break, Macy told his team a

story of how in one game, Campo led 35-21 at halftime. The final score was 38-35. Campo lost. Even on this night against the Pats, the coaches were all in the players' face about how not to give up a comeback and not letting the first drive of the second half slip away from the defense. And coming out of the locker room, Heritage was hungry.

With 10:13 left in the 3rd quarter, the Patriots marched all the way to the Cougars' 1. On 4th and goal, quarterback Kyle Golinveaux capped the drive with a QB sneak into the end zone, cutting the lead to 28-14 Cougars. After an incomplete pass to Luke Crossley on 4th down, the Patriots drove the ball all the back way down deep into Cougar territory, this time to the 5 before Anthony Fadelli intercepted Golinveaux's throw in the end zone and took it back 100 yards down the sideline for the touchdown to make it 35-14 Campo. That was the turning point of the game, and Heritage never looked up again.

Nick Mascheroni ended the scoring in the 4th quarter with a beautifully lobbed 10-yard touchdown reception from Andrew Ertola.

Last week, Campolindo went on to defeat Encinal High 28-8 (see story above) after the Jets ended Acalanes' season with a 46-7 win over the Dons in Lafayette. The No. 7 Cougars will face No. 1 Las Lomas on the Knights' home turf at 7 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 30.