

Published November 25th, 2009

Lamorinda Trio in NCS Football Playoffs

By Alex Crook



#33 Miramonte junior running back John Coupin scored the winning touchdown for Miramonte Photo: Lamorinda Linda

Just 54 seconds into the game, senior quarterback Tommy Stephens hit junior wide receiver Andrew Ahr for a 66-yard touchdown to start their playoff run hot. In his final game as a Cougar, Stephens finished strong by completing 16 of 22 passes for 193 yards, three touchdowns, with two interceptions.

But Stephens' dominance wasn't enough to hold off Fortuna, who took the win, 36-20.

Only one Lamorinda school will go on to the second round. Miramonte's next opponent will be fourth seeded Novato, a familiar face for Coach John Wade and his Matadors. The two schools met on the gridiron last year for a spot in the section title game in Carson, with Novato knocking off the visiting Mats, 20-6. Miramonte travels to Novato on Saturday, November 28th.

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Last weekend, all three Lamorinda schools began their run at the football state championship, opening the first round of the North Coast Section (NCS) playoffs.

Acalanes, who tied for second in DFAL, opened the first round by hosting Analy High School. The Dons bounced back this year after struggling last year and looked to prove themselves in the post season.

Acalanes controlled most of the game. However, Analy took its first lead in the fourth quarter off of junior running back Cooper Maloney's two-yard run, giving the Analy Tigers a 19-17 lead and the win.

"Our kids played hard and never gave up; we just didn't make it happen tonight," remarked Dons coach Mike Ivankovich, who took the helm at Acalanes in 2008 and turned a last place team into a playoff team.

Despite a losing 4-6 record, Miramonte made it to the playoffs as well. The Mats hosted Healdsburg High, and came out victorious 30-28 to move up to round two.

Both teams kept it close for the entire game, but Healdsburg pulled ahead by 10 in the third quarter. The Mats marched 60 yards, capped by a five-yard touchdown run from junior running back John Coupin with four minutes left to give the Mats the lead.

"We might have worn them down a little bit. We kind of pounded the ball at them on that final drive" said Miramonte coach John Wade, referring to his team's game winning 60-yard drive.

Campolindo started its playoff run with a long six-hour bus ride up to Fortuna to take on the 7-3 Fortuna Huskies.