

LAMORINDA SPORTS

Cougars Pull Out Last Second Win Against Dons

By Simon Tryzna



Brett Stephens rushed for a game-winning touchdown as time expired, giving Campo the 40-39 win. Photos Kevin Nguyen

In a highly anticipated league opener between rivals Acalanes and Campolindo, the Cougars got the final word. Brett Stephens capped off an 88-yard drive with a one-yard quarterback sneak as time expired to give the Cougars a thrilling 40-39 victory on September 21.

“(There were) no time outs left. I had to do the quickest thing, so I said ‘Quarterback sneak’ and I got in,” said Stephens after the game.

It was a game to remember for fans of both teams. Led by Stephens, the Cougars got on board early with a 32-yard field goal by Cristian Antezana. An Acalanes fumble led to a 19-yard touchdown pass from Stephens to Mason Windatt to put Campo up 10-0.

The Dons answered back. After a huge fourth down conversion, Acalanes was 5/5 converting on fourth downs in the game, quarterback Robbie Stern ran in for a one-yard score.

After the Dons got their first points of the game, Stephens once again led his team down the field and Nicky Aikawa punched in a touchdown from the one to give Campolindo a 17-6 lead. Acalanes responded with a touchdown of their

own, but failed on the two-point conversion. Each school scored one more touchdown in the first half, which ended with the Cougars clinging to a 24-20 lead.

The Dons received the ball to open the second half and went on a touchdown march that ate almost eight minutes of the game clock and gave Acalanes their first lead of the game.

Two minutes later, Campolindo scored once more to take a 31-27 lead into the fourth quarter. With the Cougars driving once more, Acalanes was able to finally stop Stephens as he failed to convert on third down, forcing the Cougars to kick a field goal.

Then, the Dons went to work. Down one touchdown and facing fourth and two on their own 28, Acalanes went for it and Deshawn Johnson was able to find a hole in the offensive line and explode for a 42-yard run that ended in a facemask call against Campolindo, tacking on fifteen more yards to the end of the run.

The huge conversion set up a short one-yard score by Stern. Acalanes running back Peter Mitchell successfully recovered the onside kick. Mitchell scored on a 25-yard run

to put his team up 39-34.

But the Dons left too much time for Stephens and the explosive Campolindo offense. On cue, Stephens led the Cougars all the way down field, where he was able to sneak past the defense for the win.

“We made so many plays tonight and it was outstanding,” said Dons head coach Mike Ivancovich. “I’m so proud of my team and I’m disappointed for my players, but I’m not sad, I’m not unhappy.

Mitchell felt the same way, but was disappointed. “(We) played well, and it came down to the last play,” he said, “Moving forward, come out next week, do what we can, continue our season and do whatever we can.”

On the Campolindo side, long-time head coach Kevin Macy was relieved. “After a night like this, we have mixed emotions,” he explained. “Acalanes was incredible with what they did to wear us down. We were lucky to pull this one out.”

Next up for the Cougars is a home match with another rival – Miramonte. The Matadors have been unable to string consecutive victories together, starting the year 2-3, which includes their loss at Dublin to begin league play.

Family Tests Tolerance in Open Water Swims

Submitted by Michael Spiering



From left; Maddy, Spencer and Jack

Photo provided

Four members of a Lafayette family, two brothers, one sister and father participated in an annual family tradition, Escape from the Rock, an open water swim from Alcatraz Island to Aquatic

Park.

On August 25th, the Spierings, Jack (sixth grade, Stanley Middle School), Spencer (eighth grade, Stanley Middle School), and Maddy (sophomore, Campolindo

High School) all swam the 1.5 mile distance in the chilly waters of the Bay. Jack finished third in his age group with a time of 57 minutes, Spencer finished second in his age group with a time of 51 minutes and Maddy won her age group and placed fifth overall in the female division with a time of 45 minutes.

On September 9th, two weeks after their Alcatraz swim, Spencer and Maddy swam in the RCP Tiburon Open Water Mile from Angel Island, across the deep-water channel known as the Raccoon Strait, to Tiburon. Both siblings swam in the non-wetsuit division testing their ability to tolerate cold water. Maddy swam with friends from her local swim team, Orinda Aquatics, and finished with a time of 32 minutes. Spencer finished in 37 minutes.

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