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Campolindo Returns to NCS Title Game, Miramonte Bows out in Semifinals

By Karl Buscheck



Jacob Westphal Photos Gint Federas

"Pretty much the challenge of the full year is that you can't pick up a paper and our name isn't referenced without saying 'defending state champs,' " head coach Kevin Macy said. "The defending state champs - they're all at college right now. And that's been a challenge. Just that added pressure. Because we're just not last year's team."

But they're sure doing a good impression.

The Cougars flew through the opening stages of NCS, thumping Ygnacio Valley 70-44 in the opening round on Nov. 14 before taking care of Acalanes 42-7 in the quarterfinals on Nov. 20.

"I only go a week at a time," Macy said. "I don't look at the other bracket. I don't care who the other teams are. I don't care what North Coast is doing or what the CIF is doing."

Up next on the docket for the Cougars will be a championship showdown against the No. 2 seed Analy (Sebastopol) at 7 p.m. on Dec. 4 at Diablo Valley College. If Campo gives the 13-0 Tigers their first loss, the team will not only be crowned the NCS Division III champs, but will also return to the CIF State tournament.

"We're just doing just this one week at a time because it could be our last week," Macy said. "So, why put any energy into that next week? We just want to put all our energy into this week and then just hope for the best. If we survive, then we'll scramble and figure out what to do."

For the No. 2 seed Mats, that last week proved to be the team's semifinals meeting with Concord on Nov. 28. The game began in ominous fashion, as Miramonte fell into a 16-0 hole at home in the first quarter. The Mats cut the lead to 30-20 by the half, but ultimately couldn't find any answers for the visitor's relentless running game in the 60-32 loss.

"They're big and they're physical," head coach Jack Schram said. "They're much bigger than us and they run the ball extremely well."

Concord ended up rushing for seven touchdowns and added an eighth on a kickoff return. Concord also dominated the turnover battle, as the No. 3 seed Minutemen recovered a fumble in the first quarter and intercepted junior quarterback Tim Tague three times. The Mats signal-caller also threw for five touchdowns in the defeat.

That was actually one fewer than the week before when Tague aired out six touchdowns to

The Campolindo football team is moving onto the NCS Division III title game, but Miramonte's playoff run came to a halt at the hands of Concord in the Division II semifinals.

The No. 1 seed Cougars advanced to the championship tilt by topping Bishop O'Dowd (No. 4 seed) 25-13 on Nov. 27 at Bob Wilson stadium in Moraga.

The Cougars got past the Dragons in the semifinals thanks to a couple of fourth-quarter touchdowns. The first came courtesy of junior tight end Joey Berzins, who hauled in a 13-yard pass from junior quarterback Jacob Westphal. Junior running back Matthew Ringquist then punched in an 11-yard rushing touchdown to seal the win.

As the reigning CIF Division III State champs, Campo has been lugging around some weighty expectations in 2015.

four different receivers in Miramonte's 47-29 win over Casa Grande (No. 7 seed) on Nov. 20.

"Our quarterback does a super job of reading the defense and trying to give us the best possible play. One play at a time," Schram said.

As Schram explained, the key to Miramonte's high-powered attack was its ability to strike either through the air or on the ground. In Miramonte's 41-0 beatdown of Redwood (No. 15 seed) in the first round, senior running back Clayton Stehr went for 180 yards and four scores on just 10 carries.

"Our offense is built to take advantage of whatever the other team wants to give us - whether it's the run or the pass," Schram said. "It was a total team game [and that] was where our success came from."



Tim Tague and Clayton Stehr

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