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## Nick Safir named Miramonte's Head Football Coach

By Jon Kingdon



Nick Safir Miramonte Head Football Coach Photo  
Ann Murphy

After twelve years as an assistant high school football coach, the last two as the defensive coordinator at Moreau Catholic (Hayward), Nick Safir was named the head coach at Miramonte High School. After seeing the job listing, Safir jumped at the opportunity. "I sent in my application about 30 seconds after the job was posted," Safir said. "Growing up the Bay Area I know the excellence of Miramonte and it's athletics and I'm very excited for this opportunity." Safir was an offensive lineman and middle linebacker at St. Mary's (Berkeley) High school and a linebacker and tight end at Linfield College, and is currently in his third year as a fulltime teacher in the middle school in Hayward. "I've dedicated my life to mentoring youth," Safir said. "It really brings me a lot of joy to develop these young boys into young men." Miramonte's athletic director Sean Hennessey shared how Safir won him over. "First and foremost, he's an educator," Hennessey said. "Being a teacher really came across as a strong plus for Nick. He understands talking to students and student athletes and he stood out in every phase of what we're looking for." Safir was an assistant coach at Piedmont and Encinal prior to Moreau Catholic. "Piedmont was most like Miramonte in that they prioritize academics as well as athletic excellence," Safir said. Getting a head coaching position was something that Safir was pointing towards after

graduating from Linfield. After coaching for five years at Piedmont, the next six years at Encinal and Moreau were key for Safir. "Coaching under Keith Minor at Encinal and Moreau really helped to develop me into the finer points of what it takes to be a head coach," Safir said. Safir's family was equally thrilled with his appointment. "My wife, Brianne (and their 1½ year old daughter Piper) and my sister are extremely excited for me because they know how long I've been working for this," Safir said. "When I told my dad, he told my mom to get out the good scotch. They live on the east coast now but they're going to be flying back for a few games." Safir has already hit the ground running. "It starts in the offseason, and we've been getting in the weight room already," Safir said. "It's about coaching these kids hard and in the fundamentals. I'm excited for the challenge, but it's going to take a lot of effort and dedication from the kids. If they follow the program that we're setting out for them and if they take to the coaching, we'll be competitive with all of our opponents." Just as important to Safir is putting his staff together. "We've got almost a complete staff with about six or seven coaches on the varsity staff, some of whom were retained from the previous staff and then I have three or four guys on the JV staff and we're looking for freshmen staff because I think we're going to be able to have a freshman team this year." Safir is well aware of the discrepancy in the team's head-to-head records against Campolindo, Acalanes, and Las Lomas. "I was pretty shocked to find out that Miramonte has not beaten Campolindo since 2010 since this was one of the most elite rivalries in the Bay Area and I think it still is, but you can't call it a rivalry if one side wins every single time," Safir said. "We want to compete with those teams because we think our program is on that level and I definitely recognize that as one of the issues that the community really wants to see." Miramonte will be running a spread offense with the return of quarterback Carson Blair and wide receivers, Jack Quinnild (36/568), Andrew Bjornson (26/626), Preston Rguem (23/184) and Mitchell Reichenbach (15/185). "We're pretty excited about the receivers we have coming back and the young receivers we have coming up from the JV so we're going to do everything we can to get as many of those guys on the field but, we will have the flexibility go to two backs and to use a tight end if we need to." Safir will be running a 4-2-5 scheme on defense "because we want to get more defensive backs on the field to cover the many schools that are using a spread offense so we're going to try and get more speed on the field." In the end, it comes down to tackling and physicality for Safir. "My focus is going to be on changing the culture of the team in the secondary by tackling a lot more in practice," Safir said. "I want to make our opponents drive the field and play against a really tough-nosed defense. With our conditioning program and the athletes that we have, we can wear those teams down on the defensive side of the ball." This is going to be a non-stop job for Safir. "I'm well versed in how to make it work year-round, where we can work out, what we can push, how much of the time they're supposed to be at these practices and offseason lifts. We have a twelve-month plan and have come up with some great ideas for how we're going to develop our program."

Reach the reporter at: [sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com)

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