

SPORTS

Football team rolls through league in 56-20 win

By Jonathan Comeaux

Piedmont High’s football team continued its dominance atop the Western Alameda County Conference’s Mission Division. Last Friday, October 25, the Highlanders obliterated the visiting Washington Huskies of Fremont 56-20 at Witter Field. It wasn’t the best start after allowing the game’s opening touchdown and relinquishing a fumble on the first possession, but Piedmont jumped out to a 42-14 lead by halftime while forcing five turnovers on the night.

The result improved Piedmont’s record to 7-1 overall and 3-0 against league opponents, a one-game lead over Hayward and Newark Memorial. PHS already defeated Hayward 35-14 on October 11. They will face Newark in the season-finale on November 8.

“I was telling the coaches this was the most unsatisfying 50-point game. Yeah, we made plays, but we’re getting ready for playoffs and we have bigger aspirations than winning the Mission Division. We know that when we get to NCS, we can’t leave a team on the hook like we did in the first quarter tonight,” said coach Jordan Seiden.

It was another big performance by Piedmont’s Xavier Henderson, who is a player that has a knack for filling the stat sheet on both offense and defense. On Saturday night, Henderson had one kickoff return for a touchdown, one two-point reception, and had a forced fumble, fumble recovery and a tackle for loss all on one play.

“I just relied on my blockers, let the play develop, and tried to turn nothing into something,” Henderson said of his long kick-off return. “On the fumble, it was one of my first blitzes of the game. I knew I had to execute and just show up when it mattered,” he added.

Game Recap

Piedmont led 28-7 by the end of a high-scoring first quarter and extended the gap to 42-14 by halftime. PHS added touchdowns in the third and fourth quarters, while allowing six points in the



Xavier Henderson looks back on his way to a 95-yard kickoff return for a touchdown against Washington.



Sam Shelby bursts into the end zone for one of his three touchdowns against Washington.

final going.

Washington opened up the game with a touchdown after three minutes of play and put itself in good position after recovering a fumble at its own 41. After driving down to Piedmont’s 20, linebacker Cash Elmquist blocked the Huskies’ field goal.

On PHS ensuing drive, they drove down to the 13-yard line, leading to a quarterback keeper by Markos Lagios for the score. A missed extra point made it a 7-6 deficit with 4:21 left in the quarter.

The following kickoff is where the wheels began to fall off for Washington. The Huskies poorly handled the kick, leading to Brandon Dicke recovering at the Washington 36. Piedmont scored after four plays on a 19-yard reception by Sam Shelby. Henderson then caught a pass in the flat for the two-point conversion, making it 14-7 with 2:22 left.

Washington botched the next kickoff, where the returner let

the ball roll thinking the ball was dead at the five-yard line. Tommy Ashton pounced on the recovery, leading to him scoring on a five-yard carry on the next play—21-7 just nine after the last touchdown. The Huskies then fumbled on its first play of the next possession, leading to Faisal Malik recovering at the Washington 38.

PHS scored in six plays, where Shelby had another touchdown reception, this time weaving around defenders on a 37-yard score with two seconds left, 28-7.

Piedmont recovered another fumble at its own 27, where Henderson had a tackle for loss, forced fumble, and fumble recovery on the same play. Shelby then recorded his third receiving touchdown on a 21-yard catch and run, 35-7 with 8:24 left in the first half.

The Huskies scored with 4:51 left, but that’s when Henderson broke down the middle of the field for a 95-yard kickoff

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Tommy Ashton scores a touchdown against Washington.

Highlanders bash Dragons in first-round of WACC Tournament

By Jonathan Comeaux

Piedmont High’s boys’ water polo team glided through the first round of the Western Alameda County Conference playoffs with a 14-9 thrashing of Bishop O’Dowd on Monday, October 29 at the Encinal Pool in Alameda. The Highlanders face top seed Berkeley in the semifinals today, October 30.

After ending the first quarter in a 2-2 tie with O’Dowd, PHS exploded for five goals in the second quarter while allowing two. Both teams added two goals in the third quarter, while the Highlanders poured on seven goals in the fourth.

“Credit where it’s due, their goalie had a good game. We didn’t execute our 6-on-5, partly due to their defense. But in the third and fourth quarters, all the work we did drawing ejections paid dividends when we started getting mismatches,” explained John Savage, who has returned as head coach this fall.

“We start a little slow sometimes and just have to come out with more intensity. We had a lot of opportunities in the first two quarters, but we improved as the game went on,” said junior Elles Kreckhaus.

With a 13-8 overall record, Piedmont enters the WACC Tournament as the No. 4 seed.

“We’re humming. We’re starting to see what we’ve been preaching – where to work the ball,” Savage said.

“We’ve built a lot of chemistry as the season has gone on. The last two years we had George Stein and Declan Linnane really

leading the way. Now, it’s more balanced. Everyone needs to do their part,” Kreckhaus said.

Making an impact this year is freshman Rylan Patty, who was the Post’s Honorable Mention Athlete of the Month in September.

“I love this team because everyone has been so welcoming,” Patty said. “No one has an ego, everyone is willing to pass and listen to input. We stick together and work together really well.”

The Highlanders will have a tough task against Berkeley, which beat them 21-12 on October 15. A win will land Piedmont in its first WACC Final since winning the title in 2022.

Match Recap

In the first quarter, O’Dowd was on the board first after nearly half of the quarter ran out at 3:41, but Leo Hurwitz helped Piedmont respond on the next possession just 20 seconds later. BOD went up again with 42 seconds left, but Patty scored by way of a penalty shot with 24 seconds left.

Piedmont got to the front with 5:07 left in the second quarter when Henry Stein assisted Kreckhaus for a goal. Kreckhaus then scored 45 seconds later, this time on an assist by Hurwitz. BOD got one back about a minute later, but PHS’ Kreckhaus scored with a man-advantage with 1:43 left on another assist by Stein. PHS then forced a quick turnover, leading to a counter-attack goal by Stein on an assist by Kreckhaus just 17 seconds later – 6-3.

In the third period, goalie Luke McAuliffe opened with a save, which turned into a goal by

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Elles Kreckhaus scored six goals against Bishop O’Dowd.



Freshman Rylan Patty scored two goals on Piedmont’s 14-9 victory against O’Dowd.



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Boys' Water Polo

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Zach Dupree on an assist by Patty after one minute of play. O'Dowd got one back on its next possession to make it 7-4. Both teams traded possessions until Kreickhaus scored with 28 seconds left,

this time on a long pass from McAuliffe. A BOD penalty shot made it 8-5 entering the fourth. Piedmont's high-scoring fourth quarter got started with Kreickhaus scoring in just 16



Goalie Luke McAuliffe makes a finger-tip save against Bishop O'Dowd.

seconds. Hurwitz then drew a penalty in front of the net, leading to a goal by Patty 24 seconds later. Dupree made it 11-6 with 4:14 left on an assist by Kreickhaus, and then Piedmont scored three straight in the late minutes to go up 14-7 with two goals by Hurwitz and one by Kreickhaus. BOD scored the last two goals in the final minute.

Final stats: Kreickhaus had six goals and three assists. Hurwitz had three goals and one assists. Patty and Dupree both scored twice, while Patty also had two assists. Stein had one goal and three assists. McAuliffe had eight saves and an assist.

NEXT UP

Piedmont (13-8 overall, 4-3 league) faces Berkeley at the Encinal Pool in Alameda today, October 30, at 6:10 p.m. They will play again on Saturday, November 2. The location and start time are still to be determined.

Football

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return for a touchdown—42-14 at 4:28. Washington nearly added a touchdown as time expired, but Piedmont had a goal line stand where Henderson dropped the Washington quarterback at the one.

PHS ate eight minutes of clock on their opening drive of the third quarter, where Ashton capped off with a 10-yard touchdown run—49-14 with 4:03. Then, on the ensuing kickoff, the Huskies messed up again, leading to Miles Silver recovering at the Huskies 35. Lagios scored on 4th-and-Goal from the three, 56-14 with 10:10 left in the game.

Final stats: Lagios had 211 passing yards and three touchdowns, to go along with 48 rush-

ing yards and two touchdowns. Ashton had 50 rushing yards and two touchdowns. Shelby had five receptions for 148 yards and three touchdowns. Henderson had 55 yards on two receptions and 128 kickoff return yards, including a 95-yard score.

Defensively, Henderson had two tackles for loss, forced fumble, and fumble recovery. Dicke had a tackle for loss and a fumble recovery. Ashton had a sack and fumble recovery. Silver and Malik had fumble recoveries.

NEXT UP

Piedmont (7-1 overall, 3-0 league) heads to Kennedy in Fremont on Saturday, November 2 for a 2:00 p.m. game.

Volleyball

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lotte Bailey, Siena Botero, Abigail Choi, Madelyn Huynh, Quinn Kan-Miller, Josephine Nackley, Juliana Pouzo, Simone Tornatore,

and Abby Walsh-Poole.

Between October 15-18, PMS competed in the 10-team EBMS League Tournament in Martinez



Piedmont players hoist the second-place trophy at the East Bay Middle School League Tournament.

against the top teams in their region and the Contra Costa County region. On Tuesday, they beat Walnut Creek Intermediate School in two sets.

On Thursday, they played a close match against Orinda Intermediate, with Piedmont winning the first set, losing the second set, and then winning the third set 15-10 for the match.

Going into the final day of the tournament on Friday afternoon, PMS' first match was against the top-seed, Moraga Intermediate School. The teams traded leads until Moraga prevailed, winning 24-22 and 25-19.

As this was a double elimination tournament, PMS was not out of the running for the championship and had to turn around and play Orinda Intermediate School.

OIS was ready to avenge its prior loss to Piedmont, but the PMS 7th grade girls stayed determined, winning in straight sets by coming back from behind in both sets. Without a break again, they then played their third match of the evening for the championship.

The evening and the tournament finally ended with Joaquin Moraga winning the championship and Piedmont Middle School coming in second.

Middle school girls' volleyball is a fall sport with registration through the Piedmont Recreation Department. A development program is available for 6th graders, and teams are formed for 7th graders and 8th graders.

Piedmont a comfy 5-0 lead. San Rafael got its first goal with 2:25 left in the third.

With stout defense, Piedmont held San Rafael without a goal until 1:34 left in the game. The Bulldogs got its final goal in the very last second of action.

Final stats: Jacoby had four goals, Krumins had one. Ten Grotenhuis had seven steals, Graham had eight saves.

Loss to Berkeley

Piedmont trailed 2-0 by the end of the first quarter, while

Berkeley added four goals and conceded one in the second quarter to jump ahead 6-1 by half-time. The Yellowjackets added two goals in the third quarter and then both teams added two goals apiece in the final going.

Final stats were not provided.

NEXT UP

Piedmont (8-12 overall, 1-5 league) faces Lick-Wilmerding today, October 3, at 3:30 p.m. at San Leandro. With a win, they will face Encinal in Alameda on Friday, November 1.



Sonja ten Grotenhuis had seven steals against San Rafael.

ADVERTISE IN THE POST

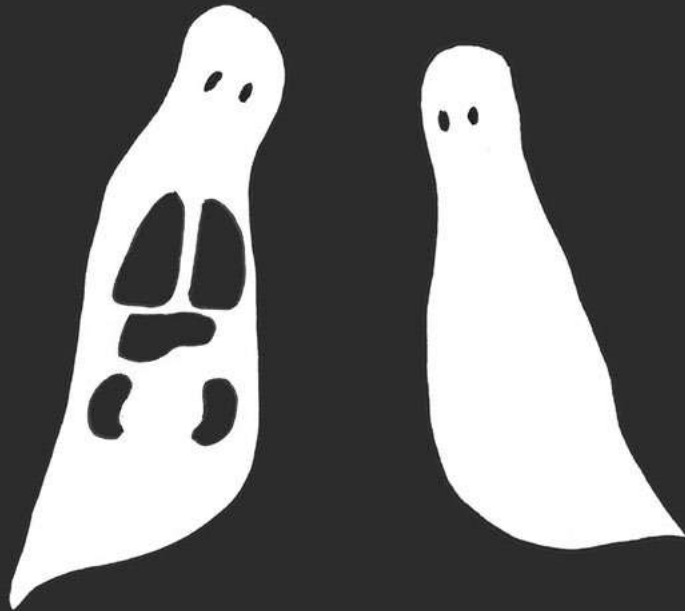
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FLIP by Phil Witte



Phil Witte

"This is not what I expected when I agreed to be an organ donor."