

# SPORTS

## Highlanders #1 in league with 49-7 rout of Irvington

Big game for Lagios and Highlanders

By Jonathan Comeaux

October 17 was a big night for Piedmont’s football team. Playing a rare game on a Thursday, it demolished Irvington 49-7 on the road in what was perhaps the season’s marquee game for the Mission Division of the Western Alameda County Conference. Piedmont entered at 5-1 and Irvington’s record was 6-0. It was also Irvington’s Homecoming Night.

But Piedmont spoiled their party in a dominant blowout.

The game was never close. All drama expired long before halftime when Piedmont led 35-0, with 28 points coming in the second quarter.

“It was totally a statement win. They thought they could schedule us on their homecoming game to get a league win. We showed them why that was a huge mistake,” said linebacker Brandon Dicke.

Piedmont’s defense was a big part of the beating with three interceptions, including 50-yard interception returns for touchdowns in the second quarter by Miguel Long and Dicke.

“I saw the QB underthrew it. It was like my interception against Encinal, I knew I had to keep my legs churning,” Long said.

Dicke extended Piedmont’s lead to 35-0 with an interception return as time expired in the second quarter. Instead of playing it safe at their own 16 with the clock ticking away, Irvington attempted a long pass, leading to Dicke’s interception.



Brandon Dicke follows lead blocker, Xavier Henderson, on a 50-yard interception return for a touchdown.

Staff Photos

With three games left in the regular season, it was an important win for the Highlanders in a battle between the top two teams in the division. Piedmont’s remaining games are with Washington and Kennedy of Fremont, which are both 2-4. The season-finale is against Newark Memorial, currently at 4-3.

“No one is close to us in this league, we realized that last week against Hayward. We’re sitting good right now. We have momentum right now. This was a full, complete game,” Lagios said.

### Game Recap

Irvington started with possession, but committed a turnover on downs after Jordan Alemania made a tackle for loss on a 3rd down,

followed by Tommy Ashton sacking the quarterback on 4th down. PHS then scored on 10 plays on an 11-yard touchdown run by Lagios with 3:43 left in the first quarter. During the drive, PHS converted a 4th-and-12 on a fake punt and had a 21-yard pass to Rehan Mumtaz.

On Irvington’s next drive, Xavier Henderson had a forced fumble and recovery at the 50. Henderson wound up scoring on a 14-yard touchdown reception at the end of an 11-play drive with 9:41 left in the second quarter.

Then with eight minutes left in the second, Long grabbed his interception at the 50, leading to him sprinting down the sideline for the touchdown after manipulating the opposing team by hesitating toward the inside.

Piedmont led 28-0 on a four-play drive after assuming possession at its own 21 with 1:14 left. On 3rd-and-2, tight end Cash Elmquist took a reception 55 yards to the Irvington 16 with 30 seconds left, followed by Elmquist taking the next pass into the end zone four seconds later.

The Vikings then made the costly error of tossing an interception as time expired on its next series, resulting in Dicke’s 50-yard touchdown return—35-0.

In the third quarter, Ashton scored on a one-yard punch into the end zone with 8:18 left, while Jack Meyjes scored on a 15-yard touchdown reception with 2:00 minutes remaining. Irvington scored its only touchdown with 7:10 left in the fourth.

**Final stats:** Lagios completed 12-18 passes for 272 yards and three touchdowns, to go along with nine rushing attempts for 39 yards and one touchdown. Ashton had 21 rushing yards and one touchdown. Henderson had four receptions for 85 yards and a touchdown. Elmquist had two receptions for 71 yards and a touchdown.

Defensively, interceptions were recorded by Long, Dicke, and Miles Silver. Alemania had two tackles for loss. Ashton and Faisal Malik had one sack. Henderson had two tackles for loss, one fumble recovery, and one forced fumble.

### NEXT UP

Piedmont (6-1 overall, 2-0 league) hosts Washington for a league game this Friday, October 25 at Witter Field at 7:00 p.m.

## Piedmont slays Trojans 7-0 on Senior Night



Photo by Jacque Jumper

Piedmont celebrated its four seniors on Senior Night on October 17: Alina Shahid (left), Carolina Romanczuk, Abigail Call, and Emma Eisemon.

By Jonathan Comeaux

Piedmont’s girls’ tennis team played its final home match of the regular season on Thursday, October 17 at the Corey Reich Tennis Center, shutting out the visiting Castro Valley Trojans 7-0. The Highlanders honored its four seniors on the roster on Senior Day, Carolina Romanczuk, Emma Eisemon, Alina Shahid, and Abigail Call.

“We played too well; there weren’t any close matches. The highlight of the day was our senior celebration. We’re going to miss them a lot next year,” coach Jim Landes said.

Of the group, Eisemon is a four-year starter in doubles and Romanczuk is a three-year starter in singles. Eisemon played alongside Call’s older sister, Audrey, as a freshman.

Piedmont’s win improves their record to 8-9 overall and 3-2 against Western Alameda County Conference opponents. To qualify for the Division 2 North Coast Section Team Tournament, schools must achieve a .500 winning percentage on its overall record or league record—making their win over Castro Valley a bit more important.

“We need to stay at least even (.500) to qualify for NCS, so we have to keep playing well. We have some good teams ahead,” Landes said.

The Highlanders have three away matches remaining on the schedule before the Western Alameda County Conference Individual Tournament on November 8-9 at Chabot College in Hayward. Before that, they’ll face Alameda today, October 23, Berkeley the following day, and Bishop O’Dowd on October 29.

All PHS needs is one win over its last three to achieve an even league record. They last lost to Alameda 5-2 on September 26 and had a heated 4-3 loss to Berkeley on October 3. Piedmont bashed Bishop O’Dowd 6-1 on October 10.

### Match Recap

At singles, Romanczuk beat Castro Valley’s top starter 6-3, 6-1 at the No. 1 spot. Kate Jumper nearly double-bageled her opponent at No. 2 in a 6-0, 6-1 win. Arianna Kortum won her No. 3 match 6-2, 6-1, while Lila Rosen



Photo by Sophie Hess

Emma Eisemon is in her fourth year as a starter on the tennis team.

won 6-3, 6-3 at No. 4.

At doubles, Eisemon and Samantha Huynh won their No. 1 match in straight sets, 6-1, 6-3. Seniors Shahid and Call paired at No. 2, winning in straight sets 6-4, 6-1. Ella Thomasson and Chiara Silvia made their varsity debuts at the No. 3 spot, winning 6-4, 6-3.

### NEXT UP

Piedmont (8-9 overall, (3-2 league) travels to Washington Park in Alameda to face the Alameda Hornets today, October 23, at 3:30 p.m. They also travel to the Berkeley Tennis Club to face Berkeley High on Thursday, October 24 at the same time. Their regular-season finale against Bishop O’Dowd on Tuesday, October 29 will be played at Merritt College.



Photo by Sophie Hess

Senior Alina Shahid, playing at No. 2 doubles, wins a point on a forehand.



Miguel Long sprints down the sideline on a 50-yard interception return.



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