

SPORTS

Football team wins first league title since 2015

29-26 win vs. Newark includes forcing 6 turnovers in 2nd half

By Jonathan Comeaux

Friday night at Newark Memorial marked mission accomplished for Piedmont High’s football team. The Highlanders captured their first Western Alameda County Conference Shoreline Division title by defeating the Cougars in a heated 29-26 battle on November 3. It marked the first time the school has won a league banner since 2015.

“I can’t get over this group of kids. I told you last year when we were struggling how proud I was of us for fighting through games. Once again, we had 17 kids and were down to 16 after an injury. Some people picked us to go 0-10. Nobody knew what we had. We kept telling them to just trust and believe in us, and they did,” said coach Jordan Seiden.

It may have not been the most elegant performance after trailing 14-7 at halftime, but Piedmont’s defense responded, forcing six turnovers in the second half, four of which came in the final quarter.

Safety Vince Arbit was the game changer with an interception on the first play of the third quarter to change the game’s momentum.

“We didn’t get things done in the first half. Coach gave us some inspiring words and reminded us of what we were playing for. I knew we had to come out in the second half and make an impact,”

said Arbit.

Running back Tommy Ashton was a big part of the victory, recording several bruising runs to set the tone in the second half. As the middle linebacker on defense, he was in the forefront of the defensive turnaround.

“Starting the second half, we really turned things up. Linebackers started making tackles, we had three interceptions and really put things together,” he said.

Piedmont gained its final lead of 29-26 on a touchdown pass from quarterback Markos Lagios to Sam Shelby with 5:27 left in the game. It was followed by linebacker Brandon Dicke’s fumble recovery and back-to-back interceptions by cornerback Miguel Long

“I gave up a touchdown earlier in the game and knew I had to lock in. I anticipated the tip on the first interception and the second was just totally surreal,” said Long. “I saw the quarterback point to the receiver, which made things too easy.”

In the fourth quarter Lagios suffered a knee injury with six minutes left but never missed a play. Despite limping back to the huddle, Lagios played on and landed an 80-yard touchdown pass to Shelby for the game winner.

PHS now earned the No. 5 seed in the North Coast Section



Piedmont football team members celebrate after beating Newark Memorial 29-26 to win the league championship.



Brandon Dicke had a touchdown reception, an interception, and two fumble recoveries.

postseason and will play at No. 4 Alhambra in Martinez this Friday, November 10.

Game Recap

Piedmont started the game strongly with touchdown series capped with Lagios running 14 yards into the end zone for a 7-0 lead after four minutes. However, Newark required just two plays on a long touchdown run by Jovany Morenogutierrez, tying it at 7-7. Newark went ahead 14-7 with 9:47 left in the second quarter.

After trading possessions, the Highlanders drove to the Cougar 5-yard-line, but failed to convert on fourth down with 28 seconds left. On Newark’s first play of the second half, Arbit jumped in front of Newark’s receiver for the interception at Newark’s 44. Piedmont then scored on a 20-yard pass down the sideline to Dicke for a 14-14 tie. But the Cougars scored on a bomb to Jaden Lim two minutes later for a 20-14 lead.

On Piedmont’s next drive Lagios threw a backwards pass to Shelby, who unloaded a 30-yard pass to Cash Elmquist. Seven plays later, Lagios scored on a 14-yard run, putting Piedmont ahead 21-20.

Newark fumbled and Arbit



Vince Arbit’s interception at the beginning of the 2nd half was the game’s turning point.

recovered with 1:37 on the clock. On Newark’s next series, Dicke came intercepted a pass at the 46 After trading possessions, Newark scored with 5:45 left in the game to take a 26-21 lead. But Piedmont, ever resilient, responded quickly with an injured Lagios threw a pass to Shelby between two defenders down the sideline for an 80-yard touchdown. Shelby scored the 2-point conversion, breaking a tackle on his way to the end zone with 5:27 remaining, and Piedmont held on for the 29-26 victory.

NEXT UP

Piedmont (7-3 overall, 5-1 league) travels to Martinez for the first round of the Division 5 North Coast Section playoffs with Alhambra this Friday, November 10 at 7:00 p.m.

North Coast Section Div. V

FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

FIRST ROUND

Friday & Saturday, Nov. 10-11

1 (1) Miramonte (6-3)

vs. (8) San Rafael (5-5)

2 (4) Alhambra (7-3)

vs. (5) Piedmont (7-3)

3 (2) St. Bernard’s (7-3)

vs. (7) Terra Linda (5-5)

4 (3) Analy (6-4)

vs. (6) Justin-Siena (5-5)

SEMIFINALS

Friday & Saturday, Nov. 17-18

FINALS

Friday or Saturday, Nov. 24-25

PIEDMONT SPORTS SCHEDULE

Some events subject to change. (Revised - 11/8/23)

Date	Day	Sport	Opponent	Loc.	Var.	JV.
Nov. 8	Wed.	WP-B	NCS Semifinals			
			vs. No. 3 Marin Academy (San Rafael)	A	5:15	-----
Nov. 9	Thurs.	TEN	NCS Team Championship			
			vs. Berean Christian	H	3:30	----
Nov. 10	Fri.	FB	NCS 1st Round vs. Alhambra (Martinez)	A	7:00	-----
Nov. 11	Sat.	TEN	NCS Team Championship			
			Semifinals vs. TBD	TBD	TBD	-----
			NCS Team Championship			
			Finals vs. TBD	TBD	TBD	-----
Nov. 13	Mon.	TEN	NCS Individual Tournament			
			Golden Gate Park (San Francisco)	A	10:30	-----
Nov. 14	Tues.	TEN	NCS Individual Tournament			
			Semi-finals & finals (Golden Gate Park)	A	10:30	-----

KEY: H = Home

WP-B = Boys’ Water Polo

A = Away

FB = Football

TEN = Girls’ Tennis

XC = Cross Country