

PHS cross-country teams finishes 2nd, 4th at WACC Championship

By Jonathan Comeaux

Piedmont High’s cross country teams had a strong run at the Western Alameda County Conference Championship meet on Saturday, November 5 at Hayward High. The boys’ team finishing second out of seven schools, and the girls’ team was fourth.

Berkeley’s boys’ team won with 98 points, and Piedmont was second with 115 points. Senior Christian Taylor finished third of 71 runners with a time of 15:43.51, which marked his fastest time this season by 22 seconds.

Junior Xander Schulte-Sasse finished fifth with a time of 15:46.92, ahead of senior Parker Long in 15:59.07. Rounding out their top-five was junior Julien Lee in 19th with a time of 16:51.33, and senior Alex Ware in 22nd at 17:03.04.

“The boys had a great run to finish second. Christian Taylor, Xander Schulte-Sasse, and Parker Long all made first-team all-league with their results. Alex Ware ran his best race ever, shoring up our number five position,” said coach Jeanine Holmlund.

There is notably a bug going around the Highlanders’ cross country team that forced some athletes to miss time and recover. Now that students are progressing from some sickness, “Coach B” Holmlund is hopeful that their best race is ahead of them at North Coast Section on November 19 at Hayward.



Christian Taylor (right) placed third, and Xander Schulte-Sasse (left) was fifth in the League championship cross-country championship.



Parker Long finished in sixth place in 15:59.07.



Freshman Skylar Best was fourth of 59 runners.

“Not everyone has completely recovered from our batch of illness going around. But if the stars align, NCS is calling for us to run well,” Holmlund added.

Freshman Skylar Best continued to lead the girls’ team with a 4th place overall finish in a field of 59 runners on Saturday in a time of 19:25.22.

Behind her were junior Jamie Schwarz in 16th in 20:27.05 and freshman Cora Chun 17th, 20:34.96. Rounding out the top five were freshmen Elia Kwong in 21:11.12, a 50-second improvement, and Quincy Antaya in 21:31.24, a 37-second improvement.

“The girls finished fourth in the league and have made a lot of improvements this year and putting a lot of effort. Skylar Best was first-team All-League and Jamie Schwarz made the second-team; we had a lot of personal records. We couldn’t be more thrilled to see so many girls making a huge effort,” said Holmlund.

Piedmont now looks ahead to the Division 4 North Coast Section Championship Meet at Hayward High on Saturday, November 19. The top three teams will qualify for the CIF State Meet at Woodward Park in Fresno on Saturday, November 26.

NEXT UP

Piedmont returns to Hayward High on Saturday, November 19 for the North Coast Section Championship. The girls’ event starts at 8:30 a.m. and the boys one hour later at 9:30 a.m.

Future of Piedmont football looks bright

JV team ends season with 41-8 rout of Kennedy

By Jonathan Comeaux

Piedmont High’s junior varsity football team closed its season on a high note by defeating Kennedy 41-8 on Thursday, November 3 at Witter Field. It was their third consecutive blowout win.

Coach Jordan Seiden reflected on the season, pointing out that this is the energy they need to bring into their offseason program. Although Thursday’s game marked the season-finales for football, it seemed to represent the start of a new era of football in Piedmont.

In the final three games of the season, the JV team outscored opponents 126-20.

“These are the kids that are going to be the foundation of the program. We have some great building-blocks with a strong group of freshmen, sophomores, and juniors. They are all leadership-type kids at each level. This is a unique group, it’s exciting to be a part of,” said coach Seiden.

Prior to the game, PHS honored its nine seniors on the varsity roster after having their season canceled after playing only four games. The players graduating are Bailey Cain, Ryan McConathy, Bautista and Matteo Costa, Marcos Filho, Aiden Hickman, Jack Nelson, Liam Campbell, and Luka Rivas Cate.

Seiden was the head coach of the varsity team prior to its closure and then stepped to the JV team after the school decided to terminate the varsity season. Seiden has seen considerable progress from several players, giving high praise to tight end Albert Belligrath, lineman Adrian Kondakov, running back and linebacker Tommy Ashton, and receiver and defensive back Marius Arno.

“The thing we preach about football is about developing. Football is a developmental sport where you start at a baseline and grow from there. We spent a lot of time in the summer and preseason working out together and I got to know a lot of them, but then when you see the light bulb go on, it’s exciting. Albert never played tight end before and has been so excited to learn that spot. Tommy hadn’t played much running back until coming down to JV, now we’re looking at him being a feature back. Adrian is another kid who never played football and is a world-class chess champion. His development to starting both ways makes us view him as a staple. Marius is a player I talked to directly and his growth has been amazing,” said Seiden.

Players like quarterback Mar-



Staff Photos

Quarterback Markos Lagios gets ready for a snap with Tommy Ashton behind him at running back.



Receiver Sam Shelby scored three touchdowns against Kennedy. Photo by Chuck Wolf

cos Lagios and Ashton got time at the varsity level and were able to see the speed from top-level teams like Del Norte and St. Mary’s. Their message to players who did not gain varsity experience is to play with confidence, don’t over complicate things, and take what’s in front of you.

“This is really our future right here. It was good to get time together and build chemistry with everyone. I really think that adjusting to varsity is dealing with bigger players, the lights, and more pressure, but it’s really the same game. The advice I’d give is to treat it like every game, don’t overthink it, and stay relaxed,” said Lagios.

“It was a tough season but we really came together and gained some momentum. I’d tell players that the pressure can get to you sometimes, but keep fighting and you’ll be fine. Play your best and always give your best effort,” added Ashton.

Game Recap

Piedmont started the game by recovering an onside kick and scored after just two plays including a 40-yard catch and run by receiver Sam Shelby—which

was the first of three scores by the sophomore. PHS led 6-0 after a missed extra point at 8:34 in the first quarter. From there, Piedmont recovered a fumble at the Kennedy 48 yard line and scored after four plays on a 17-yard touchdown run by Ashton, who punched across a two-point conversion, 14-0, at 3:24.

After a Kennedy punt to the PHS 44 yard line, the Highlanders capped off a seven play drive with a seven yard run by Ashton—an extra point made it 21-0 with 6:45 left in the first half. On the Eagles’ next series, they drove to the Piedmont 28 but failed to convert a fourth-and-four when Vince Arbit broke up a pass. The Highlanders drove six plays for the score on a 45-yard pass to Shelby—making it 28-0 with six seconds left.

In the third, PHS scored with Ashton’s third touchdown, which was a 25-yard run to make it 34-0 after a missed extra point at 7:19. In the fourth, Kennedy finally got on the board with a long touchdown run with 9:34 left in the game—34-8. But on the ensuing kickoff, Shelby took the return to the house for the game’s final score, 41-8 with 7:59 to play.



Piedmont honored its nine seniors from the varsity roster prior to Thursday’s game. Pictured are Aidan Hickman (75), Ryan McConathy (11), Marcos Filho (back), Jack Nelson (10), Bailey Cain, Liam Campbell, Bautista Costa, Matteo Costa (back), and Luka Rivas Cate.



The Professional Tree Care Company

SERVING PIEDMONT SINCE 1978

Our services cover all aspects of tree care and removal. We have a 100% recycle policy for all materials generated by our activities. Our certified arborists are licensed and insured.

www.professionaltreecare.com

510/549-3954 or 888/335-TREE