

SPORTS

PHS cancels football homecoming game

Injuries impacting already low numbers

By Jonathan Comeaux

On Tuesday, September 27, Piedmont High School made the decision to cancel the varsity football Homecoming game this Friday, September 30, with De Anza.

The decision came after the team suffered more injuries in last Friday's loss to St. Mary's. The team has experienced six season-ending injuries after beginning the season with a roster of only 20 players.

The Junior Varsity team has suffered three season-ending injuries, and De Anza decided its JV team will not travel from Richmond to Piedmont for Friday's game.

"We've had to forfeit the varsity football game this week. Unfortunately we do not have enough healthy players this week. We looked at potential JV players we could pull up, but unfortunately don't think there's anyone we could pull up... A lot of the injuries we've sustained are season-ending; we had 12 kids suit up for the last varsity practice and 15 at junior varsity," said Piedmont Athletic Director Bradley Smet.

Smet stated that the varsity team has not canceled all remaining games and will observe how players progress from injuries to determine what is feasible and what is safe.

"If we can have kids cleared to play, we'd love to bring the varsity team back. We haven't come to a final decision on whether to cancel the season. We are hopeful that there is a possibility for us to play more, but we're not going to put our athletes in a situation that puts them at a greater risk of injuries," said Smet.

The JV team has a game scheduled against Bishop O'Dowd on October 14. Other remaining games include hosting Eureka on October 7, at St. Pat-

rick in Vallejo on October 21, at St. Mary's in Berkeley on October 29, and in Richmond at Kennedy on November 4.

"Our bye week on varsity is October 14, which we were able to fill in at the JV level with Bishop O'Dowd, so that is our next confirmed game," said Smet.

Football's roster issues have been an ongoing issue for three seasons. PHS had to cancel its JV team in the spring of 2021 during a shortened season due to COVID-19. Last season there were only 17 players on the roster.

"A positive that we're seeing is that we have a lot of sophomores and freshmen. The one thing we did see from last year was having 23 freshmen playing and gained five additional players within that group who didn't play last year. The hope is that kids are having fun and can convince more kids to come out. From what I'm seeing at the middle school is they have 60 players split between 6th, 7th, and 8th grade. Potentially having 20 kids in each class is amazing, no matter what sport. If we have more kids coming out for sports, we could look into freshmen teams somewhere down the road," said Smet.

Without membership in a league for the first time since 1921, Piedmont has been competing as an independent football team in 2022.

"One thing with Piedmont is how many multi-sport athletes we have; so hopefully these football players can recruit some kids when they move onto other sports. We're seeing that, for example, with a lot of crossover between girls water polo and girls lacrosse," said Smet.

With Friday's football game canceled, the school will host its homecoming festivities at the girls' volleyball game, which has been rescheduled for Friday evening.

Piedmont defeats Lick Wilmerding & Castro Valley

By Jonathan Comeaux

In a strong week for Piedmont's tennis team, the Highlanders defeated North Coast Section rival Lick Wilmerding 4-3 in San Francisco on Tuesday, September 20, and followed up two days later with a mighty 6-1 victory at Castro Valley on Thursday.

The victory over Lick came against a Div. 2 North Coast Section opponent, which will help Piedmont earn a higher seeding in the NCS tournament at the end of the season..

"This was a very satisfying win over Lick Wilmerding," said coach Jim Landes. "It shows we are in a good position to compete well in the NCS championships at the end of the season. But we must keep working to improve."

After the 6-1 win over Castro Valley Piedmont remained undefeated against WACC opponents. They earlier had beaten Bishop O'Dowd in a tournament in Fresno, and San Leandro and Arroyo in league matches. The tournament victory over O'Dowd means Piedmont has technically played just three league matches.

The Highlanders are challenging to be the top team in its league, with Berkeley and Alameda likely being the other two contenders.

4-3 win over Lick Wilmerding

Piedmont won all of its matches in straight sets against Lick, splitting the four singles matches and winning two of three doubles matches.

At singles, No. 1 starter Tanya Kononova made quick work of her opponent in an easy 6-1, 6-1 victory. At No. 2, Anne Jumper lost 6-1, 6-1. Carolina Romanczuk at No. 3 won in straight sets 6-3, 6-1, and at No. 4, Annika Gillil and lost 6-1, 6-2.

"Tanya trounced her opponent while Anne probably played their real No. 1 starter. Anne's opponent ran down most of Anne's shots making it difficult to hit winners," said Landes.

In doubles, Mara LaForte and Michaela Bini paired together for the first time but lost at No.



Photo by Todd Marshburn

Tanya Kononova at No. 1 singles won 6-1, 6-1 against Lick Wilmerding and 6-3, 6-0 versus Castro Valley.

1 by scores of 6-4, 6-3. At No. 2, Emma Eisemon and Cecilia DeFazio won 6-3, 6-3. The freshmen combination of Kate Jumper and Arianna Kortum won 6-3, 6-2 at No. 3.

"Mara and Michaela lost in two close sets. They definitely had their chances; I expect this team to improve a lot in the next few weeks as they sharpen their volleys. Cecilia and Emma and Arianna and Kate both won in straight sets, playing aggressively but with good control. It was great to see," said Landes.

6-1 win over Castro Valley

Piedmont swept the doubles matches and only lost one singles match against Castro Valley. They won all of their matches in straight sets.

At singles, Kononova won easily at No. 1 in straight sets, 6-3,

6-0. At No. 2, Anne Jumper won 6-2, 6-3. Emma Eisemon, who usually plays doubles, appeared at the No. 3 spot but lost in three sets, 6-0, 5-7, 10-4. Romanczuk won at No. 4, 6-2, 6-2.

At doubles, LaForte and Bini paired at No. 1 to win 6-0, 6-2. At No. 2 was Anne Jumper and Kortum, winning 6-0, 6-4. DeFazio and Abigail Call won 6-0, 6-4 at No. 3.

Tuesday vs. College Prep

Piedmont hosted NCS opponents College Prep yesterday, Tuesday, September 27. See next week's Post for match details.

NEXT UP

Piedmont (7-3 overall, 3-0 league) hosts Alameda at the Corey Reich Tennis Center today, Wednesday, September 28 at 4:00 p.m., in a key league match.



Staff Photo

Carolina Romanczuk won at No. 3 singles against Lick Wilmerding and at No. 4 against Castro Valley.



Staff Photo

Abigail Call played at No. 3 doubles alongside Cecilia DeFazio against Castro Valley, winning 6-0, 6-4.

Rugby

Girls and Boys Varsity & JV sides Ages 14 - 19

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TJ Stevko, CFP®
Financial Advisor
370 Highland Avenue Suite 201
Piedmont, CA 94611
510-547-4589



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