

Piedmont beats Kennedy 27-8 on Halloween

By Jonathan Comeaux

It was all treats for Piedmont’s football team on Halloween night, October 31. The Highlanders beat Kennedy 27-8 at Witter Field to improve their record to 5-4 entering the final game of the season. With the victory, the Highlanders automatically clinched a berth in the North Coast Section postseason play-offs, and will conclude its regular season in Newark against the winless Cougars on November 7.

Piedmont was without star player Xavier Henderson, but making up for it quarterback Jimmy Lagios completing 80 percent of his passes for 185 yards and three touchdowns. Meanwhile running back Rehan Mumtaz logged 98 yards and a touchdown. “That’s Piedmont football, it’s the next man up. That mentality goes back to our first year; we’re a resilient group of kids. It really speaks to who are kids are,” coach Jordan Seiden said.

It was a strong defensive game for the Highlanders, recording three interceptions and three quarterback sacks and four tackles for loss.

“We made the plays we needed



Jason Shum made a 42-yard interception return, one of two in the game with Kennedy.

to make. We shot ourselves in the foot a few times, giving up penalties on 3rd-and-long, but that’s part of having a young team,” Seiden explained. “We’ve spent a lot of time over the past week just focusing on the fundamentals of tackling.”

Senior safety Jason Shum made two interceptions, one of which was returned 42 yards to the five-yard line, breaking a tackle in the process.

“I wasn’t sure I was going to get the first one. I must have run into the receiver’s arm and caught the ball. I saw him run a post, so I jumped on it when I saw the quarterback throw it. I played the ball and it wound up in my hands,” Shum said.

Game Recap

Kennedy started with the ball. When attempting to convert a 4th-and-8 at Piedmont’s 32, George Saunders grabbed an interception after Colby Hong laid a shot on the Titans’ quarterback, returning it to the Kennedy 39.

Piedmont scored on their third place of the ensuing possession, when a reverse from Max Fujimoto to Rehan Mumtaz turned into a flea-flicker to quarterback Jimmy Lagios, who uncorked a 49-yard bomb to Jack Meyjes for the touchdown. A converted extra point gave PHS a 7-0 lead with 6:05 left in the first quarter.

After a few trades of possession, Kennedy scored with 3:58 left in the second quarter, taking an 8-7 lead after a successful two-point conversion. But that was the last time for the Titans to score.

PHS answered with a nine-play, 59-yard touchdown series to take a 14-8 lead with 19 seconds left in the half. Capping off the drive was Fujimoto with an 11-yard touchdown, turning a five-yard hitch route into a score.

Piedmont scored next with 3:49 left in the third quarter to make it 21-8. This time, it was a five-play drive, finishing with a nine-yard touchdown pass from Lagios to Dash Waters-Worthen.

The Highlanders last touchdown came with 2:56 left in the game. Enabling the score was Shum’s long interception return to the Titans’ five. After Piedmont was penalized for holding, Mumtaz scored on a 15-yard scamper on a jet sweep after motioning from the slot receiver spot.

Final stats: Lagios completed 12 of 15 passes for 185 yards, three touchdowns, and an interception. Mumtaz had 98 yards on 12 carries and a touchdown. Fujimoto had four receptions for 45 yards and a touchdown. Cash Panico had four receptions for 59 yards. Waters-Worthen had two receptions for 17 yards and a touchdown. Meyjes had one reception for 49 yards and a touchdown. Shum had two interceptions. Saunders had one interception and one tackle for loss. Hong and John Bunje had one sack and tackle for loss.

NEXT UP

Piedmont (5-4 overall, 3-1 league) visits Newark Memorial for the season-finale on Friday, November 7 at 7:00 p.m.

Piedmont falls to Urban in heated 5-set NCS loss

By Jonathan Comeaux

Piedmont’s volleyball team’s season came to an end on Wednesday, October 29. As the No. 8 seed in the Division 4 North Coast Section postseason, the Highlanders fell in a five-set battle to No. 9 Urban at Binks Rawlings Gym, where four of the five sets were separated by just two points 25-23, 15-25, 26-24, 24-26, 16-14. Piedmont held set-point in the third set, and match point in the fifth.

Despite the loss, reaching the playoff tournament marked the team’s first post-season NCS berth since 2018.

“We really beat ourselves. The stats showed we had so many unforced errors. I’m not sure if that’s because of nerves from being our first match in NCS and single eliminator. But we made NCS and it’s great. It’s been a long time coming. That’s always been a goal since I came here,” coach Mariah Cardenas said.

For seniors Stella Wilk and Mira Sachs, they’ve seen the rise of Piedmont volleyball first-hand. They were freshmen when the team went 9-15, finished 7-13 as sophomores, and 3-19 last year as juniors—each without NCS berths.

“We left it all on the court. I’m so proud of this team because we have so many underclassmen, and we played so many schools with players who are going to play in college. Seeing us persevere was really inspiring,” Wilk said.

“It’s been so great playing with this team. Making NCS for the first time in seven years is such a big win. The collaboration and how we cared about each other was really special,” Sachs mentioned.

2025 could represent the start of some prime years for Piedmont High. This year’s team had

one freshman, eight sophomores, six juniors, while just Wilk and Sachs were the lone seniors.

“The youngness of this team is really going to show out for the next couple of years. A lot of other teams are losing big-time players, while our big-time players are freshmen and sophomores. I’m super optimistic,” Cardenas said.

“We proved so much this year. Coming back from a rebuilding year, it shows how much this program has grown. It’s really taking off with the youth. There’s even some great middle schoolers coming up next year,” added sophomore setter Allyson Huynh

Match Recap

The two sides went back and forth all the way to the end of the first set. Trailing 17-14, PHS scored five of the next six points to take a 19-18 lead with kills by Lucia Dorsey and Izara Dando, along with aces by Carina Vora and Huynh. Urban then went up 22-20, but Piedmont eventually tied 23-23 after a kill by Sachs and an offensive error. However, Urban won the set with a kill and an error.

Piedmont dominated the second set 25-15. They started with three straight points with two kills by Wilk and a block by Dando. Urban clawed their way back to tie the set at 13-13, but the Highlanders went on a roll with eight straight points and four of the final six points. During that stretch, PHS logged two kills by Maika Ting, one by Dorsey, two aces by Wilk, and a block by Dando.

The third set was intense with six total lead changes. PHS opened with three straight points, but Urban eventually went up 9-6. Piedmont then went up 13-11 with kills by Sachs, Ting, Dorsey,

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Rehan Mumtaz scored the game’s final touchdown.



George Saunders had one interception and a tackle for loss against Kennedy.



Stella Wilk logged 11 kills in her final game in a Piedmont uniform.



Mira Sachs, one of two seniors, had eight kills against Urban.

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