

Eagles Flagged for Loss Against Centennial

By Gregg McMullin

The El Segundo High School football team was on a roll going into its game with Centennial. The Eagles had won four straight after dropping their first two games of the season. Centennial too came in on a roll having beaten Pioneer League favorite North Torrance in their league opener. The Apaches have turned their program around in recent years and it showed once again by dominating the time of possession and escaping with a 14-10 win over the Eagles.

The Eagles played their second straight home game on their dilapidated field, and for the second straight week the officiating crew came up with some suspect penalties. It was another night of frustration for the Eagles in which those flags came with officials either out of position or just wanting to be involved in the play. Though there were just 12 penalty flags thrown, at least three of the officials huddled on four of the flags. On two of the flags, four of the five officials discussed the situation. After a long delay on three of the situations, the flags were directed at an Eagle player.

Centennial threw for nearly 300 yards against North Torrance, but against El Segundo it went to a more time-consuming ground game. The Apaches had four possessions in the first half and controlled the time 17:58 to 6:02. The Apaches had possessions of 10 plays, 19 plays, eight plays and five plays to end the half.

Even though the Eagles' defensive unit was on the field for so long, it did manage to keep the Apaches out of the end zone until just over two minutes left in the first half. The Eagles, who ran just 18 first half plays, responded to Centennial's score by going 68 yards in seven plays. Hunter Hovland caught a key pass for a first down and Nigel Nootbaar's 20-yard reception set up Mike Bundy's 25 yard pass play to Jimmy Quiñones for the tying touchdown. Grant Palmer helped spring Quiñones free with a great block and Quiñones went the distance to tie the game before halftime.

The Eagles could not get much going on the ground and Bundy was continually being harassed before he could pass. The senior quarterback was sacked five times for a minus 27 yards on the night and the running game that produced almost a combined 200 yards against Torrance was held to just 22 yards.

The Eagles took their second possession of the third quarter and gained a measure of momentum with a 32-yard field goal from Grant Palmer. The seven-play series was aided by a 39-yard pass play to Nick Kessler and a 14-yard pass play by Quiñones on successive plays.

Early in the fourth quarter with El Segundo leading 10-7, the Eagles' Sean DeFrancesco came up with an interception near his own 23 yard line. The plan was to keep the clock moving by running the ball, but the Apaches stuffed the run twice and forced an incomplete pass to get the ball back.

Centennial had just three possessions in the second half, but once again they dominated the time of possession—especially in the fourth quarter. The Apaches used their final possession to go 55 yards in 12 plays to score the go-ahead touchdown with 2:34 left in the game.

The Eagles had an opportunity to take the lead with their final series of the night. Bundy hooked up with Palmer for an unbelievable 41-yard pass play. With the ball on the Centennial 29 yard line, Kessler was stopped for no gain and Bundy scrambled for no gain on second down. One of the stunning penalties that went against the Eagles came on third down when Nigel Nootbaar was flagged for offensive pass interference. The officials convened for a lengthy time before making the call against the Eagles. On fourth-and-25 from the Centennial 45 yard line, the Eagles failed to pick up the first down and Centennial ran out the last minute of play for the win.

The Eagles' defense played as good of a game as you could ask for, but being on the field for so long may have taken its toll. The questionable calls that went against the Eagles also played a part in the losing equation, but Eagle head coach Steve Shevlin said it wasn't the reason they lost. "There were some questionable calls, but give Centennial credit. They earned it tonight and they're a good team."

The Eagles are a good team too and are not out of the Pioneer League race by any means, but it does make things a bit more challenging.

El Segundo will be on the road at North Torrance Friday night at 7 p.m. and will look to make the Saxons' chances of a playoff berth dim with a win over them. North Torrance (3-4, 0-2) was once thought to be the team to beat, but it has struggled in losing its last three games.

Eagle News and Notes

The girls' volleyball team is in position to make the CIF Southern Section playoffs. The Eagles (8-4, 4-1) are in second place behind league leader South Torrance. With their three final matches before the playoffs start, they'll need to sweep North Torrance (this past Tuesday), Firebaugh (at home today at 4 p.m.) and South Torrance on Tuesday, November 3 at 3:15 p.m. on the road to win or tie for the league championship.

'Gundo Boys' Polo Streaks Through League



Senior Beau Blacksten, taking a shot against Santa Monica, scored the game-winning goal with 24 seconds left to make the score 9-8. Photos by Shelley Kemp, www.kemp.photoreffect.com www.kemp.photoreffect.com.

By Kelly Kemp

The El Segundo High School boys' water polo team beat Santa Monica at home and Beverly Hills away this week to remain unbeaten in Ocean League play and advance all the way to a number two ranking in CIF Division V, behind number one La Serna of Whittier but ahead of rival Santa Monica.

Against their primary foe and up by a score of 5-4 at the half, the Eagles scored early in the third, but then gave up three unanswered goals to new number three SamoHi to close the quarter. At that point, the fireworks started with an eight-meter canvas-slapping goal by junior Jackson Hogoboom, who scored two goals in the match. Top scorer was senior Beau Blacksten with four goals, including the game winner off of an assist from senior Csaba Nagy. Nagy drew the double team and was able to feed Blacksten as the latter sprinted up the left wing past both defenders, beating the Samo goalkeeper at 0:24 seconds for the win. Nagy finished with three much-needed goals, earning my game MVP nod

due to the critical timing of not only goals, but more importantly assists and steals.

El Segundo finished the week with a resounding 14-9 victory in the famed Beverly Gym/Pool—below the basketball court floor made famous in the Jimmy Stuart film *It's a Wonderful Life*. You can Google Beverly Hills High School Pool – there's a really cool YouTube clip on it!

The Eagle polo boys are the only undefeated team in Ocean at 18-6 (5-0). Line score at Beverly Hills featured Blacksten with five goals, Nagy with four, Hogoboom with two, and Robert Cordobes, Evan Peterson, and Max Reynolds with one each. Goalie Christopher Cordobes had seven saves in net, but also had six versus Samo. As always, team defense has put them in the position to win—and this time perhaps capture the Ocean League championship! Next up: The final League run versus Torrance, Culver City and Santa Monica away, prior to the CIF playoffs. Go Eagles! •



El Segundo was down 8-7 with 38 seconds left in the fourth quarter when Jackson Hogoboom pounded the canvas with the tying goal.

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