

Eagles Have North in the Palm(er) of Their Hands



Eagle quarterback Mike Bundy, seen here during practice, threw for 413 yards against North Torrance.

By Gregg McMullin

The football game between El Segundo and Pioneer League rival North Torrance has been a heated one for the past couple of years. The Saxons were used to blowing out the Eagles in league play, but recently the Eagles have held their own against a North Torrance team that was supposed to be the league favorite this year. With a flair for the dramatic and with senior quarterback Michael Bundy throwing for over 400 yards, the Eagles scored the go-ahead touchdown with 0:42 left in the game to win 28-21.

The Eagles let a 21-7 lead slip away two years ago against North and went on to lose to the team that reached the CIF semifinals in 2007. In that game Bundy threw for 265 yards and two touchdowns, but the Eagles couldn't finish off the Saxons. Last year, the Eagles held a lead in a poorly officiated game when Bundy was forced out of the game on a late hit. The Eagles lost another thriller 21-17.

Both Bundy and Grant Palmer, who was inserted at quarterback when Bundy was injured in last year's game, insist they weren't thinking of the past before the game. But both played key roles in the Eagles' comeback win. "Let's face it--we've had some pretty bad luck against them," said Bundy.

This year, though, it would be different and the scenario was switched as the Eagles had a short lead but then lost it to fall behind by two touchdowns in the second half. "We played with a sense of urgency, especially in the second half," said Eagle head coach Steve Shevlin.

The Eagles absolutely dominated the first half of play. It didn't take El Segundo long to make a statement much like it had in the past two meetings. On a seven-play drive to start the game, Palmer caught two passes for 44 yards that helped set up Bundy hooking up with Nick Kessler on an 11-yard touchdown pass play.

On El Segundo's next possession, the offense went on a 15-play drive that was halted when Bundy was intercepted in the end zone. That pretty much summed up the first half for the Eagles. They controlled the time of possession 17:32 to 6:28 for North Torrance. In fact, the Saxons ran just six plays and were held to a net zero yards in the first quarter. But that all changed in the second quarter when the Saxons scored the tying touchdown on an 80-yard pass play.

When the two teams went to the locker room at halftime tied at 7-7, the Eagles were wondering why they weren't ahead by two or three scores based on the statistics. The Eagles ran 49 plays to just 17 for the Saxons. They had picked up nine first downs through the air and four on the ground while holding North to just two first half first downs.

North capitalized on a miscue by the Eagles midway through the third quarter. The Saxons were forced to punt after their second half opening 10-play drive stalled at the 50 yard line. On the punt, Jimmy Quiñones bobbled and lost the ball and the Saxons recovered at the El Segundo 15 yard line. Two plays later, the Saxons ran it in from 10 yards out. On their next possession, a long 66-yard run helped setup a four-yard TD run by Chris

McDaniel to put North up 21-7.

The mark of any good team is how it reacts to adversity, and the Eagles responded to being down by two touchdowns with poise. On the next possession, Bundy found Palmer open on a fade route and the speedy, sure-handed receiver caught the ball and outran the Saxons' secondary for a 78-yard touchdown to close the gap to 21-14.

With the Eagles' defense coming up with some key stops, El Segundo once again showed its resilience by going 66 yards in eight plays to tie the game. Palmer picked up 27 yards on a pass play while Jimmy Quiñones picked up another 26 yards. Nick Kessler ran it in from two yards out with 8:19 remaining to tie the game at 21-21.

The defense held the Saxons on their next five-play series and North was forced to punt back to the Eagles. The long punt sailed over Quiñones' head and was downed at the Eagle's one yard line with 4:44 remaining in the game. The Eagles then proceeded to go on a 12-play, 99-yard drive that was filled with dramatic moments. Facing a fourth-and four at their own 38 yard line, Palmer lined up to punt the ball. He found an opening and instead of punting, he ran for the first down.

With a new set of downs and the clock winding down, Bundy found Hunter Hovland for a 28-yard pickup. Trevor Thompkins, who led the Eagles' rushing attack with 52 yards, picked up 13 yards on the next play. Two plays later, Bundy threw a ball towards the back of the end zone where Hovland out-jumped two diminutive Saxon defenders for the go-ahead score with 0:42 left in the game.

With the Eagles playing a prevent defense, they allowed the Saxons' short passes but not any home run threat. With the ball on the Eagles 27 yard line with four seconds left, the Saxons' final desperation pass fell incomplete at the goal line and the Eagles came away with the 28-21 win.

With the win the Eagles (5-3, 2-1) are still in position to claim a portion of the Pioneer League title. To do so, they'll need to defeat Lawndale (5-3, 3-0) and South Torrance (3-5, 1-2) and hope that Centennial loses one or both in their final two games.

The Eagles travel Friday night to play a Lawndale team that has been on a roll literally by piling up nearly 300 yards per game on the ground. "We're playing one game and one play at a time. If we play like we have we should stop them," said Eagles' defensive coordinator Dan Heck.

Eagles News and Notes

The boys' water polo team is still on a roll and is currently ranked second in the latest CIF Southern Section Division V polls. The Eagles (19-6, 7-0) hammered Torrance behind the play of Beau Blacksten, who had six goals in the Eagles' 8-2 win. The Eagles, who have all but wrapped up the Ocean League title, traveled to Santa Monica yesterday for their final league game. The playoff brackets come out Monday morning with the first round action being played on Wednesday November 11 at 3:15 p.m. Assuming all stays the same, El Segundo would have a home game in the first round, or a bye week with a home game in the second round on Friday November 13. •

City Council

from front page

to the late John Gaines, it was announced on Tuesday. Gaines, a US Navy officer in his youth who went on to serve for eight years (1998-2006) on the El Segundo City Council, passed away in March 2007 after a long illness. The ceremony will likely take place sometime next month. In approving the dedication and plaque, Mayor McDowell said this was something he had wanted to do for a long time. Mayor Pro Tem Busch called it a "fitting and proper memorial" and described Gaines an "unwavering supporter of public safety." In an interview not long before his death, Gaines listed his role in pushing the Council to allocate funding for Fire Station 2 as among his proudest accomplishments.

H1N1 Clinic Delay Irks Busch

Mayor Pro Tem Busch voiced his displeasure about the City's decision to indefinitely postpone a Los Angeles County-run H1N1 (a.k.a. swine flu) vaccination clinic originally scheduled for November 14 at the Joslyn Center. As explained by Mayor McDowell, the City opted to delay the event because there was no assurance on the number of doses available. Busch wasn't convinced, noting that the County is getting more doses every day and that Culver City recently held a clinic in which it distributed 2,500 vaccines and still had 600 to 700 left over. "It is this City's obligation to provide these kinds of services to residents," Busch said, adding that the City should move forward quickly to set a new date, time and location. The rest of the Council could not weigh in on the matter per the Brown Act since the item was not on the agenda.

Council Meetings to Take Place on Election Days

Councilmember Carl Jacobson finally received his long-standing wish to allow regularly scheduled Council meetings to take place on the same date as any regular or special election rather than move to the following evening as has been the practice for a number of years. He received supporting votes from all but Busch, who last month

said, "Election days are for the election, and that is the main function of government."

While arguing earlier that City business should hold equal importance to election matters, Jacobson also made the request for scheduling reasons: He regularly attends other meetings on behalf of the Council on Wednesday nights, thus creating a time conflict.

City Gives RSI Work to Next Lowest Bidder

Though the lowest bidder and on the agenda for approval, S & L Specialty Contracting, Inc. won't get a \$711,000 contract to do residential sound insulation work on 26 El Segundo homes. City staff learned late in the game that S & L's bid was "non-responsive." Among the issues: a listed subcontractor was not properly licensed. As a result, the Council gave the job to Big West Construction Corporation, which came in about \$14,000 higher. That an RSI bid fell by the wayside was no surprise to the Council members, who lamented that these problems occur all too frequently. Though the difficulties typically stem from industry competition (where a vendor might rat out a rival for violations), in this case staff found the discrepancies on their own. It made Councilmember Brann wonder aloud, "Why don't vendors comply?"

Mayor Warns of More Severe Budget Cuts

After an arduous 2009/10 budget process that involved \$6 million in initial cuts plus another \$1 million pulled thanks to the State grabbing local Prop 1A revenues, Mayor McDowell predicted that "next year's cuts will probably be more severe." For that reason, City staff is already at work on next year's fiscal budget. Though the Council and staff managed to creatively avert service losses and staff layoffs this last go-around, McDowell couldn't promise the same for next year. "This will be a tough time," he said. "We will do our darndest to minimize impacts...to keep our incredibly high quality of services and keep our employees intact."

TO TURN OFF LIGHTS WHEN YOU LEAVE A ROOM YOU WILL NEED:

1

2

3

ENERGY

AC

LoseYourExcuse.gov

WHAT'S YOUR EXCUSE?

St. Antony Pharmacy El Segundo

SPECIAL

Deluxe Walker \$75.00 (Originally \$122.00)

FREE DELIVERY!

Tel. 310.524.9244 • Fax. 310.524.9592 310 E. Grand Ave., El Segundo, CA 90245

10% OFF over the counter purchase One per customer