Eagles’ Great Effort Not Enough in Opener

By Gregg McMullin

The 2009 El Segundo Eagles’ football season opened up at West Torrance, but before the game the players and fans paid tribute to the victims who died on Septem-
ber 11, 2001 when America was savagely attacked. Each player interlocked their arms with their opponents’ arms as they stood in the end zone staring at an American flag at half mast. Afterwards, the two teams locked up in a battle of their own with the Eagles’ hard effort coming up short in a 14-7 loss.

This would become a game of who had what, and may be a peek into what is to come later on during the season. For West Torrance, it would look to a smash mouth-type running game and ball control to set up a pass in a talented wide receiver. For the Eagles, they would look to their three-year starting quarterback Mike Bundy to once again lead their high-octane offense. The only question would be who had it and who didn’t.

Early on, the Eagles had trouble running the ball against an athletic but inexperienced front line. So Bundy took to the air, but was just one of five during the first series of the year. The Warriors put pressure on Bundy, but the senior QB was mobile enough to escape time and again. “The line did a great job giving me time—I just missed my targets,” he said.

The game was a defensive struggle for both teams, but West was able to move the ball on the ground behind senior running back Dan Henggeler. The Warriors were moving the ball well on their second possession when Eagle defensive end Michael Rae tracked down West quarterback Ronnie Clark for a 10-yard loss, forcing the Warriors to punt the ball back to the Eagles.

On its next possession, West once again stuck to the running game and consistently picked up three and four yards per carry. On second down, the Warriors went to the air and Clark completed a short pass to his favorite target Kyle Slowey. Slowey turned up to go up field, where he was met by senior cornerback Jimmy Quinones. Quinones hit Slowey and who rushed for 174 yards on 28 carries, picked up 41 yards on three carries during the Warriors’ final scoring drive. The drive ended with his eight-yard burst up the middle to give the Warriors a 14-7 lead with 1:32 left on the clock.

The Eagles took their last possession of the game at their own 32 yard line. Bundy then completed three of four passes to get the Eagles down to the Warrior 23 yard line. On the drive, Nick Kessler picked up 17 yards on a screen pass and Grant Palmer picked up another 20 on a naked screen over the middle.

With 0:42 seconds left in the game, the Eagles, without any timeouts, fumbled the ball back to the Warriors on the snap. With that, any chance of a comeback was quashed. “I’m not sure what happened on that last snap, whether it was me or a bad exchange,” said Bundy.

Afterwards, Shevlin congratulated his team for its overall effort and said that they kept up this level of progress, the Eagles would be “okay. It hurts to lose a game that you know you put so much into it and to come up on the short end.” Shevlin said. “They are a good football team and so are we, and Up in a battle of their own with the Eagles’ defense limited the Warriors to just four first half first downs, including one on the Eagles’ one 3-yard gain. In fact, the Eagles had a net minus-three yards for the third quarter, during which they ran just six plays.

“Our guys were on the field long periods of time and especially in the third quarter,” said Shevlin.

West Torrance had the momentum in the fourth quarter, but El Segundo’s defense kept up its light to stave off the Warrops from scoring until late in the fourth quarter. With 4:40 left in the game, the Eagles went on a seven-play drive that started on their own 27 yard line. Henggeler, who rushed for 174 yards on 28 carries, picked up 41 yards on three carries during the Warriors’ final scoring drive. The drive ended with his eight-yard burst up the middle to give the Warriors a 14-7 lead with 1:32 left on the clock.

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Provided By Doug Sersun

Stacked by three top-runners, the El Segundo High School cross country team opened the 2009 season with a solid showing at the Fashtack Shootout on Saturday, Sept. 12, at Mt. San Antonio College. The season opener featured a unique competition format in which the athletes competed by class year in contrast to the usual Varsity/JV breakout over a two-mile course.

Freshman Megan Freiberger was the Eagle’s top finisher placing third clocking a time of 1:52:56 on the famed course in the hills of Walnut. Classmates Jordan Mullins and Anna Farello followed close behind placing fifth (13:12) and ninth (13:26) respectively. Anna Farello followed close behind placing fifth (13:12) and ninth (13:26) respectively. Mandie Segura ran an impressive 2nd place (14:50) finish, followed by Macy Vezina in 28th (15:03). Hannah Garza (57th), Analise Fernandez (58th), Savannah Long (64th), Kerri Schumacher (70th), and Kelly O’Shea (113th) rounded out the freshman ladies’ team with great performances of their own. The remarkably strong finish by these young athletes bodes well for the future of El Segundo’s growing cross-country program.

The upper-class ladies were paced by senior Mackenzie Lee who had a medal-winning 34th place (15:03) showing in the tough senior division and by junior Cara de Freitas (1:52:56). On the young men’s side, junior Austin Van Biesen was the swiftest of the bunch with a medal-winning 36th place (11:57) finish. The juniors also had impressive runs by Michael Moore in 51st place (12:34), Sebastian Maurino in 74th (13:24), brother Cristian Maurino in 89th (14:28), and Jordan Stella in 97th (15:00). Sophomores Rex Umbenhaur and Charlie Nicholson showed that they are varsity contenders with strong efforts in their race heat at 75th (13:30) and 78th (13:47) place respectively. Seniors Chris Reed (78th), Zac Garland (90th), and Nick Fletcher (93rd) ran well in the last race of the day.

As with the lady Eagles, the freshmen guys look to be a force to be reckoned with as they mature. Newcomer Joel Foster missed out on a medal by one position at 41st (13:15), surprising the talented Chris Reimann who slotted to a 48th place finish (13:23) after a minor mid race injury. Brett Wood (56th) and Ethan Liang (64th) showed their ability to be varsity contenders. Six freshmen rounded out the deep pool of talent running brave races of their own. They included Connor Forody (91th), Ryan Steele (92th), Spencer