

Mustangs Gallup Away from Panthers



J.R. Tavai and #3 Jackson Morrow bring down the Panther's leading rusher in the Mustang's 42-19 win.

By Gregg McMullin

The Mira Costa High School football team has played an arduous schedule so far, and when it traveled to meet a struggling Peninsula in a Bay League match-up, Mustang coach Don Morrow didn't look at his opponent's record. The Panthers came into the game 0-7, 0-2, but they are a team that plays their opponents tough, even with their undersized defensive squad. Mira Costa seized every opportunity to score early and went on to a classy 42-19 win on the same field on which the Mustangs and Panthers played an epic game two years ago.

When these two teams meet, you can always expect a well-coached and well-played game. Two years ago, the Mustangs fell behind and then made a gallant effort to just get back into the game before falling 41-39. This year, the Mustangs were just too much for the Panthers and the Mustangs' defense once again let the offense parlay their great field position time and time again into points.

The Mustangs' defense forced Peninsula into a three-and-out situation to start the game after J.R. Tavai made a sack of the Panthers' sophomore quarterback Brock Dale. With the Panthers punting from poor field position deep on their side of the field, the Mustangs' Kyle Nunn received the punt near the 50 yard line. The 6-foot-3, 190-pound senior made two moves and then cruised 51 yards for a touchdown.

After Peninsula was held to a 31-yard field goal by Dylan Rushe, Mira Costa's bruising running back Kellen Lockwood showed why he is so tough to bring down. The Mustangs drove down to the two yard line and Lockwood then blasted his way over Panther defenders into the end zone to make it 14-3 in the first quarter.

One thing that Morrow was dead set on doing was getting Nunn more involved in the offense. On the Mustangs' next scoring drive, the team did just that. Quarterback Kyle Demarco found his favorite target for a 35-yard catch and run that put the Mustangs inside Peninsula's red zone. A couple of plays later, Demarco scrambled 11 yards on his way into the end zone for his eighth rushing touch down of the year.

Keeping Nunn involved in the offensive scheme continued when Demarco hooked up with him for another 27-yard reception that kept the chains moving for another first down. That catch set up another score, and this time it was Morgan Reece who benefited by the great field position that Nunn helped create. Reece found his way into the end zone from one yard out to make it 28-3 with 7:50 left in the first half. It was Reece's fifth rushing TD of the season.

The Mustangs took their momentum into the third quarter when on the first play from scrimmage, Reece added to his touchdown tally. He took the handoff at the 50 yard line, got outside and then ran virtually untouched down the sidelines for a touchdown. Rico Wright got into the scoring column for the first time when he added an 11-yard touchdown run that he made look easy.

With the Mustangs leading 42-3 with a little more than eight minutes left in the third

quarter, Morrow started clearing his bench on both offense and defense. Peninsula attempted to take advantage of Mira Costa's second team. Running back Okuoma Idah found his way on a 56-yard run before being tracked down by the Mustangs' Geoff La Pointe at the 15 yard line. The Panthers would go on to score six plays later from the eight yard line. Peninsula finished off the scoring with a little more than five minutes left in the game. The Panthers' leading rusher, Ryan Pierson, bulldozed his way from the four yard line to make it 42-19.

The Mustangs showed that they have a well-stocked bench, especially on offense. Morrow rotated Nigel Coronado-Morse, Cody Osagie, Tajee Mobley and Derek Largent at running back, while Dennis Falcone ran the offense in the third and fourth quarters. Late in the game, Coronado-Morse zigzagged his way for a 25-yard run to the Peninsula one yard line before being pulled down. With 22 seconds left in the game, Morrow made a classy decision and elected to let the clock run out rather than run another play for a score.

This was an important game for the Mustangs because of the showdown for the Bay League title in the next two weeks. It was also important for Morrow to get Kyle Nunn more involved in the offense with league title-deciding games against Leuzinger and Redondo coming up. Both teams have good speed on defense and Nunn could prove to be the deciding factor in those games. "With Kyle's speed we wanted to get him more involved and get him some more touches," said Morrow.

The Mustangs face Leuzinger on the road tonight (November 6) at 7 p.m. The Olympians (6-2, 2-1) have a strong passing attack led by quarterback Te Shon Burton who has thrown for 2277 yards and 20 touchdowns so far this year. Burton also runs the option and leads his team with over 300 rushing yards too.

Mustangs News and Notes

The boys' water polo team played in the prestigious Hank Vellekamp tournament and wound up 2-2 in the pool play tournament. The Mustangs (18-6) were led by Jake Miller, Alec Gasperian, Bryce Miller and goalie Deven Ram. Mira Costa is currently ranked second behind Palos Verdes in the latest CIF Southern Section Division IV polls. The Mustangs wrapped up their league season yesterday and will look to get one of the top four seeds when the playoffs begin.

The girls' golf team is closing in on another great year and getting ready for the CIF playoffs. Nicole Okada and Lauren Heavrin were fourth and fifth respectively at the Bay League finals and have had a strong year helping to lead the Mustangs to a 12-2, 8-2 record thus far. The CIF playoffs started this week and for more information on playoff sites or other sports, you can contact the school at (310) 318-7337. The Sixth Annual Mustang Classic benefiting the boys' and girls' golf teams is set for Monday, November 16 at the Candlewood Country Club. You can contact Jonathon Westerberg at Westerberg1@verizon.net for more information on playing or for sponsorship involvement. •

Come On Neighbors

By Karen King Russo

Come On Neighbors. Let's step up to the plate. Neighborhood Watch had their bi-annual meeting at Joslyn Community Center last week. There were a respectable number of residents in attendance, but as Manhattan Beach Batallion Chief, Frank Chilla, said gazing about "Hmm... I am glad to see you here but it is always the same ones who show up." Block Captains, some of them, CERT graduates, a few, those who participated in the Shake Out came. Most MB residents stay home relying on their neighbors to be on top of it all and take care of them in a catastrophe.

Chief Chilla went on, "A tsunami? Not likely. A class 7.8 earthquake? For sure." And he added, "As far as emergency services and supplies go, we will be on our own from five to seven days." You may have heard it all before, but he could not have been more emphatic, almost throwing up his hands in despair. He's the guy who will be at the helm, and he wants each and every one of us to be as prepared as possible. What do you think two fire trucks and one paramedic truck can do? For even simple fires or accidents, we always have the assistance of Hermosa, Redondo, El Segundo, Torrance, and LA County. And if it were a quake on the Inglewood Newport fault, we still may, but the big one along the San Andreas, no way. Those city's emergency response teams will have their hands full in their own areas.

Actually a hit on the San Andreas will be near Riverside, and Chief Chilla doubts that we will suffer major structural damage. But roads will all be closed, so supplies such as water, food, medicine will not get through until they can be airlifted into LAX, hopefully in three to five days. Needless to say, electricity will be off, so no phones, cell phones, computers, televisions. And get this. MB has no more than a three-day supply of water.

In case you are in the dark, MB participated in the countywide Shake Out, October 15, where emergency response teams, including volunteers, tested themselves in a practice drill. The Senior Villas, where 120 older adults reside, have been well trained and prepared. They passed with flying colors. What about the rest of us?

The key things to do today, in anticipation of an earthquake, are to secure our homes from obvious hazards, plan escape routes if multi story, and to have a supply of water and food on hand.

At the time of the earthquake

Drop. Cover. Hold. That is to drop to the ground, seek cover under or along side a sturdy desk, table, or other piece of furniture, and to grab hold of it so you don't slip away.

Once quaking has stopped, protect your head, feet, and hands with sturdy shoes, helmet and gloves.

Shut off gas, to prevent fire.

Shut off water.

Place a help or okay sign in your window to alert or calm your neighbors.

Put your fire extinguisher out on the sidewalk. A group of them may be able to put out a larger fire on your block.

Go to a designated gathering spot on your street.

Form teams to share the following tasks, or if not enough people do yourself: Listen to Emergency Alert System on radio, check on any elderly or disabled neighbors or children who are alone, check that gas is off on your block. Be prepared to give first aid.

Report to neighborhood gathering site.

Going on to the subject of crime, Police Chief Uyeda said it is up a bit, with the usual culprit, grand auto theft, and theft of belongings in a car. With the holidays coming on, the problem typically increases. The Chief reminds us once again to keep valuables in our cars hidden from view and our cars locked, even when in our driveways.

To fight the ever-present threat of identity theft, he reminded us to be on the lookout for scavengers, those people prowling through our trashcans. Manhattan Beach has zero tolerance for that, so if you observe anyone doing that, call the police.

As if we didn't have enough to worry about, Lt. Andy Harris introduced Detective Joe Aiella who talked about the latest scam to steal our money and our identity. Citibank in Manhattan Beach and Bank of America in Redondo Beach have both been targets. Seems there is a highly sophisticated technology to facilitate ATM fraud, called card skimming. It is beyond me to explain it, but the gist is that the magnetic tape on the card can be read, and the pin number photographed. We are advised to shield our pin number with our hand; To be vigilant in observing any change in the appearance of the ATM we use; To notice if anyone, especially someone who does not appear to be local, is spending a long time at the ATM or trying several credit cards. If any such situation occurs we should step away and call the police. Sally Rendler, our NW liaison with the Police Department, has been skimmed herself, and says to be alert if it is hard to insert your card. And most important, check on credit card and checking account balances frequently. There may be charges or withdrawals that you did not make.

About 70 percent of the blocks in Manhattan Beach have Block Captains. If yours does not, call the Neighborhood Watch office at 310-802-5183, and volunteer. It is a good way to know your neighbors and be in the know. Ever since Charlotte Lesser got the program going, in response to a high rate of home burglaries, crime has been minimal. Next year NW will be celebrating the 30th anniversary of citizens working hand in hand with the police to keep our town safe.

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