

# Mustangs Power Past South Torrance

By Gregg McMullin

The Mira Costa Mustangs traveled to play South Torrance on their new field. The new Sprinturf and the Spartans’ new football stadium looked great. The Mustangs were more than willing to show their gratitude for being the first opponent to play on the new field. With Mira Costa returning a wealth of talented players, the Mustangs made sure to leave their mark on the pristine field by walloping their gracious hosts 50-27 in a non-league match-up between two South Bay powers.

A year ago the Mustangs handled the Spartans easily, beating them 40-14. This year would be no different, thanks in part to Kyle Demarco who threw two touchdown passes and also rushed for another two TDs. Demarco was solid in running an offense that at times struggled against Loyola the week before.

Mira Costa’s running game caught fire early on and Demarco was part of that plan to keep the ball away from the Spartans. After a long sustained drive, Demarco scored relatively easy from one yard out to make it 7-0. His second TD of the night came later in the first quarter after the Mustang defense smothered the Spartans and forced them to go three and out. Demarco rolled out of the pocket and scored from six yards out to make it a Mira Costa 14-0 lead.

The Mustangs literally dominated the first half, especially in the second quarter when they scored three more times. The Mustangs once again drove deep into Spartan territory, and this time Demarco found Kyle Nunn open for a four-yard touchdown pass. Mira Costa kept the scoring barrage going with another TD on the ground, this time from running back Morgan Reece. The senior rushed for 74 yards against Loyola’s tough defense. Against South, the Spartans were just no match. Reece carried the ball 19 times, led all rushers with 133 yards, and he scored on a three-yard dive in the second quarter to make it 28-0. The Mustangs capped off the first half scoring with a 48-yard field goal from Alex Noroceca.

The Mustangs certainly looked sharp in the first half, and perhaps it was because they had already played one game while this was the Spartans’ opener. “I think we had an advantage by playing the first week while they were still scrimmaging their own team,” said Mustang coach Don Morrow.

The Mustangs, who scored on their first six possessions of the game including their first possession of the second half, scored on a 25-yard touchdown pass from Demarco to tight end Mike Miller. With the Mustangs leading 36-0, it was the defense’s turn to join in on the scoring. Donta Bavis intercepted Spartan quarterback Jon Concetti and returned it untouched 45 yards for another score.

South’s spread offense relies on a number of things to survive, including a running game, but that was taken away early in the first half when the Mustangs took such a big lead. When they went to the air, the Mustangs’ defense harassed and sacked Concetti, and picked him off twice as well. “The defense really played well in the first half and it really set the tone for how we played on both sides of the ball,” Morrow said.

With a 43-0 lead in place in the third quarter, the Mustangs went with second team players on offense and defense. South finally got untracked with 3:55 left in the third quarter when running back Tyler Glandorff caught a short screen pass and then shook off a couple of defenders on his way to a 65-yard TD catch and run. The Spartans made it a game with three other scoring strikes from Concetti, but it was too little, too late.

The Mustangs played a complete game from the offense to the defense, and it extended to the special teams. In fact, place kicker Alex Noroceca’s booming 48-yard field goal had more than enough distance and it was into the wind.

He also made sure that runbacks on kickoffs were limited when he forced six kicks into the end zone for no return. “Our kicking game was just as great as the offense and defense tonight,” Morrow said.

The Mustangs (1-1) play host to Esperanza in their 2009 home opener Friday night at 7 p.m. The Aztecs (1-1) will look to revenge their 14-9 loss to the Mustangs in 2008. The series between these two teams is long and storied, and both look forward to this rivalry game as a gauge for their season.

### Mustang News and Notes

The boys’ water polo team scored a 7-6 overtime victory over Santa Barbara in both teams’ season-opening game. Bryce Miller, who had three goals for the Mustangs, scored with 40 seconds left in overtime for what would be the game-winning goal. Alec Gasperian also had two goals for the Mustangs, who played host to Agoura on Wednesday. •

# How Well Do You Know Your Town’s History?

Abridged from *A Walk Beside the Sea*  
By Jan Dennis

With the headlines on August 17, 1945 “War Over,” 350 Manhattan Beach residents gathered in the heart of town and all stores closed, but it was not until the following day that the planned celebration took place. After the war, peace, prosperity and acceleration were the spoken words of the day. The country exploded with excitement, new cars, shopping centers and, best of all, television, which came about for most people in 1947. The gas rationing cards were gone, and the women who worked during the war were expected to become housewives and raise the families.

The community population was mushrooming with the servicemen and women coming home, along with many of the GIs who were stationed here in town with Battery E, and factory workers who came from other parts of the country to work in the aircraft and shipbuilding industry. The census of 1944 was 9,286, a roughly 45 percent increase from 1940 when the population was 6,398. Restrictions on building materials were lifted and lumber became more available, making it possible for people to begin building new homes, offices and rental units.

Along with the population boom was a building boom, as an all-time building record was broken in 1946 with 384 permits issued in the first six months of the year. Both the City of Manhattan Beach and the Federal Public Housing Authority were working together to develop several sections of land in town.

The City had surveyed and graded for a 10-unit housing project located at 16<sup>th</sup> Street and Valley Drive along with a section of Live Oak Park that was not being used. However in 1946, the project was abandoned by the Federal Public Housing Authority after the Manhattan Beach City Council moved to withdraw from the project. It was felt that the City could not justify the considerable cost relating to its share of the development.

Subdivision projects were being developed all around town. The three-bedroom “tract” home was an ideal style for a young, growing family, as well as being affordable. East of Sepulveda Boulevard was the ideal area and very well-suited for such projects. Manhattan Homes Tract, built by the Bowler Construction

Company, was bounded by Marine Avenue to the north, 18th Street on the south, Meadows Avenue on the west and Peck Avenue on the east. The subdivision consisted of 200 homes, estimated to be worth a total of \$1,750,000.

Another subdivision, the Manhattan Village Corporation Tract, which contained 300 homes, was estimated to be valued at \$3,000,000. This 58-acre tract, estimated to be ready October 1947, was bound by Marine on the north, Manhattan Beach Boulevard on the south, Sepulveda on the west and Meadows on the east. (Dennis’s *Shadows on The Dunes* provides more information about development east of Sepulveda.)

There were other changes made in the post-war era, such as the first woman appointed as director of the Manhattan Beach Chamber of Commerce, Mrs. Kirk White. She filled the term of Jack Hill, who had resigned. The Chamber supported the installation of parking meters in the downtown area and asked for angle parking on Manhattan Avenue. Like today, the Chamber requested that business owners have their employees park off the main business streets.

The Chamber also supported the name change of Center Street to Manhattan Beach Boulevard. Being unanimously recommended to the City Council and Planning Commission, Ordinance 578 confirmed the name change on December 4, 1947. The Chamber was instrumental in setting up a committee to look into the possibility of hiring a city manager who would administrate the City’s affairs. It was believed that the City had reached the state of growth and development whereby its best interests would be served much more efficiently via a full-time manager rather than through the five City Council members. On August 1, 1948, Clifford G. Petrie took office as the first Manhattan Beach City Manager. One of his first projects was a town clean-up campaign, which entailed the beautification of the city and the dismantling of the Army’s powder storage bunkers. With the filling in of the bunkers, the land was ready to be used for home building lots.

The recovery period in town saw one of the biggest transactions in 1946 with the purchase of Metlox’s Pottery Company.

To be continued... •




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