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## Matador Football Turns Heads in Playoffs

By Alex Crook



Ross Anderson (9) drops back to throw Photo Jodan Fong

Miramonte, the only Lamorinda high school football team to escape the first round of post-season play, defeated #11 San Marin in the second round on November 27 before falling in the third round to #2 Cardinal Newman on December 3.

Miramonte tied with Alhambra for the regular season league title with a 9-1 record and was given a third seed.

Miramonte blew by Analy in the first round to host San Marin. San Marin shocked Alhambra the week before.

Miramonte started their first drive confident, as back-to-back 14-yard runs put the Mats on the Mustangs' 16 yard line. However, in the next play junior quarterback Ross Anderson fumbled and turned the ball over.

Later, the Matadors drove down the field 86 yards to set up a one-yard touchdown run by senior running back John Coupin, which put the Mats up 7-0 late in the first quarter.

The second-team all-DFAL running back added another touchdown to finish with 16 carries for 125 yards. Behind Coupin, Miramonte rolled to a 23-0 shutout of San Marin to advance.

Coupin, like many of his teammates and coaches, was optimistic about a successful year and expected this playoff run: "I'm not that surprised actually, I thought we were going to be very strong from the very beginning of the season. I thought we had the potential to go undefeated."

The Mats, winners of their last six, put their nearly perfect 11-1 record on the line a week later against a traditional powerhouse in second-seeded Cardinal Newman.

Cardinal Newman's defense showed up at the beginning and stopped Miramonte on their first possession. Newman gradually made their way down the field, and junior running back Stephen Tomasin punched it in from one yard out to put the visitors up 7-0.

Late in the first quarter, it was Miramonte's turn to drive and Anderson connected with Coupin on a screen pass that accounted for 23 yards, setting up a 15-yard touchdown run for Anderson within a minute to play in the quarter.

The first twelve minutes ended in a 7-7 deadlock, but it was Miramonte who carried the momentum.

Cardinal Newman stormed back with an answer on their ensuing possession, with a touchdown in the first minute of play of the second quarter as Tomasin again ran it in, this time from 30 yards out for a 14-7 Cardinal lead.

Newman rolled from there, as Miramonte was outscored in the quarter 21-3, with the lone field goal coming from 47 yards out from senior kicker Anthony Piganelli.

As the game went on, the Matadors tired out, and ended their playoff run with a 42-17 home defeat at the hands of Cardinal Newman. The Mats finished their season with an 11-2 record.



John Coupin (33) blocks the pass Photo Jordan Fong



Anthony Piganelli makes the catch Photo Jordan Fong

Reach the reporter at: [info@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:info@lamorindaweekly.com)

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