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Kevin Macy - 25 years at Campolindo

By Jon Kingdon



Photos Gint Federas

This was to be a celebratory 25th season for Campolindo Head Football Coach Kevin Macy but the coronavirus split it in thirds. "In December, I finished season 25A. The season in the spring was 25B. You're doing this story in now 25C."

The Macy coaching career began 41 years ago at Skyline (1980-85) to College Park (1986-1988) to Oakland Tech (1989-1994) to Bishop O'Dowd (1995) to Campolindo (1996 - present).

Macy's coaching career began when he was a senior at UC Berkeley. He was interning at a nuclear engineering firm, working half days, which freed up his afternoons to become the JV head coach at Skyline where his brother Mark was playing.

Macy's first varsity head coaching job at Oakland Tech was memorable, in that getting enough players on the team was a battle. Even with limited numbers, Macy and Tech went on to break a six-year league losing streak.

Getting the head job at Campolindo was due to a fortunate set of circumstances for Macy. Dan Hagen, the Campolindo coach, recommend Macy to Mike McGinnis, the Campolindo athletic director. "John Knox, who has been my friend since high school, was working out with McGinnis who said we can't find this guy we're looking to hire at Campo. Finally, he dropped the name Kevin Macy and John told him that he knew how to contact me. It's possible that if it weren't for that conversation, I may never have made it to Campolindo."

Like at Tech, it was an uphill battle for Macy at the start. "I was the head coach for the varsity and JV teams my first year," Macy said. We had about 42 kids all together. They were a warrior group that had to go both ways."

When Bob Wilson became Campolindo's athletic director, it pulled things together for Macy. "Bob was awesome," Macy said. "He was the real deal in getting things done and we have a real good athletic director now in Ray Meadows."

If there is an operative term for his coaching staff, it would be family - literally in many cases. Macy's brother Matt and their brother-in-law Bill Leavy have been with him since Oakland Tech, along with his son Miles.

Macy's wife, Claire, has been with him through thick and thin. "I keep joking as to why my wife is still with me," Macy said. "When I started, we just had a baby, and I was putting in crazy hours. I don't know why she kept me."

There were good and bad seasons during Macy's first 15 years at Campolindo when football was not that important to the community. "It was just a high school sport to play," Macy said. "Winning was not the mentality. So, we started a youth summer camp where we put kids in full gear. We began with fourth-graders on up. By the time they got to high school, it was in their blood."

Macy's career record at Campolindo is 215-89 (.707). These past 10 years it's 113-20 (.850) with a 30-6 playoff record, two East Bay Coach of the Year awards (2011 and 2014), five NCS championships and two state championships in four appearances.

What is his secret? "We've built into our program that our goal is to surprise every team with our toughness," Macy said. "Who can expect a little school from Moraga with kids that do not look like football players to play tough. That's part of our hidden formula."

Macy is not one to oversell the team, said his brother Matt: "Kevin likes to play the underdog. After winning the state title, he had to find another way to do that. Now that's creative - that's Coach Macy."

With so many memories and big games, it's one person that still causes Macy to choke up when speaking about him - Bob Wilson.

"In 2014, prior to our playoff game against Marin Catholic, Bob was bedridden and not doing well and I was told that we needed to see him," Macy said. "I brought the team over and his wife Emily invited us all in. Bob perked up and kept asking the players questions. Bob hadn't spoken or been awake for over a week

and rallied with all the kids there. The emotion we had for that game is something that people just didn't know. After we won our first state championship game that year, I told the reporters that there was some divine intervention with the way that game ended, and all the credit goes to Bob."

The victory over Acalanes this year also brought a great deal of satisfaction to Macy. "Coming out of COVID, I felt that this was the most important win in the school's history for the school and the community," Macy said. "There had been nothing to smile about for over a year. The school had nothing going on and there was no life on the campus, and it was a rivalry game. I felt that it probably saved the school year. It was the first time in a year that our community had a chance to celebrate and feel good about anything."

Senior quarterback Jacob Griessel said the team knew how important the season was to Macy. "We were aware it was Coach's 25th year and we wanted to make it a memorable and cherished season," Griessel said. "He really brought a bright spot to practice every day even when it looked like we would not have a season."

Does it seem like 25 years? "Well, the last year seemed to last quite a bit," Macy said. "The players from my first decade have sons that I may be coaching soon, and they have said to me that you have to be there when my kids get there. It's funny how fast it has all gone, but I'm still planning on doing a few more."



Photos Gint Federas

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