

Jesuit Rugby Newsletter: Vol VIII, No 14

Jesuit Edges Burbank

Jesuit HS 4/24/04

Another year, another war, another heart rending end. The Burbank Islanders came, they played inspired rugby and barely came up short on a rolling maul 1 meter from the goal. The Houdini team, Jesuit, edged the Islanders by 15-12 on Eric Forner's penalty kick in the second half. However, for most of the game, it was Burbank on the offensive and Jesuit tackling to save their lives. The massive forwards of Burbank pounded the Red Armada repeatedly and it required all 15 of the Red Army to stop them from sinking the ship. In the second half, the Islanders let the ball fly somewhat and a few of their passes let them down in the end.

The first 90 seconds was an eye-opener as the Islanders took the kickoff, ran through 9 phases and pounded the Jesuit forwards to what seemed to be an easy score. It gave one concern for the remaining 68 minutes.

Later in the first half, in a series of rucks near the Jesuit goal, the ball popped out and Paul Jesseman scooped it up. He was tackled by Burbank but off loaded to Adam Mariani who then ran the length of the field, almost 80 meters, to score. It was Mariani and 3 Burbank players in pursuit to the goal with the Red Flyer staying a step in front but with a black clad Islander closing fast.

Burbank scored to take the lead again and then near half time, the forwards and Steve Lewis drove the ball over in a series of mauls for the evener at 12-12 as half time beckoned.

After half, Burbank ran and passed and Jesuit tackled and kicked and the two heavy weights traded attacks with no one able to cross the goal despite several close calls. Sean McNamara made a couple of try saving tackles, one in secondary defense from the entire length of the field. He had several runs through most of the Islander backs but was stopped meters from the goal each time.

After each team missed a penalty kick, Eric Forner got a second chance and made it good. Jesuit then held off some frantic Burbank attacks with strong defense to edge the Men of Burbank by the sole penalty kick.

At the post game meeting, Burbank chose Paul Jesseman as best forward and Ken Imwinkelreid as best back. John Shorey gave a stirring post game talk and the referee, Dr. Bruce Carter, was applauded for his efforts.

Everyone at the game had to congratulate Burbank for a magnificent performance, with desire and determination evident in their every action. Jesuit, as expressed by Coach John Shorey, is very fortunate to have survived the excellent effort by Burbank today. Jesuit will shoulder the mantle to represent Sacramento rugby in the rest of the playoffs and Nationals.

Jesuit 15: Estrella, Read, Sweeney, Fry, Jesseman, Lewis, Reed, Kallergis, Bittner, Sardon, Mariani, McNamara, Forner, Imwinkelreid, Taylor

Bench: McCoy, French, Welch, Llewellyn, Siegel, Casanova

Trys: Mariani, Lewis

Conversions: Forner 1/2

PK: Forner 1/2; Mariani 0/1

Referee: Bruce Carter

Touch Judges: Sam Riegle, Marc Ward

Jesuit vs. Rio Americano Frosh/Soph Playoff

April 23, 2004 Rio HS

Marauders Plunder Raiders 57-0

The Jesuit Frosh/Soph team attempted the impossible on April 23 at Rio Americano High School. The Marauders were told they had to defeat their toughest opponent of the year by at least 45 points. Undaunted by the enormous task ahead of them, they reached deep into their hearts and pulled out one of the greatest performances that this observer has ever witnessed by any Frosh/Soph team.

Shortly after the opening kick-off Mitch 'The Maniac' De Anda flew down the right side of the field for a quick try. Three minutes later it was Justin 'Mr. Assist' Powers who set up his opposing player and then sacrificed his body as he released a perfect pass to 'Nasty' Nate Floyd who then sprinted 60 meters for the try. It would be another 15 minutes before Jesuit could break through the spirited Rio defense, but once again, it was 'Mr. Assist' Justin Powers who duplicated his previous sacrifice this time releasing the ball out to Wil "Wheels" Wegner. Will blew by his opposing wing and then cut back inside to leave the Rio fullback wondering what had just happened to him. Wil's 70-meter run was just a hint of what would come from this incredible freshman. The Rio offense was relentless in it's pursuit of a try and forced the Marauders to execute a handful of try-line stands. When the whistle blew for halftime the score stood at 19-0.

The second half opened with a bang as Mike 'ZimZam' Zimmerman took our own kickoff and fought through 3 defenders before finally outpacing the Raiders and placing the ball between the posts. Moments later it was the Wil Wegner show as he scored not one, but two try's just minutes apart giving himself his first 'Hat Trick' in playoffs. It should be noted that both of these runs down the left wing were in excess of 50 meters. As the score now stood at 40-0, the Marauders knew that they were under pressure to get those last few points to boost them into the playoffs. So, Captain Pierce 'The Cool One' Cooley, took it upon himself to follow his pass out and then take it back up the middle for the longest run of his life (60 meters). His gasps for air echoed off the American River levee as he placed the ball over the line. Then it was Spencer Puente's turn as he remembered he hadn't given his mom her birthday present. Spencer took the ball and crashed up the middle and then bobbed and weaved his way up for the score. Then, just when the Raiders thought the Marauders rampage was over, Wil Wegner grabbed the ball and sprinted for his fourth and the final try of the game.

All players should be congratulated for their efforts in this historic victory. Outstanding freshman were Wil 'Wheels' Wegner, Zeek 'The Manimal' Sulzan and Cori 'Big Nic' Nicodemus. Freshman Wil 'Wheels' Wegner was the back of the match and Sophomore Julian 'The Italian Stallion' Colombero was the forward of the match. ' Too-Tall' Ted Watje provided some great extra point kicks as well as a unique style of playing hooker.

Final 57-0

Tries: Wegner(4), Cooley, DeAnda, Floyd, Puente, Zimmerman

Conversions: Watje(5), Floyd

Cheers and Jeers

Cheers - to Anthony Andrews (Jesuit 2002), Sophomore cadet at the US Military Academy. He was the starting scrumhalf for Army in their game in the Sweet 16 vs UC Santa Barbara and played against former teammate Cole Valadez of UCSB. Anthony is performing well on the field as well as in the classroom. Congratulations on a great season for Army!!

Cheers - Matt Majewski; he manned the scoreboard with verve and skill at the Burbank game. Thanks for your efforts.

Cheers - to Sue Gamache; our Miss Reliability, never missing the post game sodas and always on the spot to make sure everything is ready and waiting. Thanks very much.

Notes

Texas is in our picture for May 21 and 22 at the Nationals. We will play to find out if we are in the upper or lower division, but we will be there. Players will be determined in the near future. If parents or fans wish to go, please contact Management at 916-682-2858 or email the web site as soon as you can.

Sacramento Valley Camp

B and FS Championship tournaments

Recent scores:

Del Campo 45 - Jesuit 24

Del Oro 45 - Jesuit 7

Davis 28 - Jesuit 19

Jesuit 57 - Rio 0

B Scores:

Jesuit 1 - Rio 0(forfeit)

NorCal Semifinals

Jesuit 15 - Burbank 12

Elsie Allen 21 - Lamorinda 18

Write Ups From The Norcal Referee Web Site

Saturday, April 24 written by Bruce Carter

Jesuit 15 - Burbank 12 Referee: Bruce Carter

Touch Judges: Sam Reagle, Marc Ward

This must be the best regularly-scheduled high school match in the United States. Jesuit and Burbank meet in the Sacramento conference regular season and invariably again in the NorCal semis or finals. Two hundred miles of open road did not begin to consume the anticipation that the peripatetic Pelican referee felt prior to this beauty. Breakfast at Pea Soup Andersen's in Santa Nella was only the beginning of a memorable day.

The team of three met an hour before kickoff to walk the pitch and review their approach to the game. There were also some arrangements made in light of the violence that has unfortunately defaced this fixture in the past. But Saturday, with all of the coaches, players and spectators aware of this history, Saturday was to be a run in the park and a rugby day to remember. And what a run it was!

Burbank took the field first, entering from one in-goal single-file parallel to the touch line, circling around to form up in position for their Haka.

Jesuit then lined up facing them on the goal line, shoulder to shoulder, and advanced abreast shouting at the top of their lungs, not imprecations but those multi-purpose male noises of enthusiasm and vigor. The Pirates got louder as they got closer to mid-field, stopping with their toes on the line.

Burbank assumed their dramatic stylized starting positions for the Haka: each player lunging to the left, right knees almost touching the ground, arms held out parallel to the ground, heads bent. Arrayed in an arc, they held this stance while #10 Benny Mateialona strode up and down in front of the beseeching Jesuit lads, marshalling the troops with his preparatory remarks in Tongan. But the Jesuit players did not bow to tradition, did not relent, did not back off one decibel, in fact only increased their ardor. Mateialona realized that Jesuit were not going to honor the Haka. He did not want to dishonor it by leading the Haka in the face of a rabble. So he gave a wry smile and at a gesture his team decamped to receive the kickoff. It was a kabuki Haka.

Far from disappointing them, this clearly served to inspire the Islanders. From the kickoff they took ninety seconds, eight phases and one penalty advantage (for attempting to kill the ball!) for Johnny Folau to score a proto-typical forwards' try off a goal-line maul. This was converted, Burbank 7 - 0 and Jesuit had not touched the ball. Burbank continued to press a forward-dominated game for almost twenty minutes. They would have scored another try from a goal-line maul but for a flanker who unbound early, ahead of the peeling ball-carrier. The ball-carrier was USA U-19 Prop Folau again, who would certainly have scored but for colliding with his own teammate.

On yet another sortie at the try line, a Burbank forward was tackled near the goal-line by the Jesuit #4, who ended up on the ground behind the tackled player. The first two players who arrived stayed on their feet and contested the ball with their hands - no ruck. As other players arrived the "ruck-like object" collapsed as the Burbank player shoveled the ball back - still no ruck and no maul, "just" a tackle.

The Jesuit #4 then stood up on the "wrong side" of the non-piece, picked up the ball and passed it out to the very-rapid wing Adam Mariani, who sprinted the length of the pitch. The delirious shouts of the Jesuit sideline neatly drowned out the referee's cry, "Four was tackler, play on!" This was converted, 7 - 7. Momentum shifted and the run of play moved away from the Jesuit end.

Jesuit's second try came off a series of attacking forays from which #6 Captain Steve Lewis found that his arms were precisely long enough to allow him to score as he squirted through a rolling, roiling maul. The score was 12 - 7 Jesuit at the break.

The second half featured staunch defenders on both sides of the ball who were up to every break. Burbank's breaks tended to be big lads running straight at the defense over and over again, while Jesuit made fewer breaks but these tended to be speedy outside backs making large chunks of ground before getting hauled down. Burbank scored the only try of the second half when they spun a ball wide after a series of attacking rucks that flanker Fahina (Dave) Fakalata dotted down for an unconverted try, 12 - 12.

Each team had several shots at penalty goals over the last fifteen minutes, including one by Jesuit that caromed off the stratospheric upright. The difference in the game was that Jesuit's Eric

Forner connected on one of these to lead 15 - 12. Burbank mounted a furious series of attacks with time running down. Jesuit booted the ball as far downfield as possible every time they got their hands on it, only to have Burbank press their line again. With 22 seconds left, a Jesuit clearing kick went over the fence about twenty meters out. The referee said, "We'll play this lineout." Burbank controlled the ball and the subsequent maul, maintaining form and momentum for nineteen meters. Then Jesuit did something remarkable.

Rather than each recycling defender re-joining the maul one by one, as is the usual practice, several Jesuit players slammed into it altogether right at the goal line, driving it into touch and leaving the valiant Burbank Islanders just inches from playing for the NorCal championship.

Monday, April 26 Lamorinda 18 - Elsie Allen 21 Referee: Paul Bretz

Touch Judges: David Williamson, Marc Ward

This game featured fullbacks who were best childhood friends.

Lamo's Ian Todd is the son of Ed Todd and EA's Patrick King is the son of Mike King. Ed and Mike played together for Hastings and lived near each other when starting their families.

The match was tied 15 - all after regulation. After ten minutes of overtime it was 18 - 18. The teams then went to drop-kicks and Elsie Allen won in that fashion.