

Jesuit Rugby Newsletter: Vol VIII, No 15

Norcal Champions!!

Elsie Allen HS 5/8/04

The Red Armada met some heavy seas in Santa Rosa but held off a physical Elsie Allen team to take the NorCal and generally presumed State title with a 20-6 win on the road.

The short, narrow field at Elsie Allen suited the tight tough game played by the Lobos. Tackling in packs and hitting with vigor, the Lobos kept the fleet Jesuit backs at bay for most of the first half. The strong cross winds made kicking a guessing game and made the Marauders run at the tough defenders from EA. After holding off the Red and Gold Brigade for most of the first half, the Jesuit backline of Sardon, Forner and Mariani spun the ball wide for Adam Mariani to score under the posts. Eric Forner added a penalty kick and Jesuit lead 10-0 at the break.

After halftime, the Lobos controlled the wind and made the most of some long probing kicks to the Jesuit wingers. Unfortunately, Jesuit was able to control most of the lineouts and EA never was able to fully capitalize on the wind at its back. Midway through the second half, EA upped the tempo and seemed to take control of the rucks and mauls. Eric Fry and Zach Reed made some intense individual efforts that kept EA from making any scores. Elsie Allen slotted 2 penalty kicks to make it 10-6 with the adrenaline pumping like a Saudi oil well on both sides.

Jesuit had a series of rucks and scrums from 5 yards out but was unable to put the ball over against the massive Lobos. With time passing, Chris Sardon took a quick tap and ran sideways to just dive in front of the Lobo defenders for a much needed score. Shortly thereafter, Steve Lewis ran a great line for an attempted try from a penalty play, but the alert Lobo defender held the ball up and the crisis was over for Elsie Allen with Jesuit empty handed.

Midway through the second half, Jesuit then tried to put the game away when the backs and Sardon spun wide. Paul Jesseman created an overlap, but the alert Lobo defense prevented him

from spinning the ball wide and he was stopped short of a much needed try. Eric Fry did put the game's finishing touches in place with an energetic pick and drive to score at the final whistle.

Jesuit was pleased to end up on the top end of the score in light of the intense and dedicated effort put in by the Lobos. Given their performance today, one has to like the Lobos chances to win the Tier B championship in Fort Worth, Texas in 2 weeks. Although there were some missed chances, there were some mighty efforts from the Marauders today to take home the gold and head to Texas to face perennial heavyweight Westerville of Ohio.

Eric Fry and Zach Reed wanted a good tape to show the U-19 coach for selection to the summer tour to Canada. Their performances today should put them to the top of the heap. Paul Jesseman, with the flu and late from taking the English placement test for Cal Berkeley, again was unstoppable in lineouts (with much credit to lifters Anthony Estrella and Eric Fry) and made key carries from his #8 position. David Read stole 3 EA scrum put-ins (tightheads) and threw well in lineouts. Newcomers Greg Loflin, Craig McCoy and Winston Welch made strong contributions at critical points in the game.

At the post game meeting, Elsie Allen was gracious and Jesuit extolled their opponent's virtues. Jesuit now shoulders the mantle to represent Nor Cal rugby in Tier A of the national tournament. Elsie Allen chose Paul Jesseman as best forward and Eric Forner as best back in the Championship game and both choices were well deserved.

Congratulations to the NorCal Rugby Champions!!!

Jesuit 20

Trys: Mariani, Fry, Sardon

Conversions: Forner 1/3

PK: Forner 1/1

Jesuit I-XV: Estrella, Read, Sweeney, Fry, McCoy, Lewis, Reed, Jesseman, Bittner, Sardon, Mariani, McNamara, Forner, Imwinkelreid, Taylor

Bench: Llewellyn, Welch, Loflin, Casanova, Cooley, Siegel, Collins, Nickerson, Booth, Floyd, Morrison, French, Colombero, Hawley

Referee: Peter Smith

Touch judges: Kat Todd, Joe Leisek

B Championship

Jesuit HS 4/30/04

Jesuit victimizes the Cougar RFC with a 46-14 win. Congratulations to the team and coach Tim Mullikin who remains undefeated in title games. Unfortunately, the details of the game were not deployed to the newsletter and should be ready for the banquet.

Frosh/Soph Championship

Jesuit HS 4/30/04

Jesuit takes the title with a 59-5 win over Del Campo. Congratulations to the team and coaches. However, the roving correspondent responsible for updates has failed to file a story. Hopefully, he will be ready to describe the details at the banquet.

Red Armada Set to Invade Texas

The 59 strong Red and Gold Battalion has invasion plans for Ft. Worth, Texas from May 20-22, 2004. Jump off is 9:23 AM from American Airlines at Sacramento International Airport. Rendevous with other units will take place on Thursday followed by a bivouac at Residence Inn for the duration. Logistics and ground support will be provided by management and parents throughout the siege, while primary battle stages will be at Birdwell Stadium in Fort Worth Texas. Communications will be handled through satellite links with webmeister Ed Davila to provide up to date information for all interested parties.

A Clean Sweep

Congratulations to the Jesuit Rugby Program and Jesuit HS. The three levels of the rugby team have swept the league, NorCal, and state Championships in 2004. The Frosh/Soph were victorious over Del Campo 59-5 on April 30 to take the title. The B's also victimized Del Campo 46-14 for their championship. The Varsity beat Ponderosa to win the league title and then won games over Diablo 23-17, Burbank 15-12, and Elsie Allen 20-6 to win NorCal and essentially the State title. Thanks for all of the hard work by the team and all of the unending support from the school's administration, especially Athletic Director Ron Nocetti, administrative assistant Christina Shannon, and Principal Father John McGarry.

Notices:

Banquet: The Rugby Banquet, one of the most heavily attended sports related events on the school calendar has been slated for June 2nd, a Wednesday, at the Student Life Center. Volunteer organizers are sought to help with the festivities and planning. Please contact Lynda at 682-2858 or sheldonoaks@hotmail.com to volunteer for the event.

For travel information to Texas with the team, contact Beatrice Beekwilder at 489-9355 or BeBeTravel@aol.com.

Crocodile O'Conner returns!! With the rugby of Australia safely resolved, Guru Barry O'Connell will return to help guide the Red Armada through the Straits of Texas for another attempt on the Mount Everest of High School rugby, the national Championship tournament.

Cheers and Jeers

Cheers - to Coach Andy Pecsynski for arranging for the bus to the Elsie Allen game. The bonding was invaluable. Thanks Andy!

Cheers - to Coach John Shorey, with help from teammate Melissa, on the birth of their first child, Lila Rose, on May 3, 2004. Congratulations!!

Cheers - To Craig McCoy, Colin Ferro, and Derek Siegel all of whom will be at Regis University together on the rugby team next year. They join Dan Propheter (Jesuit '01) at the school.

Cheers - to Dan Propheter, former Jesuit rugger, who was at Santa Rosa to cheer the team on in the NorCal Championship.

Correction - Elsie Allen refers to a state championship but it refers to the Bowl level of last year's competition. The teams were divided into Cup, Bowl, Plate with the Cup going to the Nationals and comprised of the top 2 teams per conference.

Write up from the Referees Website

5/10/04

Cup Final

Elsie Allen 6 - Jesuit 20 Referee: Pete Smith

Touch Judges: Joe Leisek, Kat Todd-Schwartz

Fourth Official: Ray Schwartz

On yet another priceless day in the Bay Area, it was time for another road trip. I hopped in my '77 International Traveler (think old Bronco, but bigger and cooler) with the fiberglass top in the garage and the Alpine ready to drive my JL's for the next few hours. I was set for a 1:45 minute personal concert that started with a little 'Yellow Card' (I thought that to be appropriate). My trip was extended as I missed the 580 connector and would up going through Vallejo and spent 30 minutes on the phone with my wife on Mapquest trying to get back on track (I guess I shouldn't have been paying more much attention to the radio and not the road). Once I found myself, I needed some 'Fuel' to get me going again.

I arrived at the pitch at 12:30 and was greeted by friends Dixon Smith, Dr. David Miller, Joe Leisek, Ray Schwartz and his much better half Kat (who reminded me twice about my very expensive speeding ticket the last time I was late to a game). Also arriving at the pitch were Jake Rubin, the ubiquitous Dan Hickey and Bo Rodman, fully kitted up in case one of us came up lame or inexplicably got a bloody nose (sorry Varnell, I had to remind you).

As for the game, it was a real firecracker. The wind was blowing hard and Jesuit started out with it at its back for the first 30 minutes. Despite that advantage, Jesuit only managed one converted try in the first half, that with the Elsie Allen fullback in the bin for stomping, and a penalty kick. By and large it was a fairly error free half with a total of 8 penalties and strong defense played by both teams. The second half saw EA climb back into the game with several long kicks keeping the game in the Jesuit half and capitalizing with penalty kicks. The score was now 10-6 with roughly 10 minutes to play, EA had the momentum and the wind at their backs, but then Jesuit started to take over. Primarily at the set pieces taking 5 against the head and winning almost all of the lineout ball, especially in their own end. Jesuit mustered another try to get a little breathing room at 15-6 and with EA desperate, pushed another hard fought try over at full time to cap the scoring at 20-6. Both teams will be heading off to Texas to play at the national level.

I jumped back in my ride, grabbed a bite to eat and popped some 'Good Charlotte' in the deck for the return trip. It was roughly 75 degrees out and very few clouds in the sky. An absolutely stunning drive on the way home, coming back over the correct bridge was very scenic as were the Oakland and San Francisco skylines. I made it home by 4:30.