

Published March 31st, 2021

## Campolindo wins 28-13 in emotion-filled rivalry game

By Jon Kingdon



From left: Marshall Lockwood and Zach Raphael  
Photo Gint Federas

There is nothing like a rivalry game between two local teams. It's bragging rights for the next year for the winner and something to point to for the next season for the loser. However, the 28-13 victory for Campolindo was emotional beyond words due to the passing of junior offensive lineman Elijah Klock's father earlier in the week.

Prior to the game, Acalanes coach Floyd Burnsed and Campolindo coach Kevin Macy downplayed the idea that this was a rivalry game. "I think that when two teams are winning, they're always rivals," Burnsed said. "We stayed away from the rivalry stuff because it was a very emotional week for us," Macy said. "I told our kids that all the teams are in this together; we're all on the same team. We're playing football on a beautiful night so, it's pretty amazing that we're playing this game."

"Monday was a very hard night for Elijah and the team and none of us saw it coming," Macy continued. "We tried to make a statement that we were behind Elijah 100% and that we were here for him and his family."

Mistakes proved to be the difference in the game. From the opening kickoff, which Acalanes misplayed, having to start on their own 8-yard line, errors bedeviled Acalanes all evening with three turnovers and not converting a fourth-and-2 late in the game, deep in Campolindo territory, which sealed the victory for the Cougars. Unlike the Dons, Campolindo suffered no turnovers.

It was consistent, grind it out offense by Campolindo, with some big pass plays mixed in which allowed the Cougars to dominate in time of possession and wore down the Dons. Dillan Thoms had 30 carries for 110 yards, scoring twice and converting several first downs. Quarterback Jacob Griessel played a mistake-free game and was 9/13 for 206 yards. Joey Schmidt caught four passes for 129 yards, highlighted by a juggling catch and his weaving through the Acalanes defense for 77 yards and a touchdown at the start of the second half, to put Campolindo ahead 21-7.

With his 30 carries and one reception, Thoms handled the ball on 62% of the offensive plays for the Cougars. "We were able to pound the ball on the ground," Griessel said. "Dillan Thoms is the toughest kid on the team. He works hard every single day and we could not have won without him." Our linemen did a great job as did our defense." Will Monkarsh had the Cougars' one interception and Jake Leuteneker recovered both Acalanes fumbles and also converted a key third down with a 3-yard run.

Acalanes quarterback Brady Huchingson went 18/29 for 168 yards and ran for 45 yards. Despite being pressured most of the evening, Huchingson was able to come up with big plays scrambling out of the pocket and finding receivers downfield. Dante Montgomery (7-61), Evan Malmquist (5-55) and Sam Heyman (3-62) were the leading receivers for the Dons. Nick Rossi had 12 carries for 63 yards and scored both of the Don's touchdowns on runs of 1 and 4 yards.

The Campolindo offensive line did an excellent job opening up holes for Thoms and protecting Griessel in the pocket. Last year's 17-7 defeat to Acalanes was not forgotten by the Cougars, according to Campolindo lineman Matai Bell: "With all the anger we had after Acalanes destroyed our game plan last year, Coach Macy emphasized that instead of going into the game with hatred, we should go into the game with love. We also wanted to make a statement that we were here for Elijah and his family."

After the game, Macy called his players over to the endzone near the stands and addressed the parents, who were not allowed on the field due to the virus protocols, finally conceding that it was far more than a rivalry game they had just won.

"What the players did with the weights they were carrying was amazing," he said. "You could not have asked for a better performance by our team that was so beaten up and worn out. It was more than just the game. We had another mission that was part of our night. The fact that it was going to collide with a rival made it very complicated. The players' composure, their spirit, their heart and everything that they threw into this week and that they were able to be so emotionally controlled tonight was amazing. This was as big of a win that we'll have in our football history. We can't go to state (this year) but this was state. With what these kids had to go through to get to this point, we made a complete season in one night after this long year."



Jacob Griessel (16) and Lars Ahrens (70) Photo Gint Federas

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

[back](#)

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA