



Time Out

Time To “Back The ‘Pack”



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Apache Trail wins 44-42 thriller to advance to AzCAA State Championship game this Saturday

By Chuck Baker
The News

If you have yet to jump aboard the Apache Trail Wolfpack bandwagon, perhaps now is the time. In just their second season of eight-man tackle football, the Apache Trail has advanced to the Arizona Charter Athletic Association’s “Class B” State Championship game thanks to last Friday’s thrilling 44-42 victory over Mohave Accelerated Learning Center (MALC) played at Phoenix Christian High School.

The game wasn’t decided until the final play when a 22-yard field goal attempt by the Patriots was kicked low and into the rushing Wolfpack defenders. Apache Trail escaped with a two-point victory and will now seek to avenge their only loss of the season when they battle Mesa Heritage Academy on Saturday, November 21 at 7:00 p.m. back at Phoenix Christian HS.

Apache Trail had taken a 44-42 lead with just 1:16 remaining in the fourth quarter when quarterback Brian Mayfield tossed a short screen pass to slot-back Joe Rodriguez, who took the pass 24 yards for a touchdown to tie the game 42-42. Mayfield then rolled right on the two-point conversion try, broke one tackle in the backfield and raced to the near corner of the end zone to put the ‘Pack up by two.

MALC returned the ensuing kickoff 42 yards to the Apache Trail 35-yard line and moved the ball to the seven, facing a first-and-goal with eighteen seconds left.

The Patriot quarterback dropped back to pass, was forced out of the pocket and was tackled just inside the five-yard line. Following their final time out of the game, MALC lined up for a game-winning field goal attempt but it never had a chance. The kick was too low and the Wolfpack im-

proved to 10-1 on the season, getting the rematch they wanted with Heritage in the Class B title game.

In a wild, back-and-forth game, the Wolfpack trailed 22-20 at halftime but put together a 12-play drive near the end of the third quarter and jumped back in front 28-22 when Jordan Viramontes scored from two yards on his only carry of the night. Viramontes ran an inside counter trap to the left side and looked to be stopped two yards short of the goal line but then dove forward and with his arms stretched out, broke the plane of the goal line. Rodriguez then ran in the two-point conversion to put Apache Trail up by six.

MALC then returned the ensuing kickoff 82 yards to the Wolfpack 13 and scored on a pass play and then added their own two-point conversion run to go in front, 30-28.

Starting from their own 30 on the next possession, May-



The Wolfpack’s Gilbert Gutierrez hauls in a 26-yard pass in Friday’s 44-42 win over M.A.L.C. in the AzCAA semifinals. It was Gutierrez’ only catch of the night but it also set up the game-winning TD toss on the very next play for Apache Trail.

field, in the shotgun formation, couldn’t get a handle on a low snap but managed to scoop up the ball and then raced 70 yards to the end zone on the final play of the third quarter. Mayfield then hooked up with Rodriguez for a successful two-point conversion pass play and the Wolfpack had regained the lead at 36-30.

The Patriots responded with a nine-play drive that began at their own 20, and with a 15-yard touchdown run with 6:22 left in regulation, tied the game 36-36. An open receiver in the end zone dropped the ensuing two-point pass play to leave the teams tied.

The Wolfpack were forced to punt for the first time all night on its next possession and MALC got the ball back and put together a 56-yard drive and scored the go-ahead touchdown on a two-

yard dive up the middle. The Patriots mishandled the snap on the two-point try and led 42-36 with 2:18 to go.

Apache Trail didn’t need much time to answer. After Viramontes fielded a squib kickoff at midfield, Mayfield completed a 26-yard pass to Gilbert Gutierrez over the middle and then hit Rodriguez with that screen pass over the middle for the game-winning score with 1:16 left.

MALC won the battle in total yards but came up short on the score board. The Patriots ran for 314 yards on 37 carries, 224 of those coming in the second half, and added 148 yards through the air while completing 10-of-29 passes.

Mayfield finished the game with ten completions in his 20 attempts for 313 yards

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Back The ‘Pack

If you’ve never seen a game of eight-man tackle football, let me invite you to this Saturday’s November 21 AzCAA Class B State Championship game between our own Apache Trail Wolfpack and Mesa Heritage Academy. Kick-off will be at 7:00 p.m. at Phoenix Christian High School, 1751 W. Indian School Road in Phoenix. Apache Trail (10-1) suffered their only loss of the season to Heritage (10-0) back on October 20 at Mesa’s Hohokam Park and the rematch should be a dandy.

Prospectors Fall In 1st Round, 36-35

Independence pulls out win with late two-point conversion

By J.J. Digos
The News

In the first round of the 4A-1 Division state playoffs, the sixth seeded Apache Junction Prospectors suffered a heartbreaking loss to the 11th seeded Glendale Independence Patriots by a final score of 36-35.

The Prospectors, playing with two key players in lineman Cy Maughmer (torn ACL) and fullback/linebacker Harrison Pomeroy (groin injury), struck first on the opening kickoff. The Independence kick returners fumbled a reverse attempt and AJHS junior Tanner Morgan scooped up the fumble and returned it for a touchdown. Less than

ten seconds into the game and after a successful David Gamboa extra point kick, the Prospectors led 7-0.

After an exchange of offensive series by both the Prospectors and Patriots, junior quarterback Roy Machuca and senior fullback Nate Scola led the Apache Junction down the field and Scola capped off the drive with a one-yard plunge into the end zone. Another PAT kick by Gamboa put the Prospectors up 14-0 with 6:39 remaining in the opening quarter.

Independence wouldn’t quit though as the Patriots capped off a long drive with their own short burst into the end zone, and then, after a Prospector lost fumble on their next possession, the



Prospector wide receiver Kyrel Parker hangs on to this pass and goes 65 yards for a touchdown in Friday’s 4A-1 State playoff game against Independence (photo by J.J. Digos)

Patriots capitalized with a 29-yard touchdown pass and knotted the score 14-14 with 10:19 to go in the first half.

On the ensuing possession, the Prospectors would fight back and find the end zone again. This time, Machuca found senior receiver

Kyrel Parker and hit him in stride for a 65-yard touchdown. Going into halftime, the Apache Junction had a 21-14 lead over the Patriots.

Coming out of the gates in the second half, Scola spear-

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Lady Prospectors Fall In 1st Round Of State Volleyball

By Chuck Baker
The News

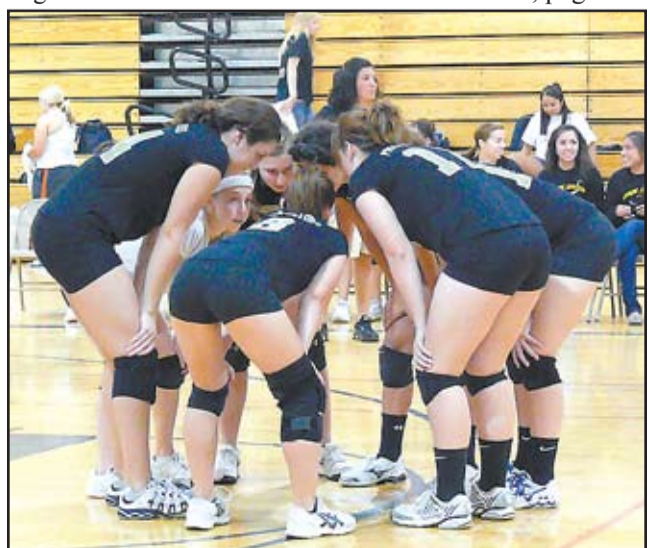
For the ten seniors on the Lady Prospector volleyball squad, their loss to Vail Cienega last Tuesday in the first round of the 4A-I State Tournament meant their careers at AJHS had come to an end.

Head coach Mandy Gamboa said it was an emotional locker room following the loss with lots of tears and hugs. But before the AJHS

girls ended their volleyball careers with their four-game loss to Cienega, they gave us one final moment of greatness with their impressive 25-15 edge in the third game.

After dropping the first two games 25-17 and 25-21, the Lady Prospectors dominated at the net in game three and awoken the AJHS crowd who made the trip south of Tucson to Vail.

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For the AJHS seniors on the court at last Tuesday’s State playoff game, this was their final pre-match huddle

Fall In 1st Round



(above) The AJHS volleyball fans in attendance at last Tuesday’s first round 4A-I State playoff match give a big cheer to the Lady Prospectors following their impressive 25-15 game three victory. Unfortunately, it was their only game win in the loss to Vail Cienega, ending their season; (below) Two colorful AJHS fans, Emily McGann (top) and Sara Beth Cranmer (bottom), intently watch the action on the court.



A ‘Scout’s’ Honor

Former AJHS QB Daniel Ambrosio has twice been named “scout player of the week” at Wabash College

By Chuck Baker
The News

This past Saturday, the Wabash College Little Giants took on DePauw University in the 116th Moron Bell Classic in a football game nationally telecast on HDNet. Wabash, 8-1 on the season, is hoping that a win over 7-1 DePauw in their final game of the regular season would land them an at-large bid to the NCAA Division III playoffs for the third consecutive year. Why I am telling you this and what possible connection to our local sports scene does it have?

Leading up to the “big game” this past Saturday, former Prospector quarterback Daniel Ambrosio was playing the scout team quarterback helping his Little Giants teammates prepare for Depauw. For his efforts, Ambrosio, now a sophomore at Wabash College, was named the team’s “scout player of the week” for the second time this season.

We don’t know if Daniel’s efforts paid off for Wabash. The results of their game with DePauw wasn’t known when *The News* went to press for this edition.

Ambrosio, listed at 6-4 and 210 pounds on the Wabash official team roster, is hoping some day to make the transition from scout team quarterback to starting QB for the Little Giants. In the meantime, he seems happy in his role with the Wabash football program and with college life in general and in a Little Giants blog on



Former Prospector quarterback Daniel Ambrosio as pictured on the Wabash College team roster

the official website at www.wabash.edu/football dated October 16, 2009, wrote, “It has been quite a journey this past year. I am currently a sophomore here at Wabash and I have had amazing experience with this Wabash Football Family. I come from Phoenix, AZ (actually, Apache Junction) and it was very difficult to adapt to college life and being far away from home. I was not sure what to expect going in to this, but this football FAMILY relieved my stress and anxiety and made me feel right at home. That was something that was very important to me because I struggled a lot when I got here and it was nice to know that I was already making a lot of friends on the football team.”

“This is my second year playing red squad and it has been awesome. I was injured for a few weeks in the beginning of the season and was unfortunately unable to

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