



Centennial vs. Marcos de Niza 11.19.10

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It was a game that all the Centennial seniors remembered, last year's semifinal shocking loss to Marcos De Niza.

Unfortunately for the Padres, there was a Coyotes' junior that remembered the sinking feeling as well.

In Friday night's rematch, safety Zach Hoffpauir, a starter as a sophomore last year, assisted on a huge 4th-and-goal stop inside the Centennial one yard line with 6:30 left to play in the third quarter and the score tied at 3-3.

For an encore, Hoffpauir would later pick off a pass three yards deep in the Centennial endzone and returned it 71 yards.

The latter play led to a Jebron Harrington winning touchdown in a 10-3 Centennial win in 5All quarterfinal action in Peoria.

With the win, the Coyotes advance to a December 4th date with Tucson Ironwood Ridge, a 41-21 winner over Sandra Day O'Connor.

"I don't think you get a lot of chances to play a team that you played last year to get revenge. We got a chance and got revenge," a happy Hoffpauir said. "It was the biggest play of my life." Hoffpauir added about the huge pickoff.

In a game that was semi-sloppy, but filled with great defensive plays, both teams struggled to find any offensive rhythm.

A pair of first half field goals left the score knotted 3-3 at halftime in an uncharacteristically low scoring game for two teams with high scoring offenses. Devon Jones connected on a 35-yard field goal for Marcos with 7:10 left in the second quarter for a 3-0 lead.

Jones' boot was matched a short time later when Centennial junior Alex Kammeyer connected from 36 yards out with 3:59 left before halftime. The Padres came out in the second half and looked to take it's second lead of the game, when they drove from their own 31 yard line, down inside the Coyotes' one in the aforementioned play.

The drive was highlighted by three passes from Thornton to JeRyan Butler, and a pair of runs by Butler (including a 17 yarder). Hoffpauir and his defensive partners, however, slammed the door on that Padres' threat with the goal line stand.

When the Coyotes failed to take advantage of the defensive stop, however, Marcos threatened again.

On 2nd-and-10 from the Padres' 43 yard line, Thornton found Martwan Weaver for 41 yards, setting up Marcos with a 1st-and-10 from the Centennial 16. But two plays later was the Hoffpauir pickoff, which brought the ball back to the Marcos 32 yard line and 8:40 left to play.

A Justin Sanchez 16-yard scramble got Centennial down to the Padres', when two plays later, Harrington mowed in from two yards out with the game winner.

"You know, these kind of games build character. They really make players believe in each other," Centennial coach Rich Taylor explained about the emotionally charged win.

"Things looked bad and Hoffpauir came up with two huge plays," Taylor added.

The 10 points scored by Centennial was the lowest point total they have scored in the past 81 games, dating back to a 14-10 loss to Moon Valley in the 2004 semifinals..