



PRESS RELEASE

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CONTACT: Lauren Creiman

William Diepenbrock

(909) 833-9853

Kaiser Cats Football Team Advances to CIF State Championship After Thrilling Win

FONTANA, CA – Henry J. Kaiser High School’s football team moved a step closer to acquiring its first CIF State Championship after defeating Rialto’s Eisenhower High 48-40 in a thrilling Division 3-A semifinal game, held Dec. 1 at Kaiser High.

Driven by senior running back Christian Hunter, who ran for 324 yards and scored seven touchdowns, the Kaiser Cats led the game 28-7 midway through the third quarter, then withstood a furious comeback by San Andreas League champs Eisenhower, who suffered its only defeat of the season.

Kaiser will play the winner of the Northern California Division 3-A semifinal game on Dec. 15 in the championship game.

“This is a team that genuinely cares about each other. Their motto is ‘We Not Me,’ and it shows in the way they approach being student-athletes,” Kaiser Principal Terry Abernathy said. “We have the highest number of players with 3.0 GPAs on this team, led by the phenomenal Christian Hunter, who is a star on the field and in the classroom. I am so happy for these players and for Coach Bill Cardosi and his staff.”

Hunter carried the Cats, as well as Eisenhower defenders, on his back, continuing an extraordinary season in which he amassed more than 3,700 yards on offense and scored 57 touchdowns.

“I am extremely honored to have this chance to win a state title with my teammates, who have worked so hard,” Hunter said. “This was truly a team effort. Our offensive line really stepped up and did the job against Eisenhower. I give them 95 percent of the credit. We are all happy for Coach Cardosi. He got very emotional after the game. We want to win state for him.”

Hunter, who has a nearly 4.0 GPA, is considering scholarship offers from UC Davis, Colorado State, Wyoming, Sacramento State and Northern Arizona University.

“Kaiser’s success continues a long and cherished history of football in Fontana Unified,” FUSD Board of Education President Peter Garcia said. “As the city has grown over the years, we have greatly expanded the opportunities for both academic and athletic achievement. Congratulations to Kaiser for its big win.”

The biggest play of the game occurred near the end of the first half, when Kaiser senior cornerback Coop Wright stripped Eisenhower wide receiver Joel Ayala of the ball just short of the goal line.

The Cats responded with a long touchdown drive. After Eisenhower crept to within eight points of the lead late in the game, Kaiser recovered an onside kick and ran out the clock to secure the victory.

“I could not be happier for Kaiser’s scholar athletes, who have displayed dedication, persistence and endurance while representing the District with respect and dignity,” Fontana Superintendent Randal S. Bassett said. “We wish the Cats the best of luck in their championship game and are proud of our Fontana community for coming together to cheer them on.”

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