



2019 NMAA State Football Championships

Springer-Maxwell Defeats Elida in 6-Man Title Game

The Springer-Maxwell football squad is now a member of the state football championship club. The Red Devils brought home the blue trophy at the 2019 6-man State Football Championship. Springer-Maxwell beat Elida on Championship Saturday in November by a score of 29-26.

Top seeded Elida got on the board first on a 20-yard touchdown run by running back Will Haley. The Tigers took a 7-0 lead early in the first quarter. Springer-Maxwell would respond on their next drive with a touchdown of their own on a 1-yard plunge by Gabriel Garcia. Following the two-point conversion, the Red Devils took an 8-7 lead and would never trail the rest of the day.

On the first play of the second quarter, Springer-Maxwell scored their second touchdown of the day on a pass from Jose Urquijo to Diego Maestas. Springer-Maxwell had a 15-7 lead with 9:55 left in the first half. Elida would respond to the score as the Tigers capped off a drive with a short touchdown run by Tyler Belcher to make it 15-13 with 6:56 to play in the quarter. Springer-Maxwell still had more scoring to do before halftime. With a little under five minutes to play in the second quarter, Wesley Jeffrey took the shovel pass and went 8-yards for the score to make it a 23-13 ballgame at the break.

Elida avoided a scoreless third quarter with a touchdown pass from Colton Ferguson to Wesley Poling. The Tigers cut it to 23-20 with less than a minute to go in the third. Springer-Maxwell added some insurance to their lead when Urquijo connected with Maestas one more time for another touchdown to make it 29-20. A late Elida touchdown from Teagan Burton to Poling would get the Tigers within 3 again, but they could never take the lead.

Springer-Maxwell would win by a score of 29-26 to claim their first ever state football title. The Red Devils would finish their championship season with a 9-1 overall record.



Melrose Earned Blue Trophy for fifth Time in Six Years

For the 5th time in six years, the Melrose football team claimed the 8-man State Football Championship. The Buffaloes beat Tatum in the 2019 final by a score of 56-44. The game was as thrilling as the score would indicate.

The fireworks started with the opening kickoff as Tatum sophomore Hayden Mullins returned the opening kickoff 83-yards for the first score of the game giving the Coyotes the early lead. The score remained 8-0 until 4:38 in the first quarter when Melrose senior Tristan Sena intercepted a pass and took it all the way in the other direction for their first touchdown of the night. The 8-8 tie was broken on the first play of the second quarter when Sena recorded his second score of the game after a quick pass from Michael Cardonita. Sena's catch and run score of 51-yards made it a 14-8 game. Tatum would respond with a score of their own on the next drive. Sebastian Jimenez connected with Kaden Rodriguez to give Tatum the lead once again, 16-14 with 9:27 to go in the second quarter. Jimenez would throw his second touchdown toss of the game later in the quarter, this time to Mullins with 8:31 left in the quarter. The touchdown gave the Coyotes a ten-point lead, 24-14. Still in the second quarter, Sena would pick up his third score of the game on a short pass for a 15-yard touchdown to get the Buffaloes within four, 24-20, with eight minutes still left in the half.

Sena proved to be an unstoppable force in this one scoring on offense, defense and special teams. The Melrose senior returned a punt 85-yards for a touchdown, his fourth of the game, to give Melrose a 26-24 advantage. The lead wouldn't hold for long as Tatum would put up two more scores before halftime. With less than a minute to go in the half, on fourth and goal, the Coyotes scored on a short pitch and pass play. Scott Alexander got the ball and threw it four yards to a wide open Rodriguez in the endzone to give Tatum a 30-26 lead. Jimenez would throw his third touchdown pass of the game just before the break to Kivan Cardenas to make it 38-26 Tatum at the half.

Melrose got the scoring started in the third quarter with a handoff to Sena who went 35 yards for his fifth trip to the endzone to get Melrose within four, 38-34. The Buffaloes would regain the lead thanks to Tate Sorgen's 63-yard scoring reception to make it 42-38. With less than 8-minutes to play in the game, Sena got into the scoring column again, this time with a touchdown pass to a wide-open Devon Bailey to give Melrose a 50-38 lead. A 60-yard scoring pass from Jimenez to Rodriguez would get Tatum within six, 50-44, but little did the Coyotes know that Sena wasn't done. The Melrose senior capped off the scoring with a 55-yard touchdown run to make it a 56-44 final score. In all, Sena had a hand in seven of the eight scores for Melrose. The Buffaloes finish the year with an 11-1 record.



Eunice Captures Three Peat with 56-2 win in 2A Title Game

The Eunice Cardinals captured their third straight NMAA Class 2A Football Championship with a 56-27 win over Texico. This was the Cardinals' 13th blue trophy in school history.

The Cardinals got on the board first with a 3-yard touchdown pass from quarterback Mason Caperton to wide receiver Avante Stevens, making it 7-0 with 9:30 left in the first. Texico responded on a 20-yard touchdown pass from quarterback Gabe Dickerman to wide receiver Andres Nelson to even the score at 7-7 with 5:43 on the clock in the first quarter.

Just 20 seconds later, running back Tayveon Mitchell exploded thru the line for a 55-yard touchdown run giving Eunice a 14-7 lead. After a defensive stop, Eunice scored on an 11-yard touchdown pass from Caperton to Hayden Dean making it 21-7 with three minutes left in the first.

Eunice pushed the lead to 28-7 on a 45-yard touchdown pass as Caperton and Dean hooked up for the second time in the game. Texico pulled to within 28-13 off a 48-yard scoring pass, as Dickerman and Nelson also connected for the second time in the first half.

Eunice, however, wasn't done scoring less than 30 seconds later on a 47-yard touchdown run by Mitchell to make it 35-13. The score remained the same going into the locker room.

Texico wasn't going down without a fight in the championship game, as Nelson scored his third touchdown of the day on a 9-yard run, making it 35-19 with 3:30 left in the third quarter.

Eunice would carry a 42-19 advantage into the final quarter of play following a 20-yard touchdown pass from Caperton to Dean.

The Cardinals opened up the fourth quarter with a 25-yard touchdown run by running back Micah Tippet to extend their lead to 49-19 with 10:24 left in the game. The Wolverines added another touchdown later to make it 49-27 but on the Cardinals next possession, Avante scored on a 95-yard touchdown run with under a minute to play to give Eunice a 56-27 lead and their third title in as many years.



Hope Christian Earns First Title in Football

The Hope Christian Huskies (11-2) earned the school's first blue trophy in the sport of football with a 34-24 win over the Socorro Warriors (11-2) in the 2019 NMAA 3A State Football Championships.

Hope Christian scored first on a 60-yard touchdown run by Blane Miller to give the Huskies a 6-0 lead. Socorro responded just minutes later on a 44-yard touchdown pass from Payson Hix to Nathaniel Fresquez, as the Warriors took a 7-6 lead. Miller scored for the second time in the game on a 1-yard touchdown run to make it 12-7, Hope Christian.

Socorro's Michael McDaniel helped the Warriors regain the lead with a 43-yard touchdown run and a 20-yard touchdown reception from Hix, as Socorro lead 21-12 at halftime.

Socorro added a field goal to make it 24-12 to start the third quarter.

Hope Christian, however, would outscore the Warriors 22-3 in the final two quarters of play. Miller added his third touchdown of the game on a 1-yard touchdown run to make it 24-19, Socorro, midway through the third.

A 2-yard touchdown just by Collin Evans gave the Huskies a 27-24 lead, late in the third quarter. Jarod Knowles added the final score of the day for Hope Christian on a 12-yard scamper, as the Huskies extended their lead to 34-24.

In the end, it was too much for Socorro to overcome and Hope Christian captured the 3A Football State title for the first time in school history.

Portales Blanks Bloomfield in 4A Championship Game

Portales (12-1) reached the NMAA 4A State Football Championship game for the first time since 2016, while Bloomfield (12-1) made the title game for the second year in a row. On this day, it was all Rams, as Portales blanked Bloomfield, 23-0. It was the second title for the Rams in the last four years and the sixth football championship for Portales in school history.

Portales got on the board with a field goal in the second quarter, leading 3-0. The Rams added to their lead just minutes later on a 37-yard touchdown run by Romero Gbassagee, as Portales held a 10-0 lead going into halftime.

The Rams added two more scores in the third quarter, as Kellan Hightower scored an 8-yard touchdown run to make it 16-0, followed by a 3-yard score from Jordan Garcia, as Portales extended their lead to 23-0.

Neither team would manage to score in the fourth quarter, as Portales earned the title of 4A Championship with a 23-0 win over Bloomfield.



Roswell Wins Back-to-Back 5A Championships

The Roswell Coyotes (13-0) capped off an undefeated season in the 2019 NMAA 5A State Football Championship game with a 25-19 win over the Los Lunas Tigers (10-3). These two teams met in the 2018 championship game, with Roswell coming out on top in that game as well. This was the sixth football title for the Coyotes in school history.

Roswell took an early 10-0 on Los Lunas following a 10-yard touchdown pass from Dominic Nava to Joel Sanchez and a 28-yard field goal by Sanchez in the first quarter.

Los Lunas responded with an 8-yard touchdown pass from Kade Benavidez to Dominic Baca and an 18-yard touchdown run by Derek Chavez, to giving the Tigers a 12-10 lead going into halftime. It was the first time all season the Coyotes had trailed at the half.

Roswell was the only team to score in the third quarter, this time on a 36-yard touchdown pass from Nava to one of his favorite targets all season, Jasia Reese. This gave the Coyotes the lead back at 17-10. Roswell added to their lead on an 8-yard touchdown strike from Nava to Roderick Sedillo, giving the Coyotes a 25-12 lead with just over four minutes left in the game.

There was no quit in the Tigers, as Los Lunas scored a 2-yard touchdown run by Bryce Santana, making it 25-19 but it was too little too late as Roswell hoisted the blue trophy for the second year in a row.



Cleveland Captures 2019 NMAA Class 6A Football Title

The Cleveland Storm (11-2) hoisted the blue trophy for the third time in school history and the first time since 2015, as the Storm defeated crosstown rival Rio Rancho (8-5), 48-40. This marked the first time the two schools had squared off in a state football championship game.

From the start of the game, fans knew this was going to be a classic match-up. The Storm started with the ball but the Rams forced an early turnover off an interception by linebacker Jaylan Smith. Just a minute later, Rio Rancho got on the board first on a 14-yard touchdown run by quarterback Isaiah Chavez with 10:42 left in the first quarter.

Cleveland, however, rattled off 21 unanswered points, as running back Dorian Lewis scored twice on touchdown runs of 4-yards and 1-yard, while quarterback Jeff Davison connected with wide receiver Tre Watson on a 14-yard strike. The Storm led the Rams 21-7 after one quarter.

Another interception by the Rams' Junior Hodnett gave Rio Rancho life, as Chavez scored his

second touchdown of the game, this time a 1-yard scamper, making it 21-13. The Rams' defense held the Storm on their next possession and with just two minutes left in the half, the Rams' Elijah Smith reached the end zone on a 2-yard touchdown run to make it 21-20.

The Storm wasn't done yet, as Davison connected with Lewis on a 27 touchdown pass with just seconds left in the half to make it 27-20, going into the locker room.



Coming out of halftime, the Rams quickly tied the game at 27 all following a 6-yard touchdown run by Chavez, his third of the game. Cleveland then drove the length of the field and punched it in the end zone off a Lewis 1-yard score, making it 34-27. It was also Lewis' third score of the day as well.

Still in the third quarter, Rio Rancho again tied the game, this time on a 6-yard touchdown run by running back Zach Vigil, as the game was knotted at 34-34. Then just 40 seconds into the fourth quarter, Davison hit wide receiver Luke Wysong on a 47-yard touchdown pass to give the Storm a 41-34 advantage.

Chavez recorded his fourth rushing touchdown of the game with seven minutes remaining on a 6-yard scamper but a missed extra point had Cleveland with a one-point advantage at 41-40. On the Storms' next possession, Lewis recorded his fourth touchdown of the afternoon on a 4-yard touchdown run, giving Cleveland a 48-40 lead with just 5:40 left on the clock.

It looked as if the Rams would have a chance to tie the game with just over a minute to play. A fourth-and-one from the 1-yard line was stuffed by the Storm, as Cleveland took over on downs and was able to run out the clock and captured the 6A Football title, 48-40.