

Grieving Bears take football crown

By FRANK JUZENAS
November 20, 2010

The St. Edmund Campion Bears played the Region of Peel Secondary School Athletic Association (ROPSSAA) Tier 2 senior football with heavy hearts on Friday afternoon. Mourning the passing of the father of one of their teammates the Bears wore black ribbons on their helmets as they took the field at Etobicoke Centennial Stadium to take on the Clarkson Chargers. The Bears played through their grief to win a thriller as they topped the previously unbeaten Chargers 21-20. Marcellus Kent scored the second of his two touchdowns on the afternoon with 30.9 seconds remaining. After the extra point by Adam Amaro the Bears had their first lead of the game on the way to capturing the school's first football championship, four years after losing the Tier 2 championship to St. Francis Xavier in their only other title appearance. For many of the players their thoughts were also with teammate Daniel Simpson whose father Leroy Simpson, a licenced pilot, was one of two people killed in a plane crash near Stayner a week before. An older brother Jermaine also formerly played for Campion.

The Chargers, who had finished first in the South with a 6-0 record led 14-0 in the first half and had a 20-7 midway in the third quarter. A play that loomed large came when Kwabena Asari, a Campion defensive lineman blocked a Clarkson extra point attempt after the third Chargers touchdown, and that proved to be the winning margin.

Campion had finished first in the North division, going 5-1 in their first season back in Tier 2 after three seasons in Tier 1. After being winless last year and with only two wins in 2008 head coach Oliver Ocampo decided it was best that the team play Tier 2 to try and get back to its winning ways.

"I'm elated," said Ocampo about the team's performance. "I literally had tears in my eyes at the end of the game. I'm so proud of this team. They have had to overcome so much. It's an emotional win."

He said Nick Currie one of the anchors of the offensive line suffered an apparent separated shoulder in the first quarter and looked like he was done. However he came back and played in the fourth quarter helping out in the drive that led to the winning touchdown.

With a team primarily made up of Grade 11 players and with the Bears only expecting to lose about five players from the squad Ocampo said Campion will go up back to Tier 1 next season.

The Chargers, coached by former Brampton Centennial coach George Fotopoulos, jumped out to a 14-0 lead on touchdowns from Jeffrey Heartwell and Amitaj Gill. Heartwell kicked both converts.

The Bears got on the board just before the end of the half on a run by Brittley Mokube. Amaro had the first of his three converts.

Clarkson quarterback Tyler Shanahan scored on a keeper with 5:40 remaining in the third to put the Chargers ahead by 13 points. That set the stage for the Campion comeback.

Kent ran in his first major on a four-yard run with 2:44 left in the third quarter.

He got the winning touchdown from two yards out.

Clarkson still had a chance to score again but the Bears defense made some big plays. Twice Rakeem Roberts knocked the ball away on passes to Gill. On the final play of the game Amaro intercepted a pass to seal things.

Game notes...It was a big 15 hours for Campion. The senior football contest came just hours after the Campion



HARD HITTING. St. Edmund Campion's Chris Reid (22) looks for some extra yardage as Clarkson Chargers defender Ziad Nassar holds on during Friday's thrilling Tier 2 senior football final at Etobicoke Centennial Stadium. Campion won 21-20. *Photo by George Beshiri*

senior girls basketball team won its first Tier 1 title...Campion defensive coordinator Anthony Bianchi had his cell phone handy during the game as his wife is expecting and the due date was the same day as the final.

This article is for personal use only courtesy of BramptonGuardian.com - a division of Metroland Media Group Ltd.
