



Vacaville wraps up MEL title

November 4, 2006 - *The Monticello Empire League belongs to the Bulldogs again.*

The Vacaville High School football team won its fifth consecutive MEL championship, and 18th overall in any league, after defeating Fairfield 42-14 at Tom Zunino Stadium on a brisk but clear Friday night.

Terrance Dailey rushed for over 200 yards for the second straight week, racking up 215 yards and four touchdowns, including a 42-yard scoring catch from Ricky Rodarte. And for the second consecutive week, the Bulldogs' defense held an opponent scoreless for the entire second half.

"It's a great feeling," Vacaville head coach Mike Papadopoulos said of clinching the MEL. "The kids have done a great job focusing at practice this week. They knew Fairfield was good. They have some tremendous athletes."

Beset by two lost fumbles and seven penalties for 65 yards, Vacaville led only 21-14 at halftime before finding its groove in the final 24 minutes.

After forcing a three-and-out on Fairfield's opening drive of the third quarter, Ortiz capped a seven-play, 63-yard drive with a 14-yard touchdown with 9:28 remaining in the third for a 28-14 lead. The next time Vacaville (8-1, 4-0 MEL) earned possession, Dailey chugged in for a nifty 10-yard traipse after changing direction mid-run for a 35-14 advantage. Ortiz caught a 37-yard touchdown pass from Rodarte with 12 seconds left in the quarter to put the Falcons (2-7, 1-3) away.

"We started the game kind of slow. I think we underestimated Fairfield a little bit," said Dailey, who also scored on spectacular runs of 54 and 41 yards in the first half. "In the second half, we came out hard."

After missing the last two games of last year, Dailey will participate in his first Black and Blue Bowl against Will C. Wood next Thursday at 7:30 p.m. at home.