

Prep Notes With A Twist

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At a school known as "The Ranch", you'd expect that the offensive line might include a ton of beef and that's certainly true at Rancho Cotate of Rohnert Park. Read below for more recruiting updates, football team in Stockton shutting down and why every game is a road game for Carlsbad.

There's a brand new state-of-the-art artificial turf gridiron with a new track, new stands and a spacious press, announcer and coaches box at Rancho Cotate High in Rohnert Park.

After playing all 13 games in a 10-3 season on the road last year, "The Ranch" as its affectionately known in the Redwood Empire, this year has played five games on its home turf and one on the road and is 6-0 coming into a road game Oct. 24 at 6-0 Ukiah.

While the faces and names of the current stars are also new, one thing the current team has in common with longtime Cougar Coach **Ed Conroy's** back-to-back NCS 3A Redwood Empire championship teams in 2001-02 is size on the offensive line.

Those teams went 11-1-1 in 2001 and 13-0 in 2002 and featured one big tackle and three 300-pound guards.

The tackle was 6-foot-6, 275-pound **Alex Morrow**, who went on to USC and just missed making the last cut this season with the New York Giants.

The two guards were 6-3, 330-pound **Sammy Poueu**, and 300-pound Rich Jones.

This year's team doesn't have quite that much size on the line, but what it has that the championship teams didn't have, is an excellent multi-threat quarterback with size and speed, and a tight end that's like a tackle once he gets the ball.

The quarterback is 6-foot, 205-pound senior **Cody Allen**, who has passed for 362 yards and two touchdowns and rushed for 350 yards and six TDs.

"Our quarterback makes our option offense work, and Cody's the best we've ever had, said Conroy, who added Allen has been productive even while nursing a bad thumb and a sprained ankle.

With Allen running the show, the Cougars have piled up 1,514 yards rushing and 26 touchdowns as a team. Sophomore **Brian Dworkin** leads the team with 545 yards and six touchdowns, but three other players besides Dworkin and Allen have rushed for over 100 yards on the season.

Normally a player like Allen would be a big man in the huddle but not in this group. With linemen like 6-7, 310-pound **Adam Murray**, who is getting looks from every Pac-10 school plus others, or 6-3, 295-pound **Bud Guinn**, or 6-3, 230-pound tight end **Anthony Alicea** lined up alongside him, Allen is almost dwarfed.

With those three mainly opening the holes, it makes a player Allen's size even harder to bring down when he's untouched coming through the hole.

The real test of whether this squad has what it takes to do what the teams of earlier this decade did will come next week when Conroy's charges host Cardinal Newman in a Halloween showdown for the North Bay League's bragging rights.

"To beat Newman, we have to pressure their quarterback, slow down their running game and

fool them in coverage, Conroy told CalHiSports.com. "On offense we have to win at the line of scrimmage.

One thing's for certain, Conroy's got plenty of beef at "The Ranch to possibly get that part of the job done.