

2008 YEAR IN REVIEW

• All photos by HIME ROMERO • Week-by-week summaries by JONAMAR JACINTO

WEEK 1



Ripon opened up its non-league schedule by roughing up Linden 55-0, outgaining the Lions 539-135 in offensive yardage from scrimmage in the process. In other Week 1 action: Manteca was the first to kick off the 2008 season, doing so with a 27-20 win over Beyer; Jarrod Daniels grinded out 156 yards and five TDs in Sierra's 36-28 win over Buhach Colony; Will Heersink scampered for 205 yards to lead Ripon Christian's 49-0 shutout of Delhi; and Weston Ranch was edged by Calaveras 20-18 and East Union fell to Enochs, 37-6. In addition, Lathrop played its first-ever football game at the sophomore level, losing 20-8 to Sierra.

WEEK 2



Standout LB James Glidden returned an interception 16 yards for a score to help spark Manteca's defensive battle against Tokay, which fell victim to a 21-0 defeat. Glidden also had 1.5 sacks and blocked a punt. In other Week 2 action: Ripon Christian recorded its biggest victory of the season by squeaking past eventual Sac-Joaquin Section Division VI champion Bradshaw Christian, 9-7; QB Ryan Flores completed the game-winning 2-point conversion as McNair was knocked off by Sierra 23-22; Ripon doubled up on Summerville, 28-14; Deon Eley amassed 237 rushing yards to spearhead Weston Ranch's 49-20 shellacking of Brookside Christian; and East Union allowed three scores in the final seven minutes as Bear Creek came back to win, 30-28.

WEEK 3



Sierra's tough preseason schedule ended on a downer — a 29-23 loss marred by penalties against Division V powerhouse Patterson. Anthony Hall accounted for the majority of the Timberwolves' points, catching a TD and converting two FGs. In other Week 3 action: Manteca continued its recent revival of traditional rival Tracy, burying the Bulldogs for the second straight year, 27-22, behind workhorse Marquis Miller's 148 yards and two scores; Ryan Baker's 18-yard game-winning FG was his third of the contest won by Ripon 16-14 over Argonaut; Will Heersink had 158 yards from scrimmage and three TDs in Ripon Christian's 26-23 triumph vs. Waterford; and Weston Ranch lost to Tokay 40-26 despite TE/LB Chris Contreras' 96 yards and three TDs to go with two fumble recoveries.

WEEK 4



The Valley Oak League season kicked off for the Manteca Unified schools, and it started with one-sided rivalry showdowns. Jarrod Daniels led Sierra's 36-7 romp of in-town foe East Union with 110 yards and three TDs. In other Week 4 action: Manteca RB Marquis Miller continued to pick up steam, rushing for 182 yards and four TDs on 28 carries in a 31-13 rout of Weston Ranch; Ripon's defense terrorized Bret Harte's QB to the tune of four interceptions and three sacks in a 42-7 victory; and Ripon Christian became the second area squad to start the season 4-0 following its 41-14 thrashing of Denair.

WEEK 5



Sierra snapped Manteca's seven-year reign of city dominance by stunning the Buffaloes, 7-6. A broken play on the point-after try led to the deciding sequence in which Nathan Fonoti batted down the 2-point pass attempt early in the fourth quarter. Jarrod Daniels ran for 145 yards and a TD for the Timberwolves, whose defense limited Manteca's ground attack to just 100 yards. In other Week 5 action: Weston Ranch evened its league record to 1-1 with a 31-7 win against East Union despite committing 11 penalties, and Deon Eley anchored a dominant ground attack with 185 yards; Ripon Christian wrapped up the preseason undefeated with a 50-14 drubbing of Turlock Christian; and Ripon's offense struggled in a 26-16 loss to Calaveras.

WEEK 6



Ceres snapped a two-year winless drought spanning 15 games by putting a damper on Weston Ranch's homecoming night with a 21-6 victory. The host Cougars were hampered by penalties, as they were flagged for 12 infractions worth 95 yards. In other Week 6 action: Coming off the heartbreaker against Sierra, Manteca kept its postseason hopes alive by handing Sonora its first loss of the season, 28-14; QB Ryan Flores rushed for 191 yards as Sierra staved off Central Valley's high-octane air attack, 31-28; East Union fell to Oakdale, 35-0; Hughson overcame an early 17-0 deficit to stun Ripon 42-40 in overtime to begin the Trans Valley League season; and traditional power Escalon pounded Ripon Christian, 42-6.

WEEK 7



Sierra's historic 2008 run marched on, as it defeated Sonora 38-14 for the first time in a decade while posting the program's first-ever 6-1 start. Standout Jarrod Daniels was limited to 8 rushing yards but still managed to be in on two scores — one on the run, the other with a pass. In other Week 7 action: Ripon Christian improved to 6-1, a program best through seven weeks of play, after stomping Riverbank, 52-13; Ripon's playoff hopes were crushed with a 36-10 loss to Modesto Christian; Manteca made easy work of the dangerous Ceres Bulldogs, 41-7; East Union was defeated by Central Valley, 30-10; and Oakdale blanked Weston Ranch, 42-0.

WEEK 8



Manteca's playoff chances rested on the Week 8 action: Ripon snapped a three-game losing streak with a 38-13 victory over rival Ripon Christian; Sonora racked up 465 rushing yards while holding East Union to minus 18 in a 28-0 shutout; Sierra squeaked out a 21-14 win over Ceres and clinched the program's first-ever playoff berth under murky conditions; and Central Valley's vaunted passing attack had its way with Weston Ranch in a 38-14 win.

WEEK 9



Sierra earned respect in defeat, as its shot at the VOL championship fell short via a 31-21 loss to Oakdale, which had never before lost to the Timberwolves. The two teams were tied at 14 by halftime, and Sierra was in the game until the final minutes. In other Week 9 action: Manteca needed a Sierra victory to stay in the postseason and title hunt, but it did its part by handling Central Valley's potent offense, 32-14; Ripon steamrolled to a 47-0 win over Riverbank; East Union was defeated by Ceres, 30-14; Ripon Christian hung tough with Hughson in a 26-13 loss; and Weston Ranch nearly stunned Sonora with a second-half comeback in a 40-33 loss.

WEEKS 10

With no playoff run to look forward to since 2003 despite an 8-2 overall record, Manteca ended the season with a one-sided 56-21 mashing of longtime rival East Union. Marquis Miller ran for 119 yards on 11 carries before exiting in the second quarter with an ankle injury. EU's passing game was impressive, as TE Dakota Anderson caught six passes for 185 yards and two scores. QB Dennis Johnson threw for 250 yards on 14-of-19 passing and ran in a TD. In other Week 10 action: QB Ryan Flores threw for 160 yards and a score while running for 147 and two TD jaunts to lead Sierra's regular-season finale victory over Weston Ranch, 41-20; TVL champion Escalon pounced Ripon, 41-13; and Modesto Christian had little trouble in a Ripon Christian in a 51-19 win without star QB Isaiah Burse.



WEEKS 11 & 12

Sierra wrote another chapter in its historic 2008 season. The Timberwolves' defense shined in a hard-earned 21-7 victory over visiting Rio Linda of Sacramento in the first round of the Sac-Joaquin Section IV playoffs. Nick Wendell jump started Sierra with an 82-yard return off a fumble recovery in the first quarter, and the bend-don't-break defense made two big red-zone stops on fourth-down situations. QB Ryan Flores ran in the Timberwolves' other two scores, finishing with 91 yards on 14 carries. Two weeks later, Sierra made the trek to Rocklin to square off with 2007 playoff finalist Whitney. Moving the ball downfield wasn't the problem for Sierra, which racked up 399 yards in the 51-28 semifinal loss, but committing driving-killing turnovers was. Sierra's six giveaways led to the lopsided score, and Whitney running back Zack Graves churned out 254 yards and three TDs. Bulletin All-Area MVP Ryan Flores threw four interceptions but battled valiantly, as he finished with 215 passing yards and three TDs along with 107 rushing yards.

