

A SPECIAL COMMEMORATIVE SECTION OF THE MARBLEHEAD REPORTER

the  
**MAGIC**  
is back

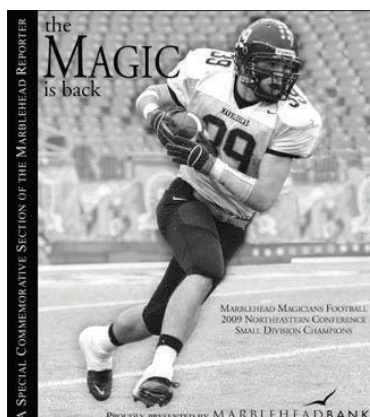


MARBLEHEAD MAGICIANS FOOTBALL  
2009 NORTHEASTERN CONFERENCE  
SMALL DIVISION CHAMPIONS

PROUDLY PRESENTED BY MARBLEHEADBANK







## ON THE COVER

Showing that dogged determination that catapulted the Marblehead High School football Magicians to the NEC Small Division championship, their first title in 36 years, co-captain Evan Comeau runs for extra yards against Bishop Feehan during the Division 3 Super Bowl game at Gillette Stadium in Foxboro Dec. 5.

WICKED LOCAL PHOTO BY IAN HURLEY

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# OUR CHAMPIONS



By Kris Olson  
Editor,  
Marblehead  
Reporter

There is a difference between winning, and being winners. The members of the 2009 Marblehead High School football team were winners, and that's why the Marblehead Reporter is proud to celebrate their historic season with this commemorative section.

To be sure, the team did plenty of winning, too — a big victory over Beverly, a Thanksgiving Day thriller over Swampscott, a rock-solid play-off triumph over Rockland. Memorable moments from those victories are preserved in this section.

But we are honoring this group of young men as much for how they came about their success. It was no ordinary path.

Like other interscholastic athletics, high school football requires no small amount of dedication. Fans may fill the stands on Friday nights or Saturday afternoons, but not too many get to witness the 6 a.m. summer workouts, the six-day-a-week practices and the trips to the doctor or physical therapist to address nagging injuries.

But in addition to the demands of their sport, the members of this team



WICKED LOCAL PHOTO BY DAVID SOKOL

The Rotary Cup is ours, says a jubilant Marblehead Magicians football team. The Cup, which bears the names of fallen soldiers Army Specialist Jared Raymond and Capt. Jennifer Harris of Swampscott and Staff Sgt. Christopher N. Piper of Marblehead, is a three-year-old prize created by the Rotary Clubs of Marblehead and Swampscott. This is Marblehead's first turn with the trophy, as it spent its first two years in Swampscott.

bore some uncommon burdens as well. For one, there was an off-season coaching change, which was preceded by legal wrangling and charges of political maneuvering. But the players would not allow such adult nonsense to diminish their joy of playing their sport or derail the pursuit of their on-the-field goals.

Nor would they be deterred by the now-debunked notion that Marblehead simply isn't a "football town," that it would always play second fiddle to its Big Blue rival to the south. Oh sure, there were

a few "true believers," like Esso Haines and other longtime members of the Gridiron Club, for whom hope has sprung eternal for many an autumn, even though the last time they saw a Marblehead football team win a conference championship was in 1973, until this year, of course.

By the time 2009 rolled around, these diehards were owed decades' worth of interest on their emotional investment. Yet somehow, the 2009 Magicians managed to pay that debt and then some.

➤ SEE **CHAMPIONS**, PAGE 4

## FROM PENTUCKET TO FOXBORO

Magicians journey to a conference championship and Super Bowl finalist

By Joe McConnell  
jmcconne@cnc.com

### GAME 1:

- MARBLEHEAD 27
- PENTUCKET 2

The Magicians trailed early as a result of a first quarter safety, but there was no need to panic in this game. They went on to score the next 27 points to win it going away.

Co-captain Evan Comeau led the way with three touchdowns, as well as a safety. On his second touchdown of the game, Comeau caught a pass on fourth-and-23 from quarterback Hayes Richardson, and utilizing brute strength to evade several would-be tacklers and his natural speed he made it across the goal line for six more points.

Coach Jim Rudloff was still talking about the play well after the game. He said: "It was the best play that I've seen in a long time. He showed brute force to evade the tackles, and then had a nice spin move around another defender to break free for the touchdown."

Richardson accounted for the fourth touchdown late in the game on a nine-yard run to paydirt.

Will Quigley was credited with a fourth quarter interception, and Nathan Koontz recovered a fumble to account for the defensive turnovers that thwarted Pentucket drives.

➤ SEE **JOURNEY**, PAGE 4

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# OUR CHAMPIONS

## ► CHAMPIONS, FROM PAGE 3

There was also the ever-present sadness about two members of the Marblehead High School community who should have been in the stands for this season's historic victories: the principal who was the tireless advocate for all students, athletes and non-athletes alike, and the sophomore who was tragically denied the opportunity to paint her face and shout encouragement alongside her classmates. No one would have dared assign the players the responsibility of uplifting the school and wider community, but they threw it onto their shoulder pads, anyway.

Theodore Roosevelt once wrote to his children that he was "delighted" that they played football.

"I believe in rough, manly sports," he wrote. "But I do not believe in them if they degenerate into the sole end of any one's existence. I don't want you to sacrifice standing well in your studies to any over-athleticism; and I need not tell you that character counts for a great deal more than either intellect or body in winning success in life. Athletic proficiency is a mighty good servant, and like so many other good servants, a mighty bad master."

These Magicians might have mastered football like few before them,

but the sport did not master them. In between the practices and games, many of the players volunteered in the Bridging Lives program, 13 to be exact of the 17 who signed up for this worthwhile venture, buddying up with elementary-age Marblehead school kids.

Others were instrumental in the Marblehead Food Pantry's Thanksgiving Day turkey distribution. In short, the players made themselves easy to root for.

And root we did.

On Saturday, Dec. 5, residents found themselves with a dilemma that would have been hard to imagine even weeks earlier: whether to take part in the time-honored traditions of Santa's Landing and Christmas Walk parade or make the trek down to Foxboro to see our lads compete for the Division 3 Super Bowl title. Even those who stayed behind found a way to follow the action — whether it was sneaking peeks at The Reporter's live blog on their Blackberrys or iPhones, listening intently to the stereo of the car parked along the parade route or stealing away from the craft fair and greens sale to the TV in the back room of the Senior Center.

OK, so the final 13 seconds of the Super Bowl game against Bishop Feehan didn't follow the script. In the final analysis, the outcome matters little. In so many other, more important ways, the 2009 Marblehead Magicians team had already won — and won big.

## FROM PENTUCKET TO FOXBORO

### ► JOURNEY, FROM PAGE 3

## GAME 2:

■ MARBLEHEAD 30

■ IPSWICH 0

The Magicians enjoyed a rather comfortable 23-0 lead at halftime. Josh Freedland started this game in spectacular fashion with a blocked punt, and subsequent run to the end zone for a touchdown from 18 yards out.

Quigley scored a second quarter touchdown, negotiating the final five yards for six points. Marcell Hardmon came through with a 24-yard touchdown run. Comeau then accounted for his second safety in as many games for two more points. Mike Bernato had three extra points to add up the rest of the first half points.

Damarco Dooley was responsible for the lone second half touchdown with a 25-yard run to the goal line, and Bernato made his extra point boot count, once again. Dooley also picked off one pass.

"I was happy with a couple of good things from this game," coach Rudloff said. "We were able to stay healthy, and we did play better on special teams, and blocking for the running backs than what happened against Pentucket. It paid off with a 100 plus yard performance [Will Quigley: 13 carries for 144 yards, and one touchdown] and rushing touchdowns. We [the coaching staff] identified areas for them to work on in practice, and they responded well."

► SEE JOURNEY, PAGE 6



WICKED LOCAL PHOTO BY IAN HURLEY

Marblehead High School head football coach Jim Rudloff talks with his defense during a timeout against Ipswich. The strategy session paid off with a shutout win over the Tigers.

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## FROM PENTUCKET TO FOXBORO

► **JOURNEY**, FROM PAGE 4

### GAME 3:

- LYNN CLASSICAL 28
- MARBLEHEAD 15

The Magicians played the Division 1 Northeastern Conference Large foe on their home turf at Piper Field. But after the Rams scored the first two touchdowns of the game, the home team basically settled down nicely to play the visitors evenly throughout the rest of the game.

Matt Perlow was on the receiving end of a 26-yard scoring strike from Richardson. Richardson netted the conversion points with a run. Comeau then hauled in a 22-yard touchdown pass from the senior quarterback. It was one of his eight receptions that he made in this game for 119 yards. Richardson completed 22 passes for 255 yards.

### GAME 4:

- MARBLEHEAD 42
- GEORGETOWN 0

The Magicians got back on the winning track with plenty to spare, while also avenging the loss to the Royals in 2008, 28-14. The locals were in command at halftime, 28-0.

Hardmon scampered 57-yards for six points to begin the rout. Flynn McCormack caught up with a 38-yard touchdown pass from Richardson. The same tandem then hooked up for a 24-yard touchdown.



COURTESY PHOTO

Shown during the Beverly game wearing their Marblehead High School spirit and colors proudly in support of their undefeated football team in the NEC Small Division are, from left, Sean Mitchell, Mitch Biggio, Patrick Grady, Jess Lipkind, Justin Hyte, Joe Aronhiem, Jeremy Meyer and Adam Nassaf in the back.

Richardson also had two short runs that accounted for touchdowns. Freedland came through with a defensive touchdown on an interception that he brought back 42 yards for six. Quigley also intercepted a pass that led to an offensive touchdown, while on offense he carried the ball nine times for 57 yards. Hardmon was the leading rusher for the locals with 75 yards on just four carries.

Richardson completed four passes

for 70 yards, and he also ran for 33 more on eight carries.

Perlow was the star of the show on defense with 2.5 sacks, one stripped fumble and one fumble recovery on a bad snap, not to mention three times in which he hurried the Georgetown quarterback into making premature passes.

Koontz and Comeau had fumble recoveries. Co-captain Matt Evans and Matt O'Neil were credited with six tackles apiece.

### GAME 5:

- MARBLEHEAD 26
- REVERE 7

This game was more of a struggle. The Patriots were clinging to a 7-0 lead at halftime.

Hardmon (10 carries, 58 yards) got things untracked for the locals with a seven-yard touchdown run. Richardson (13 carries, 64 yards) then went over from the one for six more points. Quigley (10 carries, 69 yards) kept the momentum going in the right direction with a 17-yard run to the end zone.

"Revere is a very physical, big team, and their speed also gave us fits. But we went to the run in the second half that enabled us to win the game," said Rudloff after the game.

### GAME 6:

- MARBLEHEAD 35
- SALEM 13

"Playing Salem was a good challenge, because they are in a higher division than us, so our kids had to step up," said Rudloff afterwards.

The Magicians stepped up on the strength of Richardson's arm, whose 25- and 24-yard aerials to Perlow and Quigley, respectively resulted in touchdowns. Bernato's sure foot made it 14-0, before the Witches got

► SEE **JOURNEY**, PAGE 13

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## IN THEIR OWN WORDS...

# A season to remember

By Evan Comeau  
CAPTAIN

**T**hanksgiving 2008: Marblehead football had a chance of a lifetime.

If we beat Swampscott, we could have made it to the playoffs, which no Marblehead team had done for 35 years. We had a chance to win that game, but we lost in a heartbreaker, 27-19. We will never forget the tears of defeat shed that day, but the juniors that year knew that we would have our chance to get our revenge.

The 2009 season started off with adversity, as we had a coaching change. However, we kicked it off with a bang as we easily beat Pentucket and Ipswich. Our next game was a tough task as we were taking on a bigger, stronger, faster, Lynn Classical team. Once they entered Piper field, our whole team was terrified, and we let that show in our play.

Classical got off to a large lead early, and they held on to it throughout the game, despite an almost heroic comeback. That game was a huge wakeup call to our team. It showed us that we weren't as good as we thought we were, and that if we didn't come ready to play, we will be defeated.

Learning that harsh lesson,

Marblehead football rattled off six straight victories, despite losing some key players due to injury. When Week 10 of the season rolled around, we seemed to have forgotten the lesson learned against Classical. We lost to a Winthrop team, who we felt like we should have beaten, bringing our record to 8-2 heading into the biggest game of our lives in a showdown at Piper Field.

This was our chance to finally get our revenge against rival Swampscott. This time, the game was in our house,

► SEE **COMEAU**, PAGE 9



MHS 2009 football captains Evan Comeau, left, and Matt Evans

WICKED LOCAL PHOTO BY NICOLE GOODHUE BOYD

# What a year

By Matt Evans  
CAPTAIN

**A**fter going 4-7 our sophomore year, 6-5 our junior year and now 10-3 our senior year, we made it to the pinnacle of high school football.

Reflecting upon this season, it is more than just one season. It is a culmination of years of weight training, sprinting and hard work that made this season possible. It is a testimony to this team as a whole, as it speaks volumes about our abilities

to come through adversity and about the true character of every single one of its members.

Who would have thought that our offense would become the single highest scoring team Marblehead has ever produced?

Hayes Richardson can be thanked in part, as he orchestrated drive after drive that, more often than not, would end in a touchdown.

One minute and thirty seconds against Swampscott was all he and our offense needed to march downfield to score the most monumental touchdown that this town has witnessed in recent memory.

Although the credit usually goes to the stars of the team, I want to acknowledge the achievements of our line for without them, Hayes, Marcell, Quigs, Haigis, Evan, Stano, Dmac, Perlow and Flynn would probably be in full body casts from the hits they would have taken.

So this is to Ben Koopman, Liam Gilliland, Blake Forman, Joe Nuccio, Matt O'Neil, Kyle Edwards, Jon Taylor, Jose Andrade and Nick Broughton, as they are the guys who were willing to throw their bodies into the 250-plus pound defensive tackles from around the league just to see one of our teammates cross that goal line.

► SEE **EVANS**, PAGE 8

*Truly a great season!*  
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## IN THEIR OWN WORDS...

# What a year

► **EVANS**, FROM PAGE 7

Through the summer, we slogged away in a newly renovated weight room (thank you to those who made that possible) and sessions at the Muscular Sports Therapy Center.

With the help of Paul, Luke and Dirty Dave, we flipped tractor tires and performed the Tennessee Titans rope workouts that were exhausting, yet paid off.

Then came the camps and scrimmages in the dog days of summer, which led to the highly anticipated season opener against Pentucket. They were ranked seventh in Division 2 at the time, which is a division above what we are and far ahead of what we were ranked at the time.

By the end of the game, not only did Evan single-handedly assert his dominance, score at will and have a Youtube video made of him, but the entire team made a statement that night to the league.

As the season progressed, we ran through our non-league schedule. Despite our winning, critics from other towns would not give us the respect we deserved.

Then came the second big game of the season against Beverly. This was a team that our new coach had come over from, and was quick to state that not only were they good, but they were fast, strong, three deep at every position and were hungry for a title.

Everybody came to play and every

fan seemed to be screaming wildly. As Beverly ran a simple run play to the left, disaster struck. Matt O'Neil, a 200-pound bull of a middle linebacker, stepped awkwardly after shedding a block and broke his leg. It was a significant loss as he had played beside me for my entire career, and he could always be counted on to get the job done.

It hurt to see him like that, and from that point on we were motivated to win the game for "Oniz."

Fast forward to the Winthrop game where Ben Koopman, our 260-pound left guard and defensive tackle, went down with a torn MCL and strained ACL. Suddenly, we were without 460 pounds of hardened football players. A big loss, but yet another testimony to the replacements who stepped up and performed admirably such as Broughton, Forman, Josh Freedland and Oliver Gregory.

I also want to point out the contributions of Nathan Koontz, who led the team in fumble recoveries, and is a great punter despite what he was told.

Now, it came down to the Thanksgiving Day football game against our archrivals from Swampscott, who were also contending for the Northeastern Conference Small Division championship. The game went back and forth, with us storming out to a big lead then squandering it away.

It came down to a fourth and one. Coach O'Connor called: "base up suicide snap zero," essentially calling an all-out blitz. Jose Andrade, our Vince Wilfork-like nose guard, and Blake Forman clogged the hole and almost half our defense seemed to make the tackle.

Before finally ending the game with a touchdown pass to Haigis, Hayes would say to us: "No matter what happens, I love every single one of you guys."

On to Rockland, with their highly touted combo of "Thunder," a 235-pound man-child, and "Lightning," a kid clocked at 4.5 seconds in the 40.

Our defense stopped them, our offense moved the ball and Mike Bernato was perfect in the kicking game. From a player's standpoint, seeing what seemed to be most of Marblehead in the stands at Manning Field in Lynn was truly unbelievable.

The police and fire truck escort we received made us feel on top of the world. We felt invincible as we were all dancing on cloud nine that night.

Practice continued to be the same, as we felt a change in routine would be bad luck. The only thing that did happen to change was the music in the weight room.

As Thanksgiving was now behind us, Christmas music started to leak into the air. What team besides a bunch of kids from Marblehead, would listen to Jingle Bells while

lifting weights in preparation for the Division 3 Super Bowl?

The magnitude of our final game at Gillette Stadium was far beyond anything this group of players had ever played in. Bishop Feehan came in with a high scoring offense and punishing defense. When we met them in the practice bubble, where we warmed up before the game, they looked big, and I'm sure that they thought we looked small. But as the saying goes: "It's not the size of the dog in the fight, but rather the size of the fight in the dog," and boy, were we ready to fight.

By no means was this an offensive showcase. It was a defensive slugfest from the beginning.

Occasionally, we would take a look at the crowd and a quick glance at the replay on the Jumbotron.

Even though we fought hard, it was just not enough to pull it out. It was truly heartbreaking to see all of our hard work come down to the wire, when we had come so far and so close.

In hindsight, no team has ever been as "magical," as the 2009 Marblehead High School football team. I have never been so proud to be a part of anything as much as this team in my life. I have enjoyed playing with this group of seniors for almost 10 years. We have won; we have lost, yet we have always stuck together.

► SEE **EVANS**, PAGE 9

## CONGRATULATIONS ON A WELL PLAYED SEASON!

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## IN THEIR OWN WORDS...

## A season to remember

## ► COMEAU, FROM PAGE 7

and we weren't about to let any déjà vu happen. We were ready to play this game and we got off to a quick 18-0 lead.

We became relaxed and thought we had the game in the bag until Swampscott staged a tremendous comeback and took command of the game, 27-26 with just under three minutes to go.

Marblehead took over the ball inside our own 10-yard line. In the huddle, the seniors of the team took a hard look into each other's eyes and we told each other this is not the last time we were going to play football together.

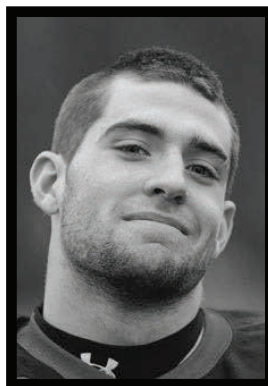
With that as our motivation, we had a huge drive and scored a miraculous touchdown to take the lead.

Swampscott took over the ball with 50 seconds to go. They knocked on the door, but as the scoreboard ticked to zero, the pass was incomplete, and the crowd stormed the field.

It was all over.

The Marblehead football team once again cried, but they weren't the same tears as a year before. This time they were tears of complete joy as a football team who came together and accomplished something that no Magician team had done for 36 years, and we also made it to the playoffs.

Yes, we beat Rockland in the playoffs, and made it to Gillette Stadium, which was an experience too tremendous to explain in a short essay. But that was just gravy on top of the amazing season that the 2009 Marblehead Magicians had, and a year that will never be forgotten.



## What a year

## ► EVANS, FROM PAGE 8

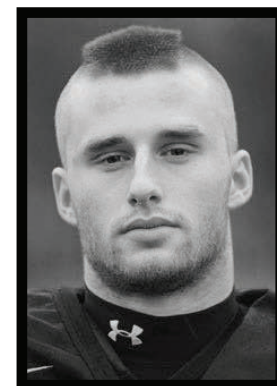
For these memories, I want to thank with all of my heart the players who have turned this program around and made the locker room the funniest scene ever imagined.

Also, I thank the coaches — Coach Rudloff, O'Connor, Hicks, Giardi, Hyde and Lavender, who picked up where Coach Chernovetz left off and never missed a beat.

Not to be overlooked are the freshman coaches, the James brothers and Coach Norman, who continue to mold the future stars of the varsity team and do nothing but win.

I want to thank each and every fan, who came to the games, and screamed their heads off, and to the few brave souls who painted their bodies. Our accomplishments were made easy by knowing we had the support of the town.

Finally, thank you to our parents, who have endured everything that comes along with their son being a high school football player. These memories have been life changing, and won't soon be forgotten.



## CONGRATULATIONS!

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# 2009 MHS FOOTBALL SMALL DIVISION CHAMPIONS



Head Coach  
Jim Rudloff

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# 2009 NEC SMALL CHAMPIONSHIP ROSTER

NUMBER	PLAYER	GRADE	POSITION	HEIGHT	WEIGHT	NUMBER	PLAYER	GRADE	POSITION	HEIGHT	WEIGHT
1	Luke Peters	Sophomore	WR/LB	5-6	150	44	Chris Piper	Sophomore	WR/DL	5-7	162
2	Michael Bernato	Senior	WR/DB/K	5-7	152	45	Oliver Gregory	Sophomore	RB/LB	5-7	168
3	Gus Percy	Sophomore	QB/LB	5-7	158	49	Michael Asainte	Junior	OL/DL	5-11	170
4	Dan Colbert	Junior	QB/DB	5-7	157	50	Kevin Lang	Sophomore	OL/DL	5-10	213
5	Josh Gonzalez	Sophomore	RB/DB	5-5	140	52	Matthew Evans – C	Senior	C/LB	6-0	185
6	Jack Clough	Sophomore	WR/DB	6-1	164	53	Joe Nuccio	Senior	OL/DL	5-7	202
7	Justin Burnett	Junior	WR/DB	6-0	141	54	Joel Katz	Sophomore	OL/LB	5-7	176
8	Bing Bial	Sophomore	WR/DB	5-5	133	55	Matt O'Neil	Senior	FB/LB	5-9	186
9	Alex Haigis	Senior	WR/DB	6-1	170	56	Ross Gienieczko	Sophomore	OL/DL	5-11	197
10	Hayes Richardson	Senior	QB/LS	5-11	187	58	John Merrigan	Sophomore	OL/DL	5-8	194
11	Matt Perlow	Junior	TE/DL	6-2	188	60	Alex Kalafa	Sophomore	OL/DL	5-7	204
15	Ryan Stanojev	Junior	WR/DB	5-10	168	61	Jake Maselek	Sophomore	OL/DL	5-10	184
20	Will Quigley	Sophomore	RB/DB	5-11	163	63	Jake Morris	Sophomore	OL/DL	5-9	196
21	Flynn McCormack	Senior	WR/DB	6-0	165	64	Kyle Edwards	Senior	OL/DL	6-0	196
22	Phil Coughlin	Sophomore	WR/DB	6-1	167	65	Blake Forman	Senior	OL/DL	5-9	205
25	Jake Kulevich	Junior	QB/DB	5-9	171	67	Nathan Koontz	Senior	OL/DL	5-7	168
26	Marcell Hardmon	Senior	WR/DB	5-6	155	70	Nick Broughton	Junior	OL/DL	6-4	202
32	Tyler Peters	Sophomore	WR/LB	5-6	151	71	Jonathan Taylor	Senior	OL/DL	5-7	267
33	Damarco Dooley	Senior	RB/DB	5-5	145	72	Jose Andrade	Senior	OL/DL	5-9	210
35	John Perry	Sophomore	RB/LB	5-7	159	75	Ben Vannah	Junior	OL/LB	5-9	161
36	Michael LeClair	Junior	RB/LB	5-7	168	77	Liam Gilliland	Junior	OL/DL	6-0	189
39	Evan Comeau – C	Senior	FB/LB	6-0	177	78	Ben Koopman	Junior	OL/DL	6-2	268
42	Josh Freedland	Junior	TE/LB	6-0	191	83	Sam Snow	Senior	WR/DB	5-8	175
43	Nick Schmitt	Sophomore	FB/DB	5-7	151	87	Matthew Cashman	Sophomore	WR/DB	6-1	171
						88	Tyree Williams	Sophomore	WR/DB	5-8	165

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## FROM PENTUCKET TO FOXBORO

### ► JOURNEY, FROM PAGE 6

on the scoreboard in the third quarter. But Alex Haigis blocked the extra point attempt, and ran it back for two points.

Richardson added to the 16-6 lead with a 12-yard keeper to begin the fourth quarter, and then chipped in with a 10-yard touchdown run to close out the game for the offense. But Haigis wasn't through, when his theft on defense resulted in a 40-yard runback for the final Marblehead touchdown of the game.

### GAME 7:

■ MARBLEHEAD 34  
■ SAUGUS 12

The Northeastern Conference Small Division schedule got under way with a convincing win over the Sachems.

Richardson initiated the offensive explosion with a 56-yard jaunt to the end zone, a precursor of what was to come against Swampscott on Thanksgiving.

Hardmon then scored from seven yards out. The Sachems made things interesting when they scored their second touchdown of the game to trim the deficit, 14-12. But the Richardson to McCormack combination extended the lead with a 10-yard scoring strike. The senior quarterback then used his legs to gallop 42 yards for another six points. He called his own number once again to account for a 17-yard touchdown run, ending the game with eight carries for 150 yards and three touchdowns.



WICKED LOCAL PHOTO BY DAVID SOKOL

Members of the Marblehead High School marching band at halftime during the annual Thanksgiving Day game against Swampscott Nov. 26.

### GAME 8:

■ MARBLEHEAD 42  
■ DANVERS 20

The Magicians improved to 7-1 after this road win against another divisional opponent. The Falcons scored on the opening possession, but Richardson got it right back with a five-yard touchdown run. The Falcons, however, regained the lead in the second quarter, 14-7. But in this back and forth game, it was

Marblehead's turn to score on a 12-yard scoring strike from Richardson to Haigis. Richardson then had one of his patented long scoring runs, this time from 54 yards out, after Danvers retook the lead. 20-14. A Bernato extra point was the difference on the scoreboard at halftime.

The third quarter was scoreless, and the Magicians knew they had to tack on a few more points for insurance purposes.

The defense got the next three scoring drives going with crucial turnovers. Haigis came up with an interception that

led to a touchdown by Hardmon, and a couple of fumbles by Danvers led to two more scores.

Richardson collected 267 passing yards on 12 completions. Haigis was the leading recipient with four catches for 107 yards. Hardmon was the leading ground gainer with 71 yards on 16 carries, plus two touchdowns.

Comeau returned after recuperating from a sprained ankle, and led the defense with nine tackles.

► SEE JOURNEY, PAGE 14



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## FROM PENTUCKET TO FOXBORO

### 2009

## Marblehead Magicians Statistics from Pentucket to Rockland

### RUSHING

PLAYER	RUSH	YARDS	TD
Marcell Hardmon	113	783	10
Will Quigley	97	546	3
Hayes Richardson	96	541	18
Evan Comeau	18	137	1
Damarco Dooley	11	65	1
Ryan Stanojev	2	13	0

### PASSING

PLAYER	PC	PA	YARDS	TD	INT
Hayes Richardson	102	211	1,628	17	7

### RECEIVING

PLAYER	RECEPTIONS	YARDS	TD
Alex Haigis	24	467	3
Matt Perlow	21	421	3
Evan Comeau	15	245	4
Flynn McCormick	14	187	3
Will Quigley	14	180	4
Marcel Hardmon	7	86	0
Ryan Stanojev	6	51	0
Josh Freedland	1	13	0

► JOURNEY, FROM PAGE 13

### GAME 9:

■ MARBLEHEAD 39

■ BEVERY 21

Their third win over a NEC Small Division opponent ensured the Magicians that the Thanksgiving Day game against Swampscott would have playoff implications for the second year in a row.

Marblehead scored the first touchdown of the game in spectacular fashion with a blocked punt, and an alert

Jake Kulevich picking up the loose ball and running it in for six from the 36. Beverly got the points back late in the first quarter, plus the extra point to take the lead.

The Panthers went up, 14-7 in the second quarter, but the Magicians got it right back on a 23-yard touchdown pass from Richardson to Quigley. Richardson then tied up the proceedings on the two-point conversion.

Richardson scored the first touchdown of the second half on a two-yard run. But the Panthers wasted little time to score the tying touchdown, and go ahead once again with the extra point.

Hardmon then shouldered the responsibility to

► SEE JOURNEY, PAGE 15



Quarterback Hayes Richardson takes the ball himself in pursuit of a first down against Swampscott during the Thanksgiving Day game at Marblehead Nov. 26.

WICKED LOCAL PHOTO BY DAVID SOKOL

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## FROM PENTUCKET TO FOXBORO

### ► JOURNEY, FROM PAGE 14

finally put this game out of reach for his teammates with three unanswered touchdowns. He ended up carrying the ball 19 times in the game for 151 yards.

Linebackers Comeau and O'Neil also helped make another win possible with nine and eight tackles, respectively. Ben Koopman and Perlow both had interceptions late in the game to thwart any notion of a Beverly comeback.

"It was a great game. The field was packed like a Thanksgiving game. There were students in the stands, who had painted themselves up. It was a really neat, wild atmosphere," Rudloff said.

### GAME 10:

- WINTHROP 27
- MARBLEHEAD 18

As it turned out, it was just one of those extra games that didn't mean that much in the schedule, but it was still a wake-up call for the Magicians that ultimately set the tone for Thanksgiving and beyond.

Marblehead actually had more yards than the Vikings, and led after one, 6-0. Richardson found Quigley in the end zone for a seven-yard scoring

strike to account for the early offense. It was Richardson's 13th touchdown pass of the year, and it occurred on Friday the 13th, no less.

Richardson scored the other two touchdowns as a result of running plays, the last one coming on the final play of the game.

### GAME 11:

- MARBLEHEAD 32
- SWAMPSCOTT 27

It was indeed one for the ages, with all of its playoff machinations hanging in the balance. Marblehead dominated the first half, but Swampscott came back in the second half to take a 27-26 lead. It only led to a drive that the hometown Marblehead fans will never forget, not to mention the first conference title in 36 years.

Here's the drive's breakdown:

After an incomplete pass, quarterback Hayes Richardson hooked up with Haigis, who made a sensational leaping 30-yard catch to the 36. But Richardson was just warming up. He found Hardmon dashing out of the backfield to snare a pass for 28 more yards to the Swampscott 34. It was then time for Haigis to account for an 18-yard reception to the 16, and after Marblehead was caught offside Hardmon put his running shoes back on to pick up six yards to the 17. Richardson inched his teammates closer with a four-yard run to the 13 with 1:01 left in the game, and he wasted little time to secure the game-winning touchdown with a 13-yard scoring strike to Haigis.

Richardson, the co-offensive Player of the Year, completed 15 passes for 270 yards versus the Big Blue.

Rudloff, the NEC Coach of the Year, couldn't have been happier to help bring this championship back to Marblehead at long last.

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WICKED LOCAL PHOTO BY DAVID SOKOL

Marcell Hardmon (26), Matt Evans (52) and Josh Freedland (42) tackle Swampscott's Kyle Shonio to stop a threat late in the annual Thanksgiving Day game.

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## FROM PENTUCKET TO FOXBORO



COURTESY PHOTO

For the first time, the Marblehead High School football cheerleaders were among the top three teams in the state, finishing second overall. They also ended up first as grand champs at the Swampscott Invitational Tournament, and were second in the regionals after also coming in second in the Northeastern Conference Meet, where they also captured the top spot the previous three years. Team members are, from left, top row, captain Tori Mancuso, Haley Andrews, Shayla Monahan, Catie Brown, Nicole Roberts, Jaime Thayer, Stephanie Lyons, Lauren Cohen, Emily Katz, captain Kirby Franzese and Jillian Whiting. Middle row, Hazel Carron, Rachel Conrad, Jesse Thayer, Paige Federman, Nicole Magnet and Naemah Adams. Front row, captain Ellen Federman. Missing from photo, Sarah Liberson. The MHS cheerleaders would also like to thank the Magicians football team and coaching staff for a job well done on their championship season in the Northeastern Conference Small Division.

## CONGRATULATIONS to the Marblehead Magicians on a successful season!

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## FROM PENTUCKET TO FOXBORO

## ► JOURNEY, FROM PAGE 15

"I couldn't be happier for the town, the old-timers in the town, the Youth Football program, the mothers and fathers of the players. This [game] has changed the face of the program forever. This isn't your grandma's team anymore, and nobody can question this program ever again," he said.

## GAME 12:

■ MARBLEHEAD 21

■ ROCKLAND 12

DIVISION 3 PLAYOFF

Marblehead was now playing meaningful December football in a Division 3A Super Bowl game at Lynn's Manning Field against Rockland Dec. 1.

Richardson and the Marblehead offense wasted little time to score the first touchdown of the game. With just three minutes gone on the clock, Richardson ended the six-play drive with a one-yard run to the end zone. Dooley set things up with a sensational 52-yard kickoff return to the 36. Bernato nailed the extra point through the uprights following Richardson's score to give his teammates a 7-0 lead.

Rockland's Mike Driscoll got the Bulldogs on the scoreboard with an 11-yard run, but the Bulldogs missed on the extra point.

It took the Magicians just three plays to increase the margin of difference

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WICKED LOCAL PHOTO BY DAVID SOKOL

Flynn McCormack of the football Magicians kisses the Rotary Cup, which is awarded to the winning team of the annual Thanksgiving Day game between Swampscott and Marblehead, after the Magicians defeated the Big Blue, 32-27 to also secure the NEC Small Division title for the first time in 36 years.



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## FROM PENTUCKET TO FOXBORO

## 2009 Division 3 Super Bowl — Marblehead by the Numbers

### RUSHING

PLAYER	RUSH	YARDS
Marcell Hardmon	12	22
Evan Comeau	1	2
Hayes Richardson	9	41
Will Quigley	2	3

### PASSING

PLAYER	PC	PA	YARDS	TD
Hayes Richardson	7	23	73	1

### RECEIVING

PLAYER	RECEPTIONS	YARDS	TD
Evan Comeau	2	6	
Alex Haigis	3	57	
Marcell Hardmon	2	10	1

### MARBLEHEAD OFFENSIVE TEAM STATISTICS

TOTAL YARDS	141
RUSHING YARDS	68
PASSING YARDS	73
PASS COMPLETIONS/PASS ATTEMPTS	8 for 23
FIRST DOWNS	7
THIRD DOWN CONVERSIONS	2 for 12
FOURTH DOWN CONVERSIONS	1 for 2
PENALTIES	0
TURNOVERS	2 interceptions
FUMBLE RECOVERIES ON DEFENSE	1 (Matt Evans)

## CHAMPIONSHIP STAFF



WICKED LOCAL PHOTO BY NICOLE GOODHUE BOYD

MHS football Head Coach Jim Rudloff is flanked by his varsity assistants, from left, Tim O'Connor, Mike Lavender, Mike Giardi and Pat Hicks. Missing from photo, Coach Tim Hyde.

#### ► JOURNEY, FROM PAGE 17

on a 49-yard touchdown pass from Richardson to Perlow, just seconds into the second quarter. At the other end of the quarter, Comeau ran the final 13 yards for the third score, and Bernato added the exclamation point for a 21-6 halftime lead.

Driscoll made things interesting with another touchdown late in the third quarter, but when a big stop was needed the Marblehead defense didn't disappoint.

Marblehead star running back Marcell

Hardmon (32 rushing yards) echoed the sentiments of his teammates afterwards by saying: "It's amazing to be on the first Marblehead team to go to the Super Bowl," he said. "Everybody did such an amazing job, and I just hit the holes to pick up the yards."

It was all about respect for Rudloff, who said: "They deserve a lot of credit. They know hard work pays off every time, and I think they have earned everybody's respect right now."

► SEE JOURNEY, PAGE 19

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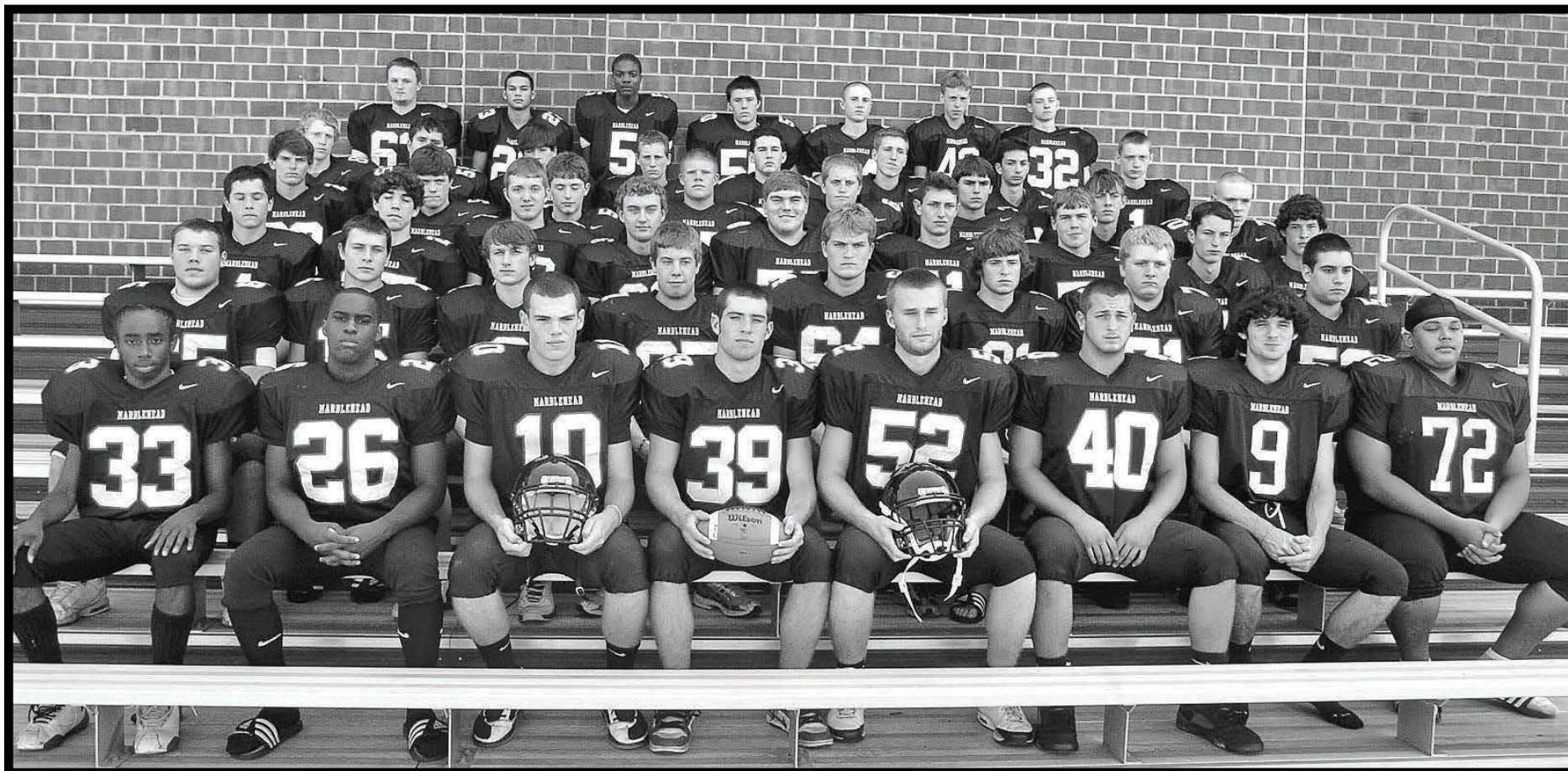
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## FROM PENTUCKET TO FOXBORO



The 2009 MHS football NEC Small Division championship squad

WICKED LOCAL PHOTO BY NICOLE GOODHUE BOYD

► **JOURNEY**, FROM PAGE 18

### GAME 13:

■ BISHOP FEEHAN 12  
■ MARBLEHEAD 6  
DIVISION 3 SUPER BOWL

Despite a steady rain and a slick field, the Magicians still hung in there

in one of the most competitive Super Bowl games on the Gillette Stadium docket Dec. 5, only to succumb to the Shamrocks with 13 seconds left in the contest.

After a scoreless first half, Bishop Feehan cracked the scoreboard first, but the resilient Magicians at the four-minute mark of the third quarter. Evans pounced on a fumbled punt to set up

the tying score when Richardson found Hardmon just over the goal line from six yards away. But the extra point was blocked to keep the score tied at six until Bishop Feehan workhorse Zach Schweiger (23 carries, 132 yards) was credited with the winning touchdown from the three.

Richardson was the leading Marblehead rusher with 41 yards on

12 carries, and he completed eight Super Bowl passes for 73 yards, three of them to Haigis for 57 yards.

Coach Rudloff then put this whole championship season in perspective: "We have grown as a program by leaps and bounds, and took it from winning the conference championship for the first time in 36 years all the way to the Super Bowl."

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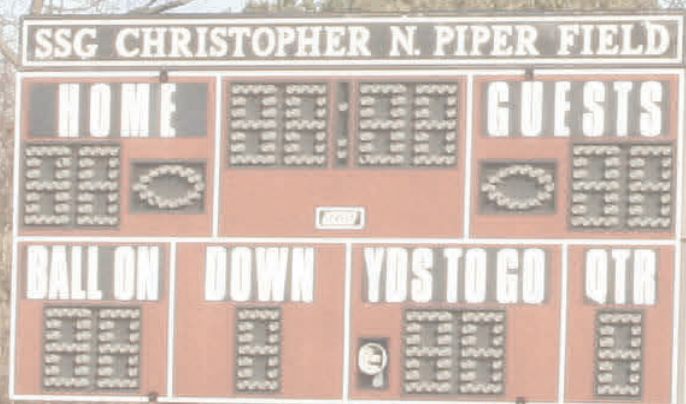
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