

# St. Mary's Advances

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**Rutherford, N.J.** – Home field advantage is critical during playoff time and the first round of the Non-Public Group 1 playoffs was no different as Montclair Immaculate traveled to Rutherford to take on St. Mary's on November 19.

With the rushing attack of the Gaels at the top of their game, junior running back Jonathan Diaz capped off their first drive with a 2-yard run with 8 minutes to go in the first quarter. The next series, Montclair Immaculate took the ball 65 yards in seven plays to score their first touchdown of the game with 5 minutes to go in the first quarter.

On their second possession of the game, St. Mary's started off with a 45-yard run up the middle to senior fullback Kidane Rutty. Three plays later, this time from ten yards out, Diaz scored his second touchdown of the game.

In the second quarter, both defenses forced punts. Half way through the quarter, a punt by Sophomore Isaiah Pitts was blocked setting Montclair Immaculate up with very good field position. Despite the field position, St. Mary's was able to keep them out of the end zone as senior safety Anthony Ferrentino broke up a fourth down pass on the goal line. St. Mary's took a 14-6 lead into halftime.

Early in the third quarter, a 6-yard touchdown by Rutty widened the Gaels' lead to 21-6. Next, St. Mary's possession again was Rutty, this time with a 68 yard touchdown making the score 28-6. A few plays later, Rutty scored his third touchdown of the game, this time on a 35-yard interception return. This touchdown put the game away for St. Mary's and they advanced to the Non-Public Group 1 State Championship beating Montclair Immaculate 36-6.

Senior fullback and linebacker Kidane Rutty finished the game with 2 rushing touchdowns and 131 yards on 6 carries and an interception returned for a touchdown. Junior running back Jonathan Diaz finished with 2 rushing touchdowns and 151 yards on 21 carries.