



NEWS RELEASE

FOOTBALL POWER POINTS CANDLE BURNS AT BOTH ENDS

PHOENIX, AZ (Oct. 15, 2009) – The high school football playoffs are almost here. Will your team be in or out?

The final power-points standings are capable of changing quite a bit between now and the first weekend of November that signals the end of the regular season.

While many people will be looking to see which team finishes No. 1, there will be some competitive races to determine teams that will get one of the final three or four spots in the 16-team fields. That means a chance to upset some of the higher seeds.

The leaders in Class 5A Division I are defending champion Chandler Hamilton, Mesa, Phoenix Mountain Pointe and defending runner-up Phoenix Brophy Prep.

Phoenix Desert Vista held the No. 16 spot after seven weeks, but teams such as Mesa Skyline, Phoenix St. Mary's and Gilbert Highland were within striking distance.

In Class 5A Division II, there is a dogfight for the top spot between Tempe Marcos de Niza, Scottsdale Chaparral and three-time defending champion Peoria Centennial. Tolleson and Surprise Valley Vista share the No. 16 position, with Glendale Ironwood, Laveen Betty H. Fairfax and Marana Mountain View nipping at their heels.

The Class 4A Division I race has become interesting, particularly with Tucson Canyon del Oro's recent big win over three-time defending champion Scottsdale Saguaro. Cave Creek Cactus Shadows, Vail Cienega and Tucson Sabino moved ahead of Saguaro.

Prescott Valley Bradshaw Mountain, Tucson Sahuaro and El Mirage Dysart occupied the last three spots in 4A-I, but keep an eye out for Tucson Catalina Foothills, Marana and Nogales in the closing weeks.

Two-time defending Class 4A Division II champion Scottsdale Notre Dame Prep stumbled on Oct. 9 against an up-and-coming Gilbert Williams Field team.

That led to a major shuffling of the points leaders. Notre Dame was ninth after its loss, with Cottonwood Mingus at No. 1, Tucson Santa Rita at No. 2 and Williams Field at No. 3.

Phoenix Greenway, a semifinalist a year ago, Bullhead City Mohave and Page were in the last three spots in 4A-II, with Tucson Catalina, Phoenix Thunderbird and Sahuarita waiting to make their move.

The battle in 3A appears to be as unsettled as any.

In the top 16, 10 teams were tied at various levels. Perennial power Lakeside Blue Ridge, newcomer Tucson Empire and Fountain Hills were at No. 3. At No. 8 were East Region rivals Round Valley and Snowflake. Holbrook, Kayenta Monument Valley and Safford shared the No. 10 spot. And Parker and Show Low were at No. 13.

Florence, defending state champion Payson and Globe were poised to break through in 3A.

Phoenix Northwest Christian showed it is going to be a force in Class 2A by holding down the No. 1 spot after a crucial win over Chandler Valley Christian. Valley was at No. 7.

Two-time defending champion St. Johns was at No. 2, followed by Phoenix Scottsdale Christian, Benson, Red Mesa, and Camp Verde.

Queen Creek Canyon State Academy held the No. 16 spot, but Keams Canyon Hopi, Phoenix North Pointe Prep, San Manuel and newcomer Tempe Prep were looking to gain ground.

Beginning dates for the football playoffs:

Class 1A (Oct. 23), 2A (Nov. 6), 3A (Nov. 7), 4A-II through 5A-I (all Nov. 13).

Have a Story Idea:

The AIA is looking for story ideas on member high schools, including its student-athlete, coaches and administrators. Have a story that you think should be shared with the AIA community? Email your idea to Don Ketchum at dketchum@aiaonline.org.