

IN THE NEWS

Accomplishments In Academics, Arts, Athletics & Service



University School Wins State Football Championship



Excerpts from various news outlets. Photo by Hot Shotz Studios

Miami Herald: By Andre C. Fernandez

"Thanks in part to quarterback Mike White's 282 yards, University's 7-year-old football program won its first state title. Roger Harriott sat proud Saturday afternoon hoisted on the shoulders of a couple of his assistant coaches. His players held up their index fingers, their gold medals, and the state championship trophy. Their fans stood, saluted them and celebrated in the stands. And the T-shirts they wore had a phrase that described the scene best: **Mission accomplished**. Seven years after starting its football program, University School secured its first state championship after beating Madison County 24-17 in the Class 3A state final at the Citrus Bowl.

Sun-Sentinel: By Christy Cabrera Chirinos

"The Suns regained their composure and rallied to earn a 24-17 win over the Cowboys in the Class 3A state championship game at the Citrus Bowl on Saturday. The victory gave the Suns (12-0) the first state title in program history, and helped erase the painful memories of University's last visit to the state championship game. Saturday, the Suns brought pictures from that gut-wrenching loss with them to Orlando.

"It means everything," said Suns linebacker Skai Moore, who had a game-high 14 tackles and a sack. "We had alumni out here today, just yelling at us, pushing us to keep fighting and not give up. Their support boosted our spirits when we were down and we came back and got the victory. We finally did it."

While the win made school history for the Suns, ranked No. 5 in the nation in the Rivals 100, it didn't come as easy as this season's previous 11 victories. It wasn't until Emanuel Soto caught an 11-yard touchdown pass from Mike White with 5:54 remaining that the Suns took their first lead. Soto finished with five catches for 81 yards, while White completed 21 of 31 for 282 yards with two touchdowns. After White connected with D.J. Taylor on the ensuing two-point conversion, University entrusted its championship hopes to its defense, which struggled against Madison County's Wing-T early. In the final minutes, though, the Suns held on. They forced a three-and-out on one of Madison County's late drives, then Wesley Smith made the tackle that stopped the Cowboys (12-2) on 4th-and-17 in the final two minutes.

"Madison County is a tough team," Suns coach Roger Harriott said. "They were very physical, and their game plan was effective. When you put in a lot of work, you hope it comes to fruition, and we had that opportunity to solidify everything these kids have worked on."