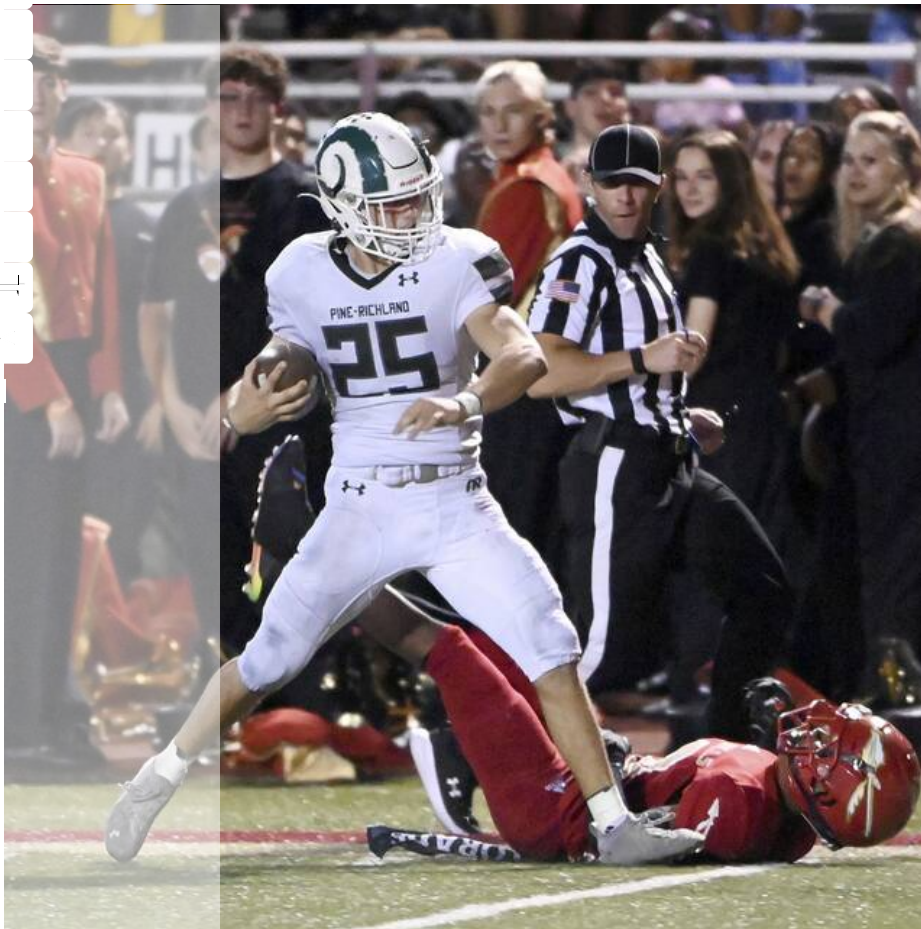


Ryan Palmieri boosts Pine-Richland with whatever-it-takes attitude

By: [Jerin Steele](#)

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Christopher Horner | Tribune-Review

Pine-Richland's Ryan Palmieri carries for his first touchdown against Penn Hills on Sept. 9, 2022, at Penn Hills.

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Ryan Palmieri's mindset is doing everything he can to help the team win.

That's a goal shared by many high school football players, but Palmieri's actions throughout his career at [Pine-Richland](#) show that he is committed to do anything he's asked to do.

Last year, when Cole Boyd went down with a season-ending injury, Palmieri was thrust into the starting quarterback role and ended up throwing for more than 1,000 yards and seven touchdowns.

Now he's back in his normal role as the featured running back and leads the team in rushing entering the Rams' game with [North Allegheny](#) on Sept. 30.

"It was definitely different last year," Palmieri said. "I had played quarterback through youth, my freshman year and a little bit into my sophomore year in JV. It took some time to get used to, but I didn't mind. I just wanted to win. Whatever I can do to help the team win, I'll do."

Palmieri has shown he can hurt teams in various ways. A good example was the [Penn Hills](#) game where he rushed for 127 yards, ran some plays out of the Wildcat formation and returned the second-half kickoff for a touchdown.

He backed that game up with returning the opening kickoff 90 yards for a touchdown against [Fox Chapel](#) and had a 20-yard touchdown run in the first quarter. The Rams went on to rout the Foxes, 61-14.

"That was my first time returning the opening kickoff," Palmieri said. "I almost had one against [Shaler](#) last year, but I got caught at the 10-yard line. That was definitely a good way to start a game for the team. It got everybody fired up on the sidelines. The blockers in front of me got a great wedge. I followed them and they made a couple of nice blocks. It was great."

Palmieri also plays defense, so he's on the field for the majority of the game.

Last year [Pine-Richland](#) coach Jon LeDonne asked Palmieri and fellow senior Max Heckert, among others, to be leaders on the team. It's a role Palmieri was ready for.

"What we've been taught throughout high school is that as a senior, it is the role you have to step into," Palmieri said. "Be a leader on the team and hold everyone accountable. The new staff with coach LeDonne and the coaches that stayed from before have done a good job helping us move into that role and let us lead the team how we want to lead the team."

The Rams were 2-3 overall and 1-1 in conference play entering the [North Allegheny](#) game. They have one more nonconference game with [Central Catholic](#) on Oct. 7 before three straight conference tilts against [Woodland Hills](#), [Shaler](#) and [North Hills](#) to end the regular season.

"I feel like we're finally starting to figure ourselves out," Palmieri said. "We have a new staff, and we're implementing a new offense and defense — a whole new scheme basically. We had a lot of players graduate from last year and young guys stepping into pretty big roles. It took a little getting used to, but we're really starting to come into our own and getting our stuff together. That's a good thing because we have some important conference games coming that are pretty much must-wins for us."

Palmieri is unsure if he'll play football in college. He said he has talked to a few schools but doesn't have any scholarship offers at the moment. He's hopeful something will materialize. One thing is certain though: He'll give everything he has on the field for Pine-Richland the rest of the season.

Jerin Steele is a freelance writer

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