

Fourth and one. One yard - one yard to win the championship. The entire game had been a toss up between Jackson Prep and MRA. When one scored a touchdown, the other would charge the field and do the same. And now it had all come down to this one play. On the line of scrimmage, the Prep offense looked straight into the eyes of the MRA defense, ready to push for as many inches as possible. The ball was snapped to senior quarterback Alex Gibbs, who handed it off to running back Jerrion Ealy. The crowd held its breath, while Ealy jumped higher than anyone thought possible, over both the offensive and defensive lines. The ref signaled a first down, and the students and fans cheered louder than anyone thought possible. The Pats had done it; they had won the championship for the seventh year in a row. As the offense jogged back onto the field to kneel the ball and end the game, the team and everyone in the crowd celebrated and reflected on the season. The team and Prep family began the season expecting to win every game, as always. After all, they had gone undefeated the prior season. However, with a mid-season loss to MRA, the Patriots realized that they were not always guaranteed a victory, and that they needed to work for it. After the defeat, Head Coach Ricky Black made his team sit and listen as the MRA team celebrated and chanted “We’re Not Gonna Take It” by Twisted Sisters. In that moment, a new fire was kindled in the players. The team finished the season without another loss and made it to the championship against MRA. For the first time, Prep was the underdog, but this time it was MRA who was expecting to win, and was defeated. The Patriots had learned to not take victory for granted and that “THEY weren't gonna take it anymore,” finally grasping the team motto for the season - UNDERSTANDING SUCCESS.