



Cougars Boys' Soccer Land NCS Title

By Steven Johns



Parker Wells (30), Ryan Kimura (18)

Photo Jordan Fong

On Saturday, Feb. 23, the Campolindo Cougars battled the Piedmont Highlanders in the NCS Championship game.

Despite beating Campolindo 1-0 earlier in the year, Piedmont was no match for the Cougars in the Championship

game. On a stormy night the Cougars dominated the Highlanders in a 6-1 win to give them the NCS Championship.

The game started out with Piedmont getting many chances at scoring. In the first five minutes they were able to get four shots

off at Campolindo goal-keeper Noel Raine. Great goal tending and good defense prevented the Highlanders from scoring.

When the Cougars settled down they began their domination. After a close call on a free kick Campolindo started its scoring barrage. With 22:20 left in the half junior Arika Okamitsu had a free kick from mid-field. He launched a shot towards the net where senior captain Max Smith-Gee headed the ball past the Piedmont goalie to put the Cougars up 1-0.

A few minutes later the Cougars had another free-kick. This time Smith-Gee shot the ball towards the net where sophomore Ben Rudolf put the ball in the back of the net to put the Cougars on top 2-0.

After seven minutes of back and forth the Cougars again showed their dominance. Rudolf threw the ball in from the left side-line to senior Parker Wells, who booted the ball for the Cougars third goal of the game. This goal gave Wells his third goal in two games.

With a 3-0 lead in favor of the Cougars, the championship game was all but over.

Campolindo came out in the second half like the game was still 0-0. The Cougars were getting shot after shot against the Highlanders.

With 26:10 left in the game Campolindo got yet another goal.

Senior Thibault Deichler raced after a ball for a chance at a break away, when the Piedmont goalie came out and tried to clear the ball. He kicked the ball towards mid-field and right to Campolindo senior Georgio Tavecchio, who launched a 40 yard shot into the back of an empty net to give Campolindo a 4-0 lead.

The goals kept coming for Campolindo with 23:12 left in the game. Freshman Jason Kimura kicked the ball from 30 yards away towards the net. After a high bounce the Piedmont keeper tried to stop the ball, but caught it inside the net. Kimura's goal gave the cougars a 5-0 lead.

The Cougars final goal came when junior Andrew Choi shot a rebound into the back of the net.

The Highlanders added a goal late, but Piedmont's deficit was too large to overcome.

As the final second ticked off the clock, the Campolindo fans stormed the field to celebrate an historic season. After beating Las Lomas and Miramonte in the quarterfinals and the semifinals respectively, the Cougars took the NCS title with a dominating 6-1 victory over Piedmont.

After a long season, the 2007-2008 Campolindo Cougars are the NCS Champions for the first time in their long history.