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Campolindo Falls Short in NCS Final

By Alex Crook

Campolindo had cruised by Novato and gotten past Alameda in post-season play. But on May 22, Campolindo's varsity boys' volleyball team came up just short of glory as the DFAL champions fell three games to one to the Sir Francis Drake Pirates for the Division II NCS title in front of a packed student section at Campolindo High School. The Pirates dominated game one, as they maintained the lead for the entire set. The closest Campo got was within one point when the score was 9-8 Drake, but the Pirates' offense was just too much for Campolindo, and their defense was stellar, shutting down the Campolindo offense and outplaying them to eventually take game one, 25-20. At the start of the second game, the score went back and forth, but again, Drake showed that they had the early momentum. Throughout the set, Campolindo was given plenty of chances, but Drake's defense just would not let them capitalize. Drake took game two as well with the identical score of 25-20.

Set three started with Drake serving into the net, giving Campolindo its first lead of the match. Following a kill by Cougar senior middle Zach Dashner, Campo junior outside hitter Jason Lee slammed one down to wake up the entire Campolindo squad. Cougar junior middle Dylan Blackstone finished off game three with a soft tip of the ball, and Campolindo took game three 25-19.

In the fourth set, Campolindo was given their chances, and converted on some of them, but not all. Drake, on the other hand, was consistent. Following a Campo timeout, the Pirates racked up eight straight points to take a 19-11 lead. From there, the Pirates never looked back, and took set four 25-18. With the win, the Pirates were crowned NCS champions.

"They played like they were composed, they fought hard in every aspect that a team should be," commented Campo coach Dave Chen after his team's remarkable run through the playoffs. This is obviously not the way Campo's six seniors wanted to be sent off, but they had come a long way.

Two seasons ago, Campolindo boys' volleyball sat at the bottom of the DFAL standings. Last season, Chen's Cougars completed an amazing 23-game turnaround before losing to Northgate in five sets in the NCS semifinals.

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