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Campolindo Volleyball Wins NorCal, Plays in State Finals

By Simon Trynza



Sophie Seiberth (12), Kelley Wirth (9) and Kirsten Sibley (11) block Cathedral's hitter, Tatiana Durr, who had 18 kills in the match. Photos Cindy Kitahara

"Our seniors did a great job of leading our young players," said Vuong. "The captains did an excellent job of motivating and keeping the team together as one unit.

The Cougars came out strong in the first set against the Fighting Irish, winning 25-19 after a kill by Abbey Healey. Despite dropping the second set, Campolindo was able to jump out to an early 7-3 lead in the third set, winning the pivotal set, 25-20.

Shurtz showed the crowd why she was crowned DFAL MVP when her timely kills propelled a 5-1 run that saw Campolindo pull away from the Irish in the fourth set.

However, Sacred Heart stormed back to tie the match at 15. Each team traded points, until a net violation gave the Cougars a 23-10 set lead. A Shurtz kill gave the Cougars match point at 24-21. Campolindo won the match as a Sacred Heart kill attempt landed wide in the stands.

Standing in between the Cougars and a berth in the State final were the Valley Christian Warriors. Although the gym was packed with a fired-up crowd, the Cougars got off to a slow start, dropping seven of the last nine points to lose the first set, 25-20.

The slow start carried over as the Cougars quickly fell behind 5-1, but behind strong blocking by freshman Kirsten Sibley, Campolindo was able to take a 22-14 lead, holding on for a 25-22 win.

With the match tied at one set apiece, the Cougars fell behind 16-11, but multiple errors by the Warriors allowed the Cougars to hang on to take the third set, 25-23.

Valley Christian fought hard in the fourth and with Campolindo trailing for the majority of the set, it took a beautiful block by Gaby Gryko to tie the set at 21. The Cougars earned the 27-25 set win, sent the crowd into a frenzy, and punched the Cougars ticket to Irvine to participate in the state title game.

"We just wanted it so badly - we knew we could do it and we went out and did what we've done all season," said senior hitter Shurtz.

Starting outside hitter Sibley was very excited about how the team has come together. "I've absolutely loved playing with the older girls," she said. "It's been a great experience. Going to State is just icing on the cake!"

Playing away from Moraga at Concordia University in Irvine, the Cougars fell behind early. However, they were never behind by more than a few and were able to tie it up at 19. After two consecutive points by the Dons, the Cougars won six of the last eight points, to take the set.

The Dons evened the set count with a 25-21 win in the second set.

The Cougars were looking to pull away in the third, and were leading 19-16, but the Dons went on a run of their own to go up 22-20. Cathedral Catholic hung on for a 25-23 win.

In full desperation mode, the Cougars were given an opportunity when a Dons' service error evened the match at 18. However, Campolindo was overmatched and lost the next seven of ten points to give Cathedral Catholic the set and the State title, 23-25, 25-21, 25-23, 25-21.

"Winning NorCal was unbelievable," echoed Vuong. "We went through tough teams and had to fight back for most of the sets played. Being at state representing NorCal was a dream for us."

Publisher's note: Special thanks to Campo grad Cindy Kitahara (ng Wake) for taking photos for us.



Kelley Wirth #9



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