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Campolindo Dominates Dons Cougars record third straight win

By Michael Sakoda



Chris Hansen #44 scored first for Campo on his way to a 15-point effort. Photos Kevin Nguyen

Defeating Miramonte in the second game of the season, Campolindo (14-5, 4-1) looked to defeat its other Lamorinda rival, Acalanes (6-12, 2-3), last week.

On Jan. 22, Campolindo dominated the Dons, recording an 81-49 win.

The Cougars opened the game on a 7-0 run, getting back-to-back baskets from sophomore center Chris Hansen and a three from junior guard Andrew Zolitakis.

Acalanes went inside early to junior center Buster Souza, but Campo was ready, sending two or three defenders at him on every possession. The Cougars' team defense on Souza forced four Dons turnovers in the first eight minutes of play.

"We were trying to make sure Buster didn't get the ball," said Campolindo head coach Matt Watson after the game. "We know they've struggled shooting outside...we felt we could get away with putting a little more pressure on (Souza), and it backfired."

Indeed, Acalanes shot the lights out from distance, getting three-threes apiece from junior guard Matt Thomas and senior guard Craig Anderson.

Even so, Campo stuck to its strategy. Looking to wear out Souza on both ends of the floor, they fed Hansen on offense. "If you can put Buster in any kind of foul trouble it's to your advantage," said Watson. Hansen was effective, scoring nine points in the first half.

The Cougars' effort to draw fouls early was very successful, as they made 10-12 free throws to the Dons' 3-7. They went into the locker room with an 18 point lead, 45-27.

In the second half, Acalanes battled back. Riding a five point, two block quarter for Souza, the Dons were able to cut the deficit to 13, 56-43.

"We were trying to take care of the ball, execute our offense, keep them off the glass and slow down their transition," said Dons head coach Darrell Hirashima. "We were able to do that in spurts but not consistently enough to

cut it to single digits at any point."

The Dons also kept Campo off the line, allowing only four second half free throw attempts. "They didn't shoot as many free throws," Hirashima said, "but we faltered on other parts of our defense."

With seconds left in the third, Cougars senior forward John Schmitz scored a driving bucket, giving Campo a 15 point edge. Schmitz hit a three to open the final period, and from there, Campo's depth was on display.

The Cougars half court trap started forcing Dons turnovers, led by four steals from senior guard Matt McCue. "If we give enough ball pressure, it's very difficult for a team to make good passes," said Watson.

Campolindo's bench chipped in offensively too, led by nine from Schmitz and eight from junior guard Andrew Cassidy. "Other teams go six or seven deep," Watson commented. "We go 12 deep, so we're able to get a lot of energy off the bench."

Sophomore guard Matt O'Reilly led Campo's four double-digit scorers with 16, helped out by 15 from Hansen, 11 from junior forward Justin Dunn, and 10 from McCue. The Dons leading scorers, Thomas (14) and Souza (10), were simply over run, as Campo posted an 81-49 victory.

In Orinda, Miramonte (11-9) notched their fourth win with Kiran Shastri back in the lineup, beating Dougherty Valley 71-37 on January 25. Rivalry play resumes Feb. 1, when the Mats host Acalanes.



Buster Souza #1 notched 10 points in the loss.

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