

LAMORINDA SPORTS

Campolindo Cougars captures NCS boys and girls lacrosse titles

By Karl Buscheck



Photos Gint Federas



After the Campolindo Cougars secured the NCS D 2 boys lacrosse title – defeating Marin Academy 13-12 on May 19 – head coach Mitch Frey delivered a simple message to his club.

“You guys put your minds to a goal. You guys earned this opportunity and you guys were able to take advantage of it,” Frey said, recalling the praise he paid his players. “I couldn’t be prouder of a group of individuals.”

Then, Frey informed the Cougars – who finished 19-3 overall (13-1 in league) – that it was time to collect their hardware.

The top-seeded team had arrived at the showdown with No. 3 Marin Academy – their sixth consecutive win, dating back to the end of April – by taking down No. 9 Saint Mary’s, 18-6, in the quarterfinals, and handling No. 4 Piedmont, 10-7, in the semifinals.

In the championship matchup in Moraga, the Cougars and Marin Academy were knotted at 12-12 with three minutes to go with senior Will Rack supplied the decisive goal. Fellow senior Drew Cirelli lead Campolindo with four goals, while also producing a pair of assists.

Following the conclusion of their unblemished march through the postseason, Frey highlighted

the contributions of Campolindo’s cast of veterans.

“If there’s a group to focus on here, it’s definitely our seniors,” Frey said. “I mean, this group came in as freshmen and this is our first NCS title. To leave as seniors, it’s something that they and the alumni, as well as the rest of the team built. It’s great to see.”

The Cougars, who claimed the DAL championship, ended the spring ranked as the No. 19 team in the state, according to MaxPreps.

Despite that lofty ranking, Campolindo didn’t have the chance to test themselves against the rest of the elite programs across California because there is no state tournament for lacrosse.

“It’s funny. We were talking after the game – the coaches and I – even the next morning,” Frey said. “It’s one of those things that you wish you could go further with a group like this, but NCS is as far as it gets and hopefully in the future there is a state tournament, so we can continue playing – especially when you have such a great group.”

Campo girls win D II bracket

Owners of 22-1 record overall (15-1 in league), the Campolindo girls lacrosse team claimed the NCS D II title after taking down No. 7 Bishop O’Dowd, 12-9, on

May 18 in Moraga. For the section winners, this spring marked the first time that the program had locked up the No. 1 seed in NCS.

“One of the key factors to this team’s success has been their adhesiveness and chemistry,” head coach Dave Parker said. “Everyone has made significant contributions to the team’s success.”

The Cougars enjoyed a bye in the opening round, roared past No. 8 Christian Brothers, 16-5, at home on May 12 and beat No. 5 Branson – also in Moraga – 14-7 on May 16, to set up their championship meeting with Bishop O’Dowd.

Parker lauded the strength of the Cougars’ roster, suggesting that if the DAL allowed it, the team could have supplied 10 or 11 All-league players. At season’s end, the team is ranked No. 19 in the state, per MaxPreps.

“The depth throughout our lineup at every position has been possibly our greatest advantage,” Parker said. “At this level, almost every team has at least a couple vulnerable spots on the field, and with the uniformity and consistency of our players’ skills, we’re usually able to identify and expose our opponents’ weaknesses, while most other teams aren’t able to do that against us. Our girls truly put the team first.”

Local honors for SMC rugby champs

By John T. Miller



From left: Kimberleigh Korpus, Teresa Onoda, Holden Yungert and Dave Trotter

Photo John T. Miller

The Town of Moraga honored the Saint Mary’s Gaels Rugby team for winning its third national Division I-A championship in five years at a recent town council meeting. Accepting the proclama-

tion for the team was tournament MVP Holden Yungert, a senior and All-Conference back for the Gaels.

A quartet of juniors, who hope to repeat as champions next year, were also introduced to the council.

They included Peter Walden, Marcus Viscardi, Ethan Waller and Vili Helu. Both Waller and Helu were named to the All-Conference first team.

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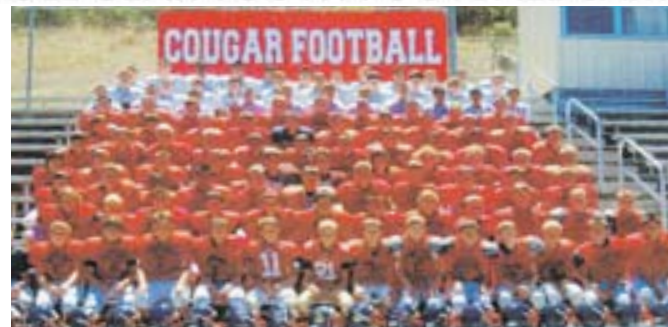
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