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Campolindo boys win NCS Championship in nail-biter

By Jon Kingdon

Photo Will Bergen

If it's possible to say that a 51-50 victory was closer than it looked, it was Campolindo's win over De La Salle in the NCS championship last Friday night.

It all came down to a missed free throw by De La Salle with 0.6 seconds left in the game that was rebounded by Aidan Mahaney that sealed the victory for the Cougars, their 21st straight win and going into the upcoming state tournament with a 27-1 record.

Mahaney led the scoring for Campolindo with 18 points, followed by starting senior Cade Bennett and Justin Yasukochi, who came in off the bench, each scoring 13 points.

Campolindo head coach Steven Dyer was not surprised at how Yasukochi elevated his performance. "Justin knows how to play in big games," Dyer said. "He is experienced and is big shot maker and we have all the confidence in the world going to him, knowing he can step up."

As has often been the case, in their last two games, Campolindo displayed the ability to come from behind in the fourth quarter. "It's both mental and physical toughness," Dyer said. "A lot of the things that we've gone through this year, you can't replicate in practice - trying to close out games, make free throws and holding the ball. The playoffs have shown how good our league was this year. Clayton Valley won the D1 championship, Northgate beat Dublin and Miramonte, as we know, is really good. The top four teams in this league have all been battle tested."

On to the state tournament.

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