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Accolades continue to be bestowed upon Campolindo basketball

By Jon Kingdon

For the second consecutive year, Steven Dyer has been named the Bay Area News Group Coach of the Year alongside Aidan Mahaney who was named the Bay Area's Player of the Year following in the footsteps of his former teammate, Emmanuel Callas, who won the award last year.

Numbers can be deceiving but not for the Campolindo basketball team. This season capped an amazing four-year run for Dyer, Mahaney and the entire Campolindo program with a composite record of 96 and 15. 2021-2022 - Making it to the Open Division state championship semifinals, finishing the season with a 28-2 record. The Cougars' only losses came against Modesto Christian who lost in the California state championship game and to Oak Cliff Faith Family Academy who went on to win the Texas State Championship.

2020-2021 - A 15-0 record in a coronavirus shortened season with a schedule comprised of teams that had a combined 66.7 winning percentage.

2019-2020 - A 26-6 record with a Division I co-state championship due to the cancellation of the final game due to the coronavirus.

2018-2019 - A 27-7 record with a Division II state championship.

Dyer takes great satisfaction in looking back at the successes of his team these past four years: "It's a pretty cool accomplishment. We've had a lot of good players that contributed to that. Our culture has been really strong and looking back on it, it's remarkable what we have accomplished as a public school."

As the personnel and the talent levels evolve each year, things inevitably must change for the coach but there are two things that remain consistent for Dyer's teams. "First and foremost, it's defense," Dyer said. "We've put a huge priority on that. If you can't guard people, then you can't play in our program. Also, looking at our statistics over the last four years, we haven't turned the ball over very much, averaging only between seven and 10 turnovers per game each season. You have a good chance to win the game if you play good defense and don't turn the ball over."

As his players have become so attuned to his system, Dyer has given them more space: "The players have put in the time that has allowed me to be more trusting of them on the court that I was my first couple of years. I've learned that I've had to adapt every year as the coach to the strength of my players because every team is different, and you can't be hard-headed about things."

Dyer also acknowledged the work of his assistant coaches, his brother Chris, Drew McDonald, and James Williams. "Drew has been with me for five years and has been my main assistant," Dyer said. "He does a great job with scouting and film work, working with our post players and is really great with the details of the game and James Williams who came over this year from Acalanes. Spencer McDonald, our JV coach, just completed his third year at Campolindo and has done a great job in preparing the players for the varsity level and freshman coach Nicky Aikawa, in his fourth year, has provided a good foundation for his players." Mahaney led the team with 17.2 points per game, connecting on 61% of his 2-point shots and 38% on his 3-point shots (52% overall), 84% on his foul shots and led the team with 3.7 assists, was second on the team in blocked shots and steals and fifth on the team averaging 3.7 rebounds per game.

As impressive as Mahaney's statistics are, they don't do justice to his overall play. "People like playing with him because he's not a guy that is looking for his own points," Dyer said. "He could have averaged 25 points a game this year if he wanted to. He realized that was not necessarily always the best thing for the team and was really good about sharing the ball this year. You can't get to his level without a lot of hard work and Aidan puts in that work which is something that not everyone knows about him."

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