

St. Monica Spartans 2023 CYO fifth grade boys' National Division Basketball Champions



Photo provided

Standing, from left: coach Craig Pineido, Eytan Brosh, Jackson Freeman, Stanley Martin, Alex Schell, Jason Fok, Thomas McCarthy, Callan Op't Holt, coach Andy Nguyen; seated: A.J. Pineido, Nolan Greenlee, Ryan Nguyen, Ben McCollum and Dalton Winkler

Submitted by Jolie Nguyen

Division Basketball championship through hard work, strategy and strength.

The fifth-grade boys basketball team St. Monica Spartans won the National

Campo defeats Las Lomas to win NCS Championship

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O'Reilly scored 13 points and held Los Lomas' leading scorer, Jake Davis, who was averaging 20 points a game, to 7 points. "Every game this year, Shane has guarded the other team's best player," Dyer said. "I can't say enough about how much he's done defensively this year for us. We probably would have been somewhat lost defensively without him because he takes out the other team's best guys. So huge credit to him because he has been a willing and great defender this year for us."

This was a win that O'Reilly saw as representative of the team's unity. "This team is a special group and we're all in it and play for each other," O'Reilly said. "I feel like I can emphasize this whole season, being together as a unit like the previous Campo teams. We lost a lot of pieces from last year so we knew that we had to be close, and I think that's what separated us from the other teams."

Dyer then took another opportunity to sing the praises of this team: "Nothing has been handed to us. We have a lot of damn good players and I think that people forget that these guys have won a lot of games and it's their turn and they're hungry for it. This year hasn't been perfect, but they've continued to fight and just play the next day."

With a 23-7 record and the NorCal tournament coming up, Dyer's initial game plan is very simple: "We're just going to lock in our principles and play great. We'll share the ball on offense and make sure that we take good shots, and whoever we end up playing, we'll take away their best players on offense."



Shane O'Reilly Photos Will Bergren

For the NorCal tournament, Campolindo received the 13th seed in Division I and will be playing at the fourth seeded Archbishop Riordan High School (S.F.) who finished the season with a 21-6 record, on Feb. 28.

Despite the lower seed, Campolindo defeated Riordan 54-51 in a tournament game Dec. 9, 2022.

Los Lomas was given the No. 1 seed in Division III. "It doesn't make a ton of sense that a team that we beat by one point would be seated essentially 20 spots below us in the state," Dyer said. "Still, I would rather win the NCS and get the harder pass than be somewhere in Division II. We can't control what they give us, so we'll take the challenge."

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