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Campolindo volleyball makes it to NorCal, Acalanes to NCS

By Jon Kingdon



Campolindo's Will Marusich spiking the ball with libero 22 Andrew Hanhan Photo Jon Kingdon

CAMPOLINDO

Having made it to the finals of the NCS tournament and qualifying for the NorCal tournament, sporting a 31-11 record and a 9-1 in league play, Campolindo lost to Rancho Americano 3-0 in the first round. "We struggled to get any traction and before you realized it, we were out," Head Coach David Chen said.

With a 42-game season, David Chen described the season as a journey. "We spent a lot of time with each other to try to find our identity, and I was able to enjoy this one last chapter with all these seniors," Chen said. "I know it wasn't the outcome team we were looking for, but they accomplished a lot."

With nine seniors graduating this year, Chen kept a large squad of underclassmen on the roster. "The reason we had such a large squad was to try and have the underclassmen understand what they will be stepping into next season," Chen said.

The team was led by middle hitter Will Marusich and co-captains Graham Volk and Will Balasi. "It was the pieces of the puzzle that made this team; everybody's personality and everybody's energy," Chen said. "With the camaraderie and the bond, they all really liked each other and even though there were arguments, they really enjoyed spending time with each other and that was special."

Assistant Coach Scott Forney shared that sentiment with the team after the loss to Northridge in the NCS final: "I told them to keep their heads high. We were honored to be playing in the NorCal Championship and that we played like champions and champions hold their heads high."

ACALANES

Playing in a very competitive league along with a difficult non-league schedule, Acalanes finished with an 11-13 record, making it to the semi-finals of the NCS with the fourth seed in Division III, losing 3-0 in the semi-finals to the ultimate champion, Bishop O'Dowd.

"I would definitely say it was a successful season, making it back to the semi-finals like we've done in the past even with the ups and downs that we had throughout with injuries and with illnesses, but it was very positive at the end, and I was happy with the outcome," Head Coach Lexi Hammer said.

Acalanes lost their first game to O'Dowd by a score of 29-27 but faltered at the end, ultimately losing the match 3-0. "We were ahead almost the entire first game, but we just couldn't pull it out," Hammer said. "I was extremely proud of how we played against O'Dowd, and it was an awesome learning experience, especially for the JV kids we brought up for the tournament. We definitely have areas for improvement but it's looking really good leading into next season and the offseason. These boys are dedicated, and they love the game and that's what's going to make a successful program at Acalanes."

This senior class was the first one that Hammer coached when they were sophomores on the JV team. "I'm definitely going to miss all the seniors. For many of them, it was their first time playing because of Covid so there was a special bond with this senior class. They will be moving on to big and amazing things in their adult lives so it's exciting to see that."

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