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Campo Reaches NCS Soccer Finals Acalanes win streak broken

By Marissa Harnett



Goalkeeper Jack Price

"From getting smacked 4-0 by Acalanes in our first league game to the NCS final has been a dream turnaround by a team of hard-working guys who are hungry to prove they belong among the elite teams," said head coach Shane Carney.

To secure its berth in the finals, Campo cruised through its first two rounds of NCS tournament play, but battled hard to win its semi-final match against No. 2 Ygnacio Valley on Feb. 20. The Cougars were down 2-0 at the half. The momentum shift began with just four minutes remaining and their opponent up, 3-1. Sophomore Preston Kilwien drilled a free kick to the top right corner of the net to narrow the gap. Senior Kian Maghsoodnia evened the score during stoppage time sending the game to sudden-death overtime. Campo's Kilwien scored first to end the game, 4-3.

It was a sweet win for the Cougars. "The semifinal [was] the culmination that our mental toughness is finally there," Carney said.

Acalanes' run for the title was not as sweet. The Dons saw their 24-game winning streak broken with their 1-0 loss in the second round, a repeat of last year's outcome.

"It was a very close match and while the Dons seemed to have the better scoring opportunities throughout the match, St. Mary's prevailed with a stout defense and the single tally," said head coach Paul Curtis.

DFAL champions four out of last five years and winner of the Winter Soccer Classic, the Dons have enjoyed a successful season. "While they would have liked to have earned their third title of the season, they walked away from the season with two of the three possible titles," Curtis explained, "A very worthwhile and rewarding season for the Dons."

The quest for the 2012 boys' North Coast Section Division II soccer championship title took an unexpected path. Undefeated in the regular season and the clear favorite, top-seeded Acalanes was upset in round two by No. 8 St. Mary's College High School. The Dons' Lamorinda rival, No. 3 Campolindo, battled to the finals where its journey ended in a 1-0 loss to No. 4 Concord High School Feb. 23.

Campo's run to the NCS finals was quite an accomplishment. "I don't think anyone would have picked us to reach the final coming into this year (our players and coaches included) because of the talent we lost to graduation from last year's team," said head coach Shane Carney.

In the final match, Concord defeated Campo in an evenly matched game. The game's only goal was scored half-way through the first half when the ball came loose in Cougar territory. Concord managed to get past Campo's solid defense and capitalized on the clear shot on an empty net. Unable to convert their own scoring opportunities into goals, the Cougars ran out of time and suffered a tough loss.

Despite the loss, Campo has come far this season.



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