

Published March 11th, 2015

Mats Beat Cougars for NCS Title

By Spencer Silva



Photos Gint Federas

"I think it was our drive to finish, looking at the clock and knowing what needed to get done," Crosetti explained gleefully after the match.

It's fair to say the Matadors (12-3-6) were an underdog heading into the tournament. To reach the final, they had to secure road victories against No. 4 seed Alhambra and No. 1 seed Acalanes.

Their semifinal win in Lafayette over the Dons may have been the most thrilling match of the tournament. Miramonte came from two goals down to force overtime before eventually winning on penalty kicks.

But don't count Miramonte coach Mohamed Mohamed among those surprised by his team's accomplishment.

"The signs were there. We felt we were the most dangerous team coming into the playoffs," he said after the match.

Campolindo (14-6-3) defeated No. 7 seed St. Mary's 2-1 to reach the final. They defeated Las Lomas the year before to win the Division II title and Saturday was their chance to repeat.

The Cougars' best opportunity came in the 47th minute, but forward Annie Midthun's goal was called back after a defensive foul. The Cougars were unable to convert on the set piece.

The "advantage rule" states that a referee should allow play to continue if it's likely to benefit the team being fouled. Therefore, the decision to whistle the play dead was quite controversial. In fact, it may have shifted the momentum of the game.

Campo coach Ernesto Silva expressed his disappointment with the call. "I knew that this would be a game where the difference would maybe be one goal," he said. "That play, if called properly, changes the game."

The Cougars played tough defense throughout, consistently thwarting their opponent in the final third until the game's final minute.

Miramonte graduates just two seniors and they hope to contend for another championship in 2016. For now, however, the Mats will be content to ride the current wave of joy.

Crosetti may have put it best: "It's kind of a dream; I don't feel like it's real. Tomorrow hopefully it will kick in, but right now I'm just really excited."

Miramonte junior Gina Crosetti found the goal she had been looking for all afternoon in the 80th minute of the NCS Division II title. With Crosetti's last-minute goal, No. 5 Miramonte defeated No. 3 seed, defending champion, Campolindo 1-0, securing their first title since 2009.

The winning play started with a deflected ball on the left wing. Moments later, Crosetti was gliding to her right, into the box while sending a game-winning shot past Campo goalkeeper Emily Parish.

Crosetti and teammate Cecilia Gee worked as a tandem all afternoon, nearly creating goals in the 67th and 71st minutes. The first opportunity was a shot from just outside the box that sailed over the crossbar. The second effort was a cross from Gee that nearly found a limb on the far side of the goal.

What was it about that final minute?



Gina Crosetti scored the winning goal for the Mats. Photos Gint Federas



Cecilia Gee was a force for the Mats.



Katharine Nerone celebrating Crosetti's goal.

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

[back](#)

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA