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## Campo Ends Drake's Bid for Perfect Season in NCS Final

By Emily Dugdale



Campolindo celebrates Photos Gint Federas

But the match wasn't an easy win. Cougar freshman Giorgio Alessandria was quick to score in the first seconds of the game, but an early ejection gave Drake the power play they needed to tie the score up. Drake knotted things up again in the fourth quarter with a huge goal, but Campo came back quickly after a Drake ejection with senior Cullen Jacuzzi tipping the ball in for a 5-4 win.

"We've had a lot of ups and downs this season," Price said. "But this is a hell of a team," he continued, gesturing around at his players.

The crowd went wild multiple times throughout the game as Campolindo's goalie Nikhil Suri dazzled with one unbelievable save after another.

"We just went all out tonight," said Suri, proudly displaying his medal with his team after the match. "I'm feeling really great."

During the preseason, the Cougars lost to Drake 14-8. Heading into the final, the Pirates held a perfect 29-0 record.

"We just wanted to take it back from them," Suri said.

The senior goalie was quick to credit his entire team, especially the seniors, for their big win. "It was a team effort all the way," he said.

The match was punctuated by a number of clock issues and unpopular referee calls, which at times had both the audience and coaches up in arms.

"Some of the calls on both sides were a little questionable, and yeah, they did throw me off a little bit," Suri admitted. "But we were able to recover and just play though."

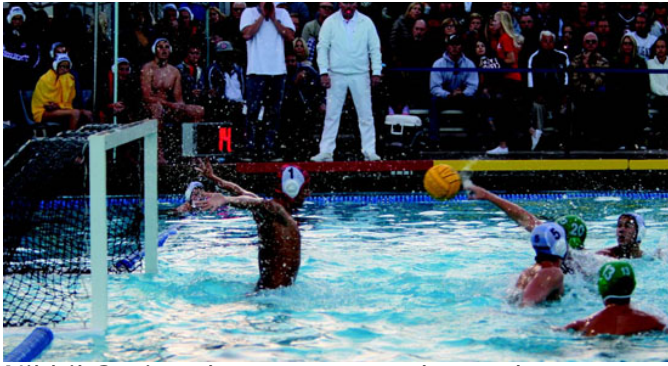
And they did, all the way to the final buzzer.

"You just can't let the guys in white decide the game," Price said.

It was a steal, a mad scramble for a loose ball, and the bleachers erupting as time expired that sealed the deal for the Campolindo Cougars, who beat No. 1 seed Sir Francis Drake (29-1) 5-4 in the North Coast Section Division I boys water polo finals on Saturday night.

The No. 6 seed Cougars (19-9) had to pull off a series of upsets to reach the finals. In the quarterfinals, they barely edged out rival No. 3 Miramonte 10-9 in overtime - the two teams had met in each of the two previous NCS Division I title matches. Then, in the semifinals, they upset No. 2 seed San Ramon Valley, in San Ramon, 7-4, to reach the finals.

"I couldn't be prouder of them," head coach Miles Price said with a wide grin as he and his team were overwhelmed by cheering parents, friends and photographers at the conclusion of the match.



Nikhil Suri makes a spectacular early save



Giorgio Alessandria

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