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## Campo defeats Las Lomas to win NCS Championship; NorCal up next

By Jon Kingdon



Campolindo celebrates NCS victory Photo Jon Kingdon

that had won 10 straight games and our league has really been disrespected by the NCS seeding committee. With us, Las Lomas, and Clayton Valley, it shows how good the top part of our league was."

It was a back-and-forth game with Campolindo leading most of the way. The Cougars led 29-26 at the half and 46-40 after three quarters. Las Lomas took its first lead since early in the first quarter, 47-46 with 1:33 to go in the game. Logan Robeson, who finished with 13 points, had scored the first basket of the game, then scored the last basket of the game on a drive to the rim with 1:06 left to play.

Las Lomas would have three more opportunities to score in and were turned away each time, with Robeson getting the key rebound with 10 seconds left in the game. Las Lomas fouled Campolindo twice and got their final possession with only two seconds left on the clock. Still, they got off a clear shot by Jake Davis from about 45 feet that banged off the back of the rim, as the Campolindo fans let out a collective sigh of relief.

It was a matter of solid defense and toughness according to Dyer. "Our game plan was to be more physical on defense," Dyer said. "Las Lomas outplayed us from the toughness perspective in our second game so we talked a lot about how we couldn't get out toughed. We didn't make any huge scheme adjustments. We just worried about being tough and playing Campo basketball."

Though it was a true team effort, Dyer singled out his three captains, Robeson, Shane O'Reilly and Clay Naffziger for their play on offense and defense. "These three seniors have had a lot of big-time moments," Dyer said. "It was just effort. These guys really want to win, and it took everything for it to get done."

For Robeson, after suffering through two injury-played seasons, the win was particularly special. "I've been through so much to get here and to finally get this win, it just means the world to me," Robeson said.

O'Reilly scored 13 points and held Las 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."

The atmosphere in the Acalanes gym was electric as Campolindo and Las Lomas faced off at this neutral site to determine who would win the North Coast Sectional Championship. With the gym equally divided in Campolindo red and Las Lomas maroon, the respective student bodies standing the entire game and with the gym so crowded, a number of fans were forced to sit in the aisles, it was a game that was destined to come down to a final shot, which it did with Campolindo coming out on top 48-47.

Coming into the game, Campolindo and Las Lomas had played twice with a one-point differential over the two games, with high scoring wins for each team. Campolindo won the first game 85-64 and Las Lomas won the second game 59-39. Campolindo coach Steven Dyer anticipated anything but a blowout game for either team. "I was 100% certain that it was going to be a close game," Dyer said. "Las Lomas is a really good team

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.

Las 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."



Clay Naffziger Photo Will Bergren



Shane O'Reilly Photos Will Bergren

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