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Cougars, Dons Baseball Defend NCS Crowns

By Hunter Hewitt



Photo Gint Federas

with the victory. The trio went 16-0 in the playoffs over four seasons, won four NCS titles and left a legacy that can never be outdone.

"It pretty much speaks for itself," Luckhurst said of the seniors' accomplishments. "Maybe someday someone can match that, but nobody can ever beat that. It's something that is pretty incredible to be able to walk away with."

Acalanes' path to another title was a bit more nerve-racking, but it ended triumphantly with a 4-3 victory over Analy at Saint Mary's College.

In front of a spirited crowd of local supporters, the Dons fought off a late rally in the seventh inning to capture their third straight NCS Division III championship. Senior Tyler Supple went 2-for-4 with two RBIs and senior Andrew Merken pitched a complete game to lead the Dons.

"This is great, especially after losing all the seniors we did," said Acalanes head coach Justin Santich-Hughes, whose team lost six starters from a year before. "We heard the talk that we weren't going to be as good this year, but we knew what we had coming back the whole time. We really believed in these guys and these guys are a great team."

Acalanes may not have made it to the championship game had it not been for a legendary performance on the mound by senior Johnny York in the semifinals on May 29. York threw a perfect game with 15 strikeouts and the Dons defeated Sonoma Valley, 1-0.

"My main focus was to make sure nobody scored at first," York said of his magical night. "Then I narrowed it down to make sure nobody got a hit. Around the third inning is when I started to realize I had a perfect game going, and I didn't want to screw it up."

Despite not pitching in the finals, York was thrilled to be a part of another championship team.

"The team has been solid all season," he said. "We had a great defensive year with good pitching. The batting slumped a little bit at times but we were still able to pull off some wins. It feels great to win another title."

Added Santich-Hughes:

"These guys are every meaning of the word team. They are great group to be around and they always pick each other up. We had some lapses today that we usually don't have, but our guys picked each other up and that's what we've been doing all year. It's been a great ride."

When Campolindo and Acalanes won North Coast Section baseball titles in 2012, both teams were feeling pretty good about themselves. The Cougars had won their third straight championship, while the Dons made it two in a row.

Just imagine how they feel now.

Campolindo and Acalanes defended their titles again on Saturday, winning their respective divisions and continuing their NCS dominance.

Senior Trent Shelton went 4-for-4 with two RBIs and the Cougars secured their fourth-straight NCS Division II title with a commanding 8-0 victory over Terra Linda at Santa Rosa Junior College.

Junior Matt Ladrech pitched seven scoreless innings for Campolindo in what was the team's fourth straight shutout in the playoffs.

"Our pitchers did a great job in the playoffs," Cougars' coach Max Luckhurst said. "Shelton and Ladrech pitched two shutouts each and they were in command of everything. We were able to put everything together."

Fourth-year varsity players Shelton, Robbie Tenerowicz and Brett Stephens capped off amazing careers

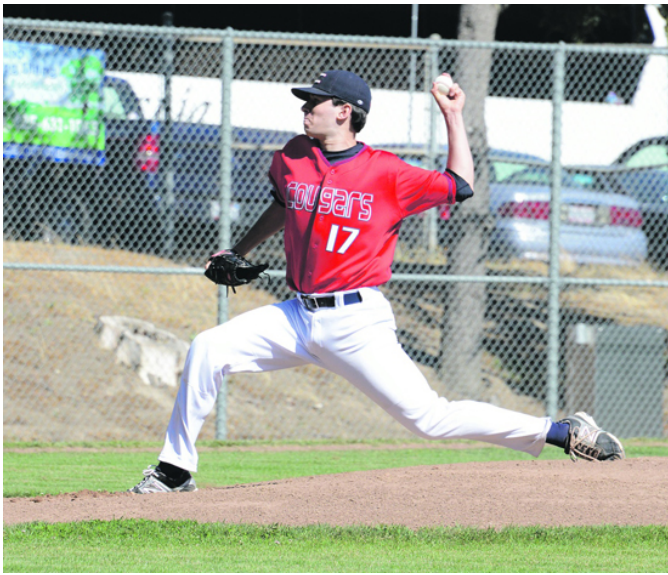


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Johnny York Photo Gint Federas



Andrew Merken pitched a complete game to lead the Dons. Photo Ohlen Alexander



Trent Shelton Photo Ohlen Alexander

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

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