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Campolindo Volleyball Still Perfect

By Brad Kvedaris



Senior Kelley Wirth had 14 kills, including four aces, in the win. Photos Andy Scheck

Campolindo may be the team to beat in DFAL girls' volleyball this year, but anything can happen in a rivalry match with Miramonte. The Matadors didn't disappoint, giving the defending league champs a serious test before falling 3-1, 23-25, 25-14, 25-23, 25-20 in Orinda on Oct. 16.

"I'm very happy with how we played. To go four games with Campo is amazing for my girls, to kind of step out and have that realistic goal, that we can keep up with the Campo team and that style of team," Mats' coach Dave Masdeo said.

Miramonte surprised the Cougars (11-5, 5-0 DFAL) by taking the first set, to delight of the raucous home crowd. The Matadors (8-9, 3-3 DFAL) used scrappy defense and deceptive soft hits to jump out to a five-point lead over the bigger Campo side, then withstood a late Cougars rally to hold on. Team captain Maddie Goodreault scored three of the final six points in the set for the Mats, while fellow senior Kacey Sorenson had the set-winner.

But the lead didn't hold up long, as Campolindo used two timeouts and the break between sets to make adjustments.

"After that (first set), we realized they do a lot of tipping, and we changed our defensive scheme a little bit. We picked up the tip," Cougars' coach John Vuong said.

The Matadors again got out to an early lead in the second set, but this time a methodical Campo squad wore them down. Kelley Wirth (14 kills, 4 aces) and Kirsten Sibley (17 kills, 4 digs) controlled the front line as the Cougars took 17 of the last 23 points to claim the set easily. After squeaking out a tight third game in which the teams were rarely separated by more than two or three points, Campo grabbed control of the fourth set early on and cruised to the win.

While the Cougars are used to seeing Wirth turn in impressive performances, this time they also got big contributions from a pair of sophomore front-line players in Sibley and Emma Johnson (9 kills). The two underclassmen - who Johnson says are also best friends off the court - weren't in for every play, but when they were on the floor together, they gave the Matadors fits with their size (Johnson stands 5-10, Sibley 6-2).

"I think (our friendship) helps on the court - we can be really comfortable with each other, help each other out, tell each other where to hit," Johnson said. "(Sibley) helps me a lot with the blocks, tells me when to go up. We've definitely gotten closer through volleyball because we've been through more things together... and that's made us even better on the court together, and it benefits the team."

Miramonte and Campo were coming off vastly different stretches in the week leading up to the match, which featured a school holiday on Monday. The Cougars hadn't played in a long time, with a bye the previous week and several players out of town visiting colleges over the long weekend. The Matadors had played eight matches in five days, including two league contests that went the full five sets, and a five-game weekend tournament. While Masdeo acknowledged that his team was "on the tired side, kind of drained emotionally and physically" by the end of Tuesday night, he was pleased with the progress they'd made.

On Oct. 17, Campolindo defeated Las Lomas in four sets Thursday to stay perfect in league play, 25-15, 25-23, 27-29, 25-20. Kenzie Brown recorded 33 assists to go along with the 52 she had against Miramonte, and Natalie Menitkas had 22 digs. Wirth and Sibley led the Cougars with 19 and 13 kills, respectively.

Acalanes fought through injuries to starters Molly Dalziel and Ying Stroebe to split a pair of league matches against Dougherty Valley (L, 3-2) and Alhambra (W, 3-0). The Dons improved to 10-9 overall and 5-2 in league play to claim sole possession of second place in the DFAL. They also took fifth place in the Dougherty Valley Varsity Tournament the previous weekend, losing to Carondelet, once in the group stage and again in the knockout rounds.



Sophomore Kirsten Sibley led the Cougars with 17 kills and four digs.



Senior Kacey Sorenson had the set-winner for the Mats.



Senior captain Maddie Goodreault scored three of the final six points in the first set to give the Mats the win.

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