

CCCAA 2009 WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Day 3, Sunday, December 6

at San Joaquin Delta College, Stockton

MATCHES 14 & 15

Match 14:

S1 Orange Coast d. S2 Cypress, 3-1 (25-20, 25-21, 25-23, 25-21);

(If necessary) Match 15:

S1 Orange Coast def. S2 Cypress, 1-0 (25-16)

Records: Orange Coast 26-3, Cypress 24-6

OCC wins sixth state championship, Cypress' highest finish at Final 8

RECAP: It took nearly 400 miles of travel for Sunday's three teams to decide something which couldn't be decided in Orange County.

The Orange Coast College (OCC) Pirates became the third team in as many seasons to come out of the loser's bracket and win the California Community College Athletic Association (CCCAA) Women's Volleyball Championship in Joe Blanchard Gym at San Joaquin Delta College.

OCC, which tied the Cypress College Chargers for the Orange Empire Conference (OEC) championship with 12-2 OEC records, posted a solid 3-1 victory in match #14 to give their Chargers their first loss in the tournament, forcing a very necessary "if game."

From there, OCC – the No. 1 seed from the South (originally #5) -- continued its torrid pace and won, 25-16, to claim its sixth state title. The Pirates also won in 1978, '80, '82, 2005 and '06.

Cypress (the No. 2 seed from the South), which tied for fifth place in 2004, posted its highest finish, notching second place this season.

In match 14, with the teams at one game (set) apiece, OCC and Cypress engaged in 15 tie scores and six lead changes in a pivotal game 3.

Sophomore opposite hitter Karlee Skalla (Green Valley HS, NV) hammered down six kills in game 3, while sophomore outside hitter Rachel Freeno (Alta Loma HS) shoveled up 9 digs. Skalla came up with timely kills to keep the scoring margin close at 20-19 before sophomore hitter Briana Fields (Edison HS) nailed kills for points 24 and 25.

Late in game 4, it was more of the same for OCC: "killing" Fields and Skalla as each had 5 kills. Cypress last led at 15-13, before a pair of crushes by Fields gave OCC a 19-18 lead. Three Cypress attack errors closed out the OCC scoring.

In the "if necessary" game (aka match 15), Cypress led 5-2 and 10-8, before a pair of service aces by Fields eventually gave OCC a 12-10 lead from which it was never headed.

With OCC leading 19-14, sophomore outside hitter Poerava Gantt (Kapaa HS, Hawai'i) logged kills for points 22 and 25, ending the match.

In OEC action, each team won in 5 games on the other team's home court. In a bit of a coincidence, it also took five games to decide the state championship (in matches 14 and 15 combined).

In match 14, Skalla led the Pirates with 15 kills, while Fields had 14 and Gantt had 12. Sophomore libero Nikki Osuna (Los Alamitos HS) had 24 digs and Freeno had 22 digs. Freshman setter Kimya Jafroudi (Huntington Beach HS) doled out 52 assists. For Cypress, sophomore outside hitter Marina Samoa (Jordan HS, Long Beach) had a match-high 25 kills and also added 21 digs. Sophomore outside hitter Katie Saavedra (St. Paul HS) added 12 kills and a team-high 23 digs.

Freshman setter Giajaida Vargas (Katella HS) had 53 assists and 13 digs and freshman defensive specialist Madison Moss (Lakewood HS) had 17 digs.

In the “if necessary” game 15, OCC’s Gantt and Fields each had 5 kills, Freeno had 9 digs, Osuna had 7 digs and Jafroudi had 14 assists to pace the Pirates.

Quotebook: OCC head coach Chuck Cutenese said, “Our strength was that we served aggressively. (Middle blocker) Brianna Fields showed strength up front and did what she was supposed to do. Volleyball has such momentum, and with momentum comes confidence. Going through Irvine Valley and Cypress to get to the trophy is a tough achievement. The key was utilizing our bench and play defense.” It was OCC’s and Cutenese’s third state title in the last four seasons.

Cypress head coach Nancy Welliver, who also finished second in the state tournament with Fullerton in 1996, said: “Orange Coast came out on fire. Their (the Pirates) defense was better and they were serving bullets. I’m proud of the whole team. We didn’t play bad, Orange Coast played great.

2009 all-tournament team:

Orange Coast: Kimya Jafroudi (MVP), Poerava Gantt, Nikki Osuna, Karlee Skalla;

Cypress: Katie Saavedra, Marina Samoa, Giajaida Vargas;

Irvine Valley: Nichole May, Allie Hammer, Katie Wilkerson;

Sierra: Corinna Farris;

Sacramento City: Alex Tkachuk