

Hyundai California Community College Men's Volleyball Championship Presented by VolleyballOne

SATURDAY, APRIL 28 at Long Beach City College

Pierce def. Orange Coast, 25-16, 25-23, 21-25, 29-27

Outstanding Player: Dhiraj Coates (Pierce)

All-Tournament Team: Coates, Dave Kniffin (Pierce), Casey Rosdail (Pierce), B.J. Lightvoet (Orange Coast), Nic (Orange Coast), Donal McGraw (Santa Barbara City), Tamer George (El Camino)

Los Angeles Pierce won its second consecutive California Community College Men's Volleyball Championship here by defeating Orange Coast in the championship match by scores of 25-16, 25-23, 21-25, and 29-27. The Brahmas completed a perfect 19-0 campaign, handing the Pirates (21-2) their only two losses of the year along the way.

The Brahmas, who lost in the state championship match in 1999, defeated Golden West in five games last April to win the title. Their five titles overall tie them with Orange Coast and Golden West for the most all-time. In fact, that trio of schools has accounted for 15 of the 16 state titles since 1986.

Pierce was dominant in the first two games, allowing the Pirates to score just five points on serve in the two games. The Brahmas took leads of 5-1 and 9-2 in the first game, then played sideout volleyball the rest of the way, Orange Coast won 18-14 before the Brahmas turned things up a notch and closed out a 25-16 win.

The second game saw the lead seesaw nearly all the way through, with neither team ever leading by more than two points. Pierce scored three straight points to go up 17-16, then after 12 consecutive sideouts, got a kill from tournament MVP Dhiraj Coates up 24-22. After the Pirates earned a side out, Steve Foote put down a kill to finish off the game at 25-23.

Orange Coast came up big late in game three, breaking a 16-16 tie with five consecutive points, the final three on kills. They traded sideouts the rest of the way and won 25-21 to force a fourth game.

The Pirates enjoyed the better of the slim leads in the fourth game, despite never leading by more than three points. Dhiraj Coates gave in, though, going on a 5-1 run to go up 17-16. Orange Coast took a two-point lead at 23-21, only to see Case Brandon Butchart pound out back-to-back kills to tie it back up. From that point, it was just a matter of which team hit first, and hitting errors by the Pirates' B.J. Lightvoet on consecutive points accounted for the final two points of the game.

Butchart led a balanced Pierce attack with 15 kills. Foote added 14 kills and six blocks from his middle blocker spot. He had 13 kills in the title match. Kniffin dished off 52 assists in a very impressive performance.

For the Pirates, Lightvoet led the way with a match-best 18 kills. Jeff Taylor added 14 kills and Soren Schneider 13 kills. Nick Ptaschinski had 50 assists for Orange Coast. The Pirates also got a strong performance off the bench from Jackson. The reserve middle blocker did not play in Friday's semifinal or in game one tonight, but came up with four blocks.

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