



2005 California Community Colleges Commission on Athletics

Men's Volleyball Championships Moorpark (CA) College

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Championship Final: Moorpark, 3-2, Palomar (20-25, 25-17, 25-18, 23-25, 15-10)

MOORPARK, CA – Utilizing excellent ball-control, the Moorpark College Raiders – in only their fourth season of existence – won their first California Community Colleges Commission on Athletics Men's Volleyball Championship with a 3-2 win over the Palomar College Comets Saturday at Raider Pavilion on the campus of Moorpark College.

In a match where the teams combined for three games with hitting percentages of zero, Moorpark (14-4) persevered and won 20-25, 25-17, 25-18, 23-25, 15-10.

Palomar (12-6) started out fast with its best hitting game (.423) of the match in game one when it registered 16 kills and only five attack errors as outside hitter Erik Joller (Rancho Bernardo H.S.) and middle blocker Jonathon Girten (Mt. Carmel H.S.) each logged six kills to get the Orange Empire Conference (OEC) champions (at 8-2) off on the right track.

The Raiders, one of four Western State Conference (WSC) regular season champions along with Santa Barbara City College, Long Beach City College and Santa Monica College at 7-3, did an about-face in games two and three as they combined for 25 kills and a hitting percentage of .387 with freshman outside hitter Sean Sharpe (Moorpark H.S.) collecting eight of his team-high 15 kills.

Moorpark led, 16-13, in game four. Palomar promptly called time out and went on a 6-0 run to get back into the game and lead 19-16. Moorpark eventually retook the lead at 23-22 before sophomore opposite hitter Kevin McColloch (La Costa Canyon H.S.) knocked down one of his 13 kills in the match to tie it at 23. With McColloch serving, Girten hammered home a pair of his 16 kills – with sophomore setter Nick Rubacky (Poway H.S.) doling out three of his match-high 56 assists – to get the Comets even.

With Billy Joel's "Pressure" blaring through the public address system prior to game five, the stage was set for an exciting game five.

An in that all-important game five, neither team hit well, but when a team like Palomar hits zero for the game, that spells trouble.

Down, 0-2, Moorpark bounced back to lead 7-3 and 12-7 before Palomar called timeout. The Comets crept to within 13-10 before sophomore outside hitter/middle blocker Virgil Ecoffey (Channel Islands H.S.) one of his 12 kills for point No. 14. McColloch – arguably had a difficult match – had his 12th and final attack error (to go along with 13 kills) come as a result of a solo block by freshman opposite hitter Luke Moffatt (Royal H.S.) to end the match and let the celebration begin.

"This is why we started the program," said an elated Moorpark College head coach Steve Burkhart, who is in his first year of coaching the men's team. "We came into the season with good ball control and our 15 guys got better every day."

Sophomore setter Jeremy Scharf (Royal H.S.) logged 40 assists and freshman libero Logan Redlin (Royal H.S.) had 14 digs for Moorpark (14-4) which became the first host to win the state championship since 1986 when Los Angeles Pierce won the first of its unprecedented seven state crowns.

Joller finished with a match-high 20 kills as Palomar was also seeking its first state crown and was making its first trip to the state final since 1995 and is the only San Diego-area program to reach the state final.

"We're a power team and when our passing broke down, that was it," said first-year Palomar head coach Alan Ursillo. "Moorpark is the best ball-control team we've seen all year."

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