



COA Women's Volleyball Championship

**December 9-11, 2005
Selland Arena, Fresno, CA**

**An official event of the 2005-06
COA Championship Festival
presented by US Bank**

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA REGIONALS

Regional seeding doesn't guarantee a team's advancement in the postseason. The North region exemplified why matches as there were three upsets out of four matches in the Northern Regional women's volleyball finals Saturday.

Only No. 1 seed and state No. 2 ranked San Joaquin Delta survived among the top four seeds to advance to the Community Colleges Commission on Athletics Women's Volleyball Championships Presented by U.S. Bank Dec. 9-11 at Selland Arena.

The other top seeds, No. 2 Sacramento City, No. 3 Butte and No. 4 Taft were knocked off at their home sites. Ironically, three teams were participants in last year's State Final Eight. Joining Delta in Fresno this week will be No. 5 seed and No. 6 seed San Jose City and No. 10 seed Fresno City.

Delta, the Big 7 Conference champions, improved to 22-1 with an easy win over fellow conference foe and 8th seed Sacramento City, 30-17, 30-16, 30-15. The Mustangs were paced by Kim Sordello with 12 kills, Breanne Zelmer with 11 kills and 3 blocks, and Frances Sandor, who had 8 kills and 3 blocks. Setter Hillary Rasmussen contributed 39 assists and Ashley Hullens. Santa Rosa finished at 15-9.

Fresno (20-6) was 20th ranked in the state coming into its match v. 6th-rated Sacramento. The Rams fell behind but made a valiant comeback to win in a five-game thriller, 19-30, 24-30, 37-35, 30-27, 15-12. The second-place team in the Central Valley Conference, Fresno placed four players in double figures in kills as Jamie-Rose Walberg tallied 13, Lauren Storey 12, and Megan Roehl 11. Michelle Gutierrez scored 38 digs and setter Kaira Kachardurian volleyed.

Sacramento, the only team to beat Delta in the regular season, saw its season end at 23-4.

San Jose leads the state in most best-of-5 match victories and the Co-Coast Conference South Division champion 26-3 by sweeping state No. 7-ranked Butte, 30-27, 30-27, 30-27. The Jaguars were ranked No. 10 in the state and non-conference matches with the Roadrunners in the regular season. Leading San Jose were Ashley Madrigal with 13 kills and Nicole Payne with 13. Butte (21-4), the Golden Valley Conference champion, was led by All-State setter Kayla Corcoran with 13 assists and Natasha Marquis with 14 kills.

West Valley, the other Co-Coast South champs, had bounced around the state poll all season and despite a No. 1 seed and No. 5 seeding, it advanced to the State Final Eight by defeating 12th-ranked Taft in four games, 27-30, 30-17, 30-27. The Vikings had suffered through injuries, but were hot over the final weeks of the season and improved their record to 22-3. Central Valley champions, will not make a return to the State Tournament after its first trip last year. Taft finished third.

With a guarantee of a new state champion this year as 12-time defending winner Golden West was eliminated in the Regionals first round, the North region may have its best shot at winning a state title. Since the State Tournament began, no North team has ever won the state crown. There have been eight second place finishes.

Delta has an impressive run of finishing in third place or higher in each of the last six years, including a second place finish in 2004.

West Valley placed tied for third in 2003, but that was when the tourney was limited to four teams and single-elimination. That year's statewide budget crisis. Fresno returns to the tourney for the first time since 2002. San Jose makes its first State Tournament appearance.

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