

CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION
2007 STATE WATER POLO CHAMPIONSHIPS
11/15/06 at Central East High School, Fresno, CA
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Fresno, CA (November 15, 2007)- The California Community College Athletic Association will host its Men and Women's Water Polo Championships this weekend at Fresno Central East High School. The championships will run for three days with the title games taking place on Sunday. Both the Northern Region and the Southern Region have sent three teams to compete for the championship in each gender division. On Friday the opening round for the men will take place with six games as the teams have been split into two pools and all teams will play two games. The top seed from the South is Golden West College of Huntington Beach and West Valley College of Saratoga earned the top seed from the North. The men will not play on Saturday, that day is reserved for the women to play their opening round. They will follow the same format as the men and each team will play two games. Riverside College from the South and American River College of Sacramento represent the top two seeds in the women's bracket. On Sunday the top two teams in each of the men and women's brackets will play in the championship game and the second place teams in each bracket will play for third place. Below are the brackets and a quick breakdown.

Men's Brackets
A1 - Golden West
A2 - Santa Rosa
A3 - American River

Women's Brackets
A1 - Riverside
A2 - Santa Rosa
A3 - Fresno

B1 - West Valley
B2 - Cuesta
B3 - Riverside

B1 - American River
B2 - Long Beach
B3 - Chaffey

Pools: A = South 1, North 2, North 3; B = North 1, South 2, South 3

Friday Men's Game Schedule:

8:00am Golden West vs American River
9:20am West Valley vs Riverside
12:00pm Santa Rosa vs American River
1:20pm Cuesta vs Riverside
4:00pm Golden West vs Santa Rosa
5:20pm West Valley vs Cuesta

Saturday Women's Game Schedule:

8:00am Riverside vs Fresno
9:20am American River vs Chaffey
12:00pm Santa Rosa vs Fresno
1:20pm Long Beach vs Chaffey
4:00pm Riverside vs Santa Rosa
5:20pm American River vs Long Beach

Sunday Game Schedule:

10:30am 2nd A vs 2nd B - 3rd PLACE
11:45am 2nd A vs 2nd B - 3rd PLACE
1:00pm 1st A vs 1st B - CHAMPION
2:15pm 1st A vs 1st B - CHAMPION

FRIDAY'S GAMES

Men's "A" Pool

#1 South GOLDEN WEST: The Rustlers are the most storied team in Community College Water Polo. They are undefeated this season against community college competition and are favored to win the program's 20th State Title. The Rustlers have played only three games this season in which the opposition has come within three goals of a victory. Two of those games were against the top seed from the North, West Valley. Golden West has also endured a four-season title drought, the program's longest title-less streak since they won their first title in 1976. The Rustlers are 30-3 this season with their losses coming against NCAA schools- Long Beach State, UC Santa Barbara and Pepperdine. SoCal MVP Mike Dick heads a gang of four All American that will lead the title charge.

#2 North SANTA ROSA: The Bear Cubs are back in the State Tournament for the second straight year and for the second time in the program's twenty-five year history. Last year they were the top seed from the North, but lost twice on the first day and were sent home. The Bear Cubs are 30-6-1 this season and although they haven't played Golden West this season they do own two wins over bracket mate American River. Two-time All American Joey Gullikson along with All Americans Lance Morrison and Todd Hazen will lead the charge for the Bear Cubs.

#3 North AMERICAN RIVER: The Beavers at 14-11 might not have the most impressive record, but they earned their place at the State Championship with a 12-11 win over Cabrillo at the Northern California Regional Championships. This is the Beavers first trip to the State Championships and they will get a shot at playing on Sunday if they can finally overcome Santa Rosa, who beat them for the Big 8 title and in the NorCal semi-final. All Americans Rory Collinwood and Marton-Arnold Toth lead the Beavers.

Men's "B" Pool

#1 North WEST VALLEY: The Vikings are the only team from Northern California to play in the State Title game since DeAnza lost to Golden West in the 1978 title game thirty years ago. The Vikings haven't rolled over either. They have won six State Titles and played in 13 State Title games. The Vikings are loaded with four All Americans in their line-up, including NorCal MVP Fabian Wanrooji. They are 2-1 against Cuesta, but they beat Riverside by ten in their only meeting with the Tigers.

#2 South CUESTA: The Cougars have beaten each of the teams in their pool once this season, however they have also lost to both of them twice. The Cougars, who are 27-9, are making their seventh trip to the State Championships and they hope to build off of last year's third place finish. West Valley beat Cuesta 12-6 and 10-4 in their first two meetings, but three weeks ago the Cougars turned the tables and posted an 8-2 win over the NorCal powerhouse. On the other hand the Cougars beat Riverside, 7-6 in overtime, the first time they met and then lost their next two meetings 16-11 and 9-8. Two-time All Americans Bryan Buhagiar and Ian Starkie lead a roster that includes ten players making their second trip to the State Tournament. The Cougars are the de facto home team this weekend with ten players on the roster from the Fresno area.

#3 South RIVERSIDE: The Tigers' loss to Orange Coast in the Orange Empire Conference Championships landed them in third place in the loop and forced them into a lower seed behind Cuesta, who they beat twice. They will have the toughest card for Friday with the least amount of rest between their games with West Valley and Cuesta. The Tigers are 20-12 this season and are led by All American Srđan Milic, who eclipsed the century mark with 103 goals during the regular season. All American Goaltender Jesse Owens will handle the defense.

SATURDAY'S GAMES

Women's "A" Pool

#1 South RIVERSIDE: The Tigers are 32-0 and only played two games that were within five goals. Then Bengals domination has been so complete that only five times this year has an opponent been able to score more than five goals and in only one of their games have the Tigers failed to reach double digits in scoring. They are led by 2007 SoCal co-MVP's Melissa de Jonckheere and Jennifer Grutz and last year's SoCal MVP Jessica McLaughlin. It may be a little early to hand them the title, but it would be a good idea to get your speech ready. The Tigers have played in each of the last three title games and won in 2005.

#2 North SANTA ROSA: The Bear Cubs make their first trip to the State Tournament after posting a 21-6 record. The Bear Cubs lost three of their games against American River and own a win over Fresno, but they have not faced Riverside this season. All Americans Mandy King and Melissa Loper will lead them in their attempt to upset Riverside and in their rematch with the Rams.

#3 North FRESNO: The Rams are the hometown favorite as they make their second straight trip to the State Finals in the only the program's fifth season of existence. The Rams squeaked into the State Tournament after beating Delta in a minor first round upset at the NorCal Championships and then received the benefit of a major upset when Foothill knocked off Modesto in the first round. Modesto had beaten the Rams twice this year, however Fresno was able to qualify for the State Tournament with a 9-0 blanking of Foothill. All American Alyson Moss leads the Rams.

Women's "B" Pool

#1 North AMERICAN RIVER: The Beavers are 23-5 and their 13-9 loss to Riverside on September 14th remains the closest that any team has gotten to the Tigers. Of course, the Tigers later beat them 18-4 and 14-4. The Beavers need to get out of their bracket to keep the Northern California Region relevant to Community College Water Polo. There has not been a Northern California team in the title game since 1996, the first year of women's water polo in the CCCAA. NorCal MVP Anne Scott and fellow repeat All Americans Ali Pierce and Rochelle Yomogida lead an experienced and talented Beavers squad.

#2 South LONG BEACH: The Vikings beat the Beavers, 10-9, in their only meeting this season and at 33-5 they have been favored to reach the title game most of the season. The defending State Champions have played in the last five State Championship Games and won three of those games. This was a team built for the playoffs and is led by All American Calli Manderino. She leads an explosive offense and a roster that can slow it down if needed. The Vikings are the only team to hold Riverside under ten goals in game; of course they also lost 8-2.

#3 South CHAFFEY: The Panthers are 27-13 this season and have played more games than any team in the State. Fortune smiled on the Panthers when they overcame a loss to Pasadena in the South Coast Conference Tournament and then beat out higher seeded teams like Santa Ana and Cerritos to reach the State Tournament. Coach Jim Dopf is in his fifth season at Chaffey and trying to reach his first State Title game with the Panthers. He lost three title games when he coached at Riverside in 1999, 2000 and 2001. All Americans Gaby Rivera, Sarah Woods and Melissa McKown lead the Chaffey attack.