

SAN DIEGO CITY COLLEGE CAPTURES BADMINTON TITLE

PASADENA, CA—San Diego City College kept up the dominance of the Orange Empire Conference as the Knights made it seven consecutive state badminton crowns from the OEC with a 17-4 victory over City College of San Francisco Thursday in the California Community Colleges Commission on Athletics Women's Badminton Championships presented by U.S. Bank. The team finals match was played at Pasadena City College's Hutto-Patterson Gymnasium.

San Diego finished the season undefeated at 12-0 and became only the third college to win a badminton title since the sport joined the intercollegiate ranks in 2000. OEC champions Irvine Valley (2002-2005) and San Diego Mesa (2000-2001) had won the previous six championships.

SDCC came a long way to capture the championship under first-year head coach Son Nguyen. Two years ago, the college didn't field a team. Last season, San Diego placed second behind Irvine Valley as Nguyen joined the program as an assistant coach.

Against San Francisco, the Knights found their strength to be their Nos. 3 and 4 seed players, Cecilia Do and Anh Le. At No. 3 on the ladder, Do swept her singles matches over CCSF's Sarah Dorsey, 11-0, 11-4, and Jennifer To, 11-2, 11-3, while No. 4 Le had a relatively easy time with Dorsey, 11-3, 11-2, and To, 11-2, 11-1.

San Diego's top player and sophomore Lai Nguyen battled to win her match against No. 1 Rams player Maggie Choy, 11-9, 7-11, 11-5, after beating San Francisco No. 2 Michelle Li, 11-2, 11-6 in the first round.

"Irvine Valley was the best team we had faced in conference play," Coach Nguyen said. "The difference with San Francisco was that their top players were good and so were their bottom players. Fortunately, we had the depth in the middle part of the ladder to control the match."

San Francisco (9-1) had several competitive matches, including a thriller win in No. 3 doubles as the team of Shannon Cho and Joan Chang outlasted San Diego's Jessenia Peralta and Ana Lozano, 17-14, 14-17, 15-12.

"We had an all freshman team and I told the players that playing hard and being competitive is all we can ask. I was pleased with our performance," said San Francisco Coach Mike Parodi.

"Our No. 5 player Cho was our No. 1 at the start of the season and then she lost her confidence. She won both her singles today and I think this might have turned a corner for her. This team got a taste of what it's like to play in a championship match."

Cho was outstanding in being part of all four of CCSF's points, including two sweeps in singles and the doubles victory.

Nguyen talked about his ladder: "Our top four players (Lai, Jenny Chau, Do, and Le) are all about the same level of play. Ana played her heart out today as did Lai. They really wanted to win."

BOX SCORE---SAN DIEGO CITY 17, CC SAN FRANCISCO 4

SINGLES—Lai Nguyen (SDCC) d. Maggie Choy (CCSF), 11-9, 7-11, 11-5; Nguyen d. Michelle Li (CCSF), 11-2, 11-6; Jenny Chau (SDCC) lost to Choy, 13-12, 11-6; Chau d. Li, 11-2, 11-4; Cecilia Do (SDCC) d. Sarah Dorsey (CCSF), 11-0, 11-4; Do d. Jennifer To (CCSF), 11-2, 11-3; Anh Le (SDCC) d. Dorsey, 11-3, 11-2; Le d. To, 11-2, 11-1; Jessenia Peralta (SDCC) lost to Shannon Cho (CCSF), 11-6, 11-1; Peralta d. Joan Chang (CCSF), 11-6, 11-5; Ana Lozano (SDCC) lost to Cho, 11-6, 11-2; Lozano d. Chang, 3-11, 11-2, 11-4.

DOUBLES—Chau-Do d. Choy-Li, 15-5, 15-9; Chau-Do d. Dorsey-To, 15-4, 15-2; Nguyen-Le d. Choy-Li, 15-13, 15-12; Nguyen-Le d. Dorsey-To, 15-3, 15-3; Peralta-Lozano lost to Cho-Chang, 17-14, 14-17, 15-12.