

# Varsity Girls Win State Volleyball Title!



December 2007

It was a thrilling season! Our Girls Varsity Volleyball team, made up of 10 players from a total high school population of just 32 girls, pulled off a most improbable victory. On December 1, 2007 the team won the CIF State Division V Championship in just three decisive games in front of a boisterous crowd of 500 fans at the San Jose State Events Center.

Led by Hawks Coach Gabby Houston Neville the girls won every title possible along the way, including being named the CIF Academic State Champions for best collective grade point average for a varsity team. Oh, and Coach Gabby also picked up the SCCAL 'Coach of the Year' award.



State Championship Team!



Central Coast Section Champs and their Fans!

How did they do it? Teamwork, focus and very hard work. "There were no individuals or heroes on this team," explained Gabby. "This win wasn't because of one person," elaborated Outside Hitter Hannah Meade. "Most of our team has been playing together since the sixth grade, and we play like a family." In the press conference after the match the girls stressed that their success was a team accomplishment where every player mattered.

Focus was another skill the team successfully honed. "Our team is gritty and tenacious," Coach Gabby was quoted as saying, "but we play calm and relaxed

and focused. They are great about staying in the present and they don't get distracted by crowds, the score or the other team."

Hard work and brain-power also contributed to team success. Throughout the season the girls practiced or played at least 5 days/week, often for several hours. On the court the players constantly analyzed their options and used their athletic acumen to strategically place the ball. "I want to be the best all-around player that I can," Outside Hitter Alexa Rosendale explained. "I just try to be smart and pay attention to what's around me."

In January the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors, invited the team to a Supervisors meeting to be honored for their accomplishments. “I’ve been following their progress and hoping that this little school with big talent would shake up the rest of the state,” Supervisor Ellen Pirie commented. “Everything I hear about the team members is great—their academics, their work ethic and their concern for others. I am very impressed and very proud.”

Additionally honors were bestowed on the team and the school by Californian Assemblyman John Laird and a proclamation read into the Congressional record by Congressmen Sam Farr and Mike Honda saying in part, “Let it be said that throughout this season they showed the character, determination, sportsmanship, and mental and physical resilience of true champions...I have long admired the students and teachers at Mount Madonna School and second year Coach Gabrielle Houston Neville and Athletic Director Sidd McDonald. They are testaments to the dedicated and exceptional staff that nurtures these future leaders.”



Congratulations Hawks! As the Congressional proclamation concluded, “May this mark the beginning of future successes.”