

SPORTS

■ CIF-SS Girls' Basketball Playoffs

Rebels Win Semifinal; FSHA, Mayfield Eliminated

The Flintridge Prep varsity girls' basketball team made history by defeating visiting Village Christian of Sun Valley, 37-27, in the CIF-Southern Section Division 5AA semifinals last Saturday.

The Rebels punched their ticket to the CIF championship game for only the second time in the program's history.

Taylor Yoshida and Natalie Rozman led No. 4-seeded Flintridge Prep with nine points each, and senior standout Tala Ismail netted four points and grabbed five rebounds.

Coaches Kevin Kiyomura and Jayme Chan entered the game having lost two semifinal contests in 2013 and 2015, but their players managed to help them get over the hump on Saturday.

The Rebels will take on Mission Prep of San Luis Obispo for the CIF-SS Division 5AA championship this Saturday, March 5, at Godinez High School in Santa Ana. The game is scheduled to begin at 4 p.m.

**Fullerton Rosary Academy 53
Flintridge Sacred Heart 40**

The Tologs' season came to an end as they fell to host Fullerton

Rosary Academy, 53-40, in the CIF-SS Division 4AA quarterfinals last week.

Seniors Kelly Fradet and Casey Johnson led Flintridge Sacred Heart with 12 points each, and Jenna Tran added seven points.

Head coach Ty Buxman guided Flintridge Sacred Heart to a 21-8 record. The Tologs finished second in the Sunshine League with a 6-2 record and reached the CIF quarterfinals for the first time since 2011.

**Long Beach St. Anthony 85
Mayfield Senior 46**

The Cubs were unable to keep up with top-seeded St. Anthony of Long Beach and fell, 85-46, in the CIF-SS Division 4A quarterfinals last week.

Head coach Kevin Yamamoto guided Mayfield Senior to one of its best seasons in recent memory. The Cubs (16-7 overall record) finished second in Prep League play with a 9-3 record. Mayfield defeated St. Mary's Academy of Inglewood and Lancaster Paraclete in the first two rounds of the postseason before falling to St. Anthony.



Photo courtesy John Blackstock

Casey Johnson scored 12 points in the Tologs' 53-40 loss at Fullerton Rosary Academy in a CIF-SS Division 4AA quarterfinal last week. Flintridge Sacred Heart finished the season with a 21-8 record.

■ CIF-SS Boys' Basketball Playoffs

Lancers Edge Campbell Hall in Semis



Photo courtesy John Blackstock

The La Salle High School varsity boys' basketball team celebrates its thrilling victory over North Hollywood Campbell Hall in the CIF-SS Division 4A semifinals last Friday. The Lancers' 69-68 win earned them a trip to the championship game for the first time since 1962.

**By Nick Ostiller
The Outlook**

For the first time in more than a half-century, the La Salle High School varsity boys' basketball team has earned a trip to the CIF-Southern Section championship game.

Thanks to hot shooting from junior Johnny Knox, passionate hustle from junior AJ Acobian and timely playmaking from senior Christian Oyie-Little, the Lancers were able to escape with a 69-68 win over North Hollywood Campbell Hall during the Division 4AA semifinal in a raucous Duffy Lewis Gymnasium last Friday night.

"I'm elated," said La Salle's first-year head coach Mike Lynch. "I'm not happy, I'm elated. For this program to get a jump-start this way is just God. I don't know how to put it any other way. ... These guys just started believing and they made it happen."

It almost didn't happen, though. The visiting Vikings had an opportunity to steal the game in the closing seconds, but senior Jordan Cohen's driving layup rimmed out at the buzzer, preserving the Lancers' one-point victory as the home crowd collectively exhaled before storming the court.

"It's insane to have this much support," Acobian said amid the boisterous celebration minutes later. "This is the best thing ever. I'm on top of the world right now."

With the win, La Salle (25-7 overall record, 8-2 in the Camino Real League) punched its ticket to Friday's matchup against Calabasas Viewpoint High School, the Lancers' first appearance in a championship game since 1962. Tipoff is scheduled for 6:45 p.m. at Santa Ana Godinez High School.

After La Salle took a 69-63 lead on Oyie-Little's free throw with 21

seconds remaining, the Lehigh University-bound Cohen quickly responded with a left-handed layup while getting fouled and sank the ensuing free throw to bring Campbell Hall within 69-66.

"We knew he was a special player," Lynch said of Cohen, a sharpshooting guard who finished with a game-high 32 points to go along with five rebounds and four assists. "Even last year, he was really good. He's a scholarship ball player, Division 1. That's big-time. We knew we weren't going to stop him. We were just hoping to contain him a little bit. But he did a fantastic job."

The Vikings (16-14) then regained possession after forcing the Lancers into a turnover on their inbounds pass with 14 seconds left. Cohen's three-pointer missed, but Campbell Hall junior Charlie Prager was there for the putback with 6.7 seconds on the clock.

The Lancer faithful, deafeningly loud throughout the majority of the contest, were suddenly reduced to a shocked murmur during a timeout as their team's lead had been cut to a single point. The large contingent of Viking supporters, meanwhile, were rooting hard for a return trip to the championship game and sensed the swift shift in momentum.

Campbell Hall immediately fouled Knox, who stepped to the line for a one-and-one with 5.7 seconds remaining. His first attempt spun off the rim and into the hands of Cohen, who desperately rushed the length of the court, only to see his game-winning shot misfire under duress.

"Coach Lynch, he preaches to us every practice, every day, about faith," said Knox. "So you can tell, each and every one of us, we all have faith and that's what helped us win."

Although Knox missed that

free throw, his overall shooting performance played a key role in La Salle's triumph. The junior guard hit seven of 11 field goals — including three triples — to pace the Lancers with a team-high 21 points. Knox also contributed four assists, two rebounds and a steal. His jumper early in the third quarter gave La Salle its biggest lead of the game at 49-33.

"I've been starting since freshman year, so I feel like I'm a leader on this team," said Knox. "Me and Christian, we're like the dynamic duo out there. When we're flowing, the whole team's flowing and we lock up on 'D,' we get down the floor and we won the game."

Oyie-Little certainly did enough to hold up his end of the "dynamic duo" moniker, scoring 13 points, dishing out eight assists and grabbing five rebounds. But it was the gritty play of Acobian that propelled La Salle in the first half and put the Vikings into the unenviable position of having to play catch-up. Repeatedly using his body to bully Campbell Hall's frontcourt players with offensive rebounds and putbacks, Acobian converted five of his first six shots en route to 17 points and a game-high nine rebounds.

"I played football, and on the football field all you can do is hustle. So on the basketball court, I inspire it and hustle my [butt] off and we get the 'W' because of it," said Acobian, whose free throw following his and-one layup off an assist from Oyie-Little pushed the Lancers' early advantage to 14-2.

La Salle led by seven points at the end of three quarters as the shooting of Cohen and his teammate, sophomore Mike Meadows, kept the Vikings in the game. Campbell Hall began the fourth

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■ CIF-SS Boys' Basketball Playoffs



Photo courtesy John Blackstock

Christian Oyie-Little (right) helped La Salle clinch its first CIF championship game in 54 years. The Lancers face Calabasas Viewpoint this Friday at 6:45 p.m.

La Salle Takes on No. 1 Seed for CIF Title

By Oscar Areliz
The Outlook

The La Salle High School varsity boys' basketball team is preparing for a CIF-Southern Section Division 4A championship game, a situation the program hasn't been in since 1962, but that's not a concern for head coach Mike Lynch. The first-year head coach has more than enough experience when it comes to title games, and he's prepped his players for Friday's contest against No. 1-seeded Calabasas Viewpoint.

"We've had four really good opponents [in the postseason]," said Lynch, who guided Los Angeles Price to 12 CIF-SS finals and 10 championships before taking over La Salle's program last May. "We're battle-tested. Now, but so are they. It's going to be a great contest."

It should be the best contest of the evening at Santa Ana Godinez High this Friday. The No. 7-seeded Lancers (25-7 overall record) and Patriots (25-6 overall) haven't seen each other, but they do share common opponents, most notably Campbell Hall of Studio City. La Salle edged the Vikings, 69-68, in the CIF-SS Division 4A semifinals last Friday. Viewpoint and Campbell Hall are both part of the competitive Gold Coast League, which includes Open Division entry Sierra Canyon of Chatsworth. The Patriots suffered a 59-55 loss at the hands of the Vikings in January and avenged that defeat in the teams' second meeting with a 72-61 victory.

La Salle and Viewpoint also traveled to Studio City to face Harvard-Westlake early in the season. The Patriots won their contest in November, 73-55, and the Lancers

dropped a December game, 73-47.

The third and final common opponent between the two teams is Crossroads High of Santa Monica. The Lancers came out on top against the Roadrunners, 69-67, in December, and the Patriots also defeated Crossroads, 77-64, in late January.

The Patriots are a senior-laden squad that relies heavily on guard Christian Juzang, who averages 19.6 points per contest. Viewpoint fell short of winning a CIF-SS Division 5AA championship last year, falling to Los Angeles Windward, 83-75, in overtime.

Though the Lancers may not have CIF Finals experience, they aren't so different when compared to their opponent. La Salle boasts quick guards Christian Oyie-Little, who possesses playmaking skills along with an ability to score, and Johnny Knox, a competitive junior guard whose hot hand propelled La Salle over Campbell Hall in the semis last Friday.

The Lancers are just focused on the moment, and relishing an event the school has not experienced in 54 years.

"It's just a great experience for me as a junior going to my senior year," said Knox. "I've never been to the CIF championship before and it's going to be a great experience. We're going to watch film, rest up and get ready for Viewpoint."

"I'm just looking to have some fun and hopefully come out with a win," he added.

La Salle and Viewpoint square off this Friday, March 4, at Godinez High School. Tipoff is scheduled for 6:45 p.m.

Editor's Note: Nick Ostiller contributed to this article.

because he's usually strong in the second half."

The Lancers received seven points, two rebounds and one steal from junior Sean Espinosa. Senior Sam Reismann added six points, three rebounds and a steal. Junior Tyrese Lee chipped in two points and two rebounds.

For Campbell Hall, Meadows notched 16 points and junior Luis Osorio scored six points. Prager and junior Marco Manlunas each had four points, while senior Cameron Hoge finished with three points. Senior Joe Romano tallied two points.

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quarter on a 7-0 run to knot the score at 53, but the visitors would never take the lead as Oyie-Little stopped the bleeding by banking in a tough runner while getting fouled with 5:47 left.

"He's been our leader all year," said Lynch, who coached Oyie-Little at Los Angeles Price High School for the past three years before the pair made the move to Pasadena prior to this season. "We played him a lot of minutes. I didn't have a chance to rest him

■ CIF-SS Basketball Playoffs

Flintridge Prep Basketball Teams Make History

Garrett Ohara is enjoying one of his finest seasons as the Flintridge Prep varsity boys' basketball coach, guiding the Rebels to their first CIF-Southern Section championship since 2011. But as an athletic director, it may very well be his best year as the girls' hoops programs also clinched a CIF title berth, making it a historic winter season for Flintridge Prep.

The boys' and girls' CIF title games this Saturday marks the first time in the school's 83-year history that both basketball teams will be playing for a championship in the same year.

"It truly is extraordinary to have both teams in a championship," said second-year A.D. Garrett Ohara, "especially for the girls, who have been on the cusp of making to [a final]. For them to pull it off is great. And to have our games back-to-back is good for our community. We're excited."

The boys rallied past No. 2-seeded Saddleback Valley Christian of San Juan Capistrano on the road for a 70-67 victory in the CIF-SS Division 5AA semifinals last Friday. Ohara's squad will face top-seeded St. Joseph of Santa Maria this Saturday, March 5, at Godinez High School in Santa Ana. The championship game is scheduled to begin at 2 p.m.

The Rebels (21-4 overall record) and Knights (28-3 overall) share two common opponents. Prep faced Arroyo Grande in the Santa



Photo courtesy Eric Danielson

Andrew Tsangeos sparked Flintridge Prep's offense in the semifinals. The Rebels advanced to their first CIF-SS championship game since 2011 and will face No. 1 seed St. Joseph this Saturday at 2 p.m.

Barabara Holiday Tournament and fell, 53-48. St. Joseph defeated the Eagles twice in league by double digits. Both teams also faced Palos Verdes Chadwick, which competes in the Prep League with the Rebels. Flintridge Prep defeated the Dolphins, 59-42, at home on January 6 and also scored a road win, 54-49, two weeks later. The Knights put on an offensive clinic against Chadwick and cruised to a 105-74

victory in the CIF-SS Division 5AA quarterfinals last week.

St. Joseph, which reached the Division 5AA semifinals last year, boasts three guards who average double-digit points per contest. The Rebels' attack relies heavily on seniors Dante Fregoso and Andrew Tsangeos, but the entire team has shown a grit and chemistry that it lacked in 2014.

"It's definitely maturity," said Ohara. "They're more mature and we have better chemistry because of it. Last year's team was fractured, but they're together now."

The Flintridge Prep girls have displayed that same maturity this year. The Rebels finally got over the hump and advanced to their second-ever CIF-SS championship game with a 37-27 victory over Village Christian of Sun Valley last Saturday. Head coaches Kevin Kiyomura and Jayme Chan had suffered semifinal losses in 2013 and 2015, proving that the third time is a charm.

The fourth-seeded Rebels (19-4 overall) will face No. 6-seeded Mission Prep of San Luis Obispo (21-8 overall) this Saturday at 4 p.m. Flintridge Prep has the edge offensively with standout Tala Ismail, but the Royals found their rhythm in the postseason with upset victories over No. 2-seeded Cypress Oxford Academy and No. 3 seed Loma Linda Academy.

Both teams will square after the Flintridge Prep boys' championship game at 4 p.m.

— Oscar Areliz



Photo courtesy Eric Danielson

Senior Tala Ismail finally reached a CIF-SS championship game on her third and final attempt. The Rebels take on Mission Prep this Saturday at 4 p.m.

■ CIF-SS Boys' Basketball Playoffs

Flintridge Prep Rallies Past Saddleback Valley Christian in Semis

The Flintridge Prep varsity boys' basketball team erased a 13-point deficit in the fourth quarter and went on to defeat host Saddleback Valley Christian of San Luis Obispo, 70-67, in overtime in CIF-Southern Section Division 5AA semifinal last Saturday.

The third-seeded Rebels (21-4 overall record) exploded for 26

points in the fourth quarter and carried that momentum into overtime to earn their first CIF-SS championship berth since winning the title in 2011. Flintridge Prep will face Calabasas Viewpoint for the CIF plaque this Saturday at Godinez High School in Santa Ana. Tipoff is scheduled at 2 p.m.

Andrew Tsangeos scored 28 points on Royals, who were seeded second in the postseason, and Dante Fregoso added 23 points. Kendall Kikkawa finished with eight points, Jonathan Le had four, Jacob Brawer netted three, and Jake Althouse and Kole Hamane contributed two points each.