

Foothill women going for water polo crown

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Every year the goal is the same for the Foothill women's water polo team — win the Coast Conference and earn the automatic bid into the NorCal tournament.

"Anything after that is just icing on the cake," Foothill coach Jeff Bissell said.

"But if the girls play as they have of late, together as a group and unselfish, I think after this weekend, our goal will be to win the NorCal water polo championship, the first in school history."

The Owls (20-3) are the top seed in the Coast Conference tournament after finishing the round-robin round with a 7-0 record. Foothill has gone 26-1 over the past three seasons in the Coast, and another league title seems a formality.

Sophomore night was Friday against West Valley. The Vikings featured Bailey Samuels, the 2003 Central Coast Section player of the year while at Sacred Heart Prep-Atherton. But West Valley was no match for Foothill, which won 11-5. Mara Blikslager led the way with four goals, while Tatiana Sheikhezai of Menlo-Atherton scored twice and fellow sophomore Julia Sterling added a goal. Goalie Lauren Pye out of Los Altos, another sophomore, made 16 saves in the win.

"It was sophomore night and we got contributions from all three of our sophomores," Bissell said.

The focus now moves to Ohlone College in Fremont, site of the Coast Conference Tournament on Friday and Saturday. The championship game is Saturday at 3:30 p.m. Foothill expects to be there.

College of San Mateo, meanwhile, comes in as the No. 7 seed and its head coach is already conceding the first-round

game against second-seeded Merced.

The Bulldogs expect to lose Friday's opener and play Ohlone on Saturday morning with the hopes of qualifying for the fifth-place game. Ohlone defeated CSM 13-5 the first time they met, but the Bulldogs closed the gap in a 4-2 loss a week later.

"I'm going to focus on the games we have a chance to win in hopes that we move up," CSM coach Randy Wright said.

COLLEGE NOTES

RUNNING ON EMPTY: CSM will host the 46th annual Northern California Community College Cross Country Championships on Saturday at the Crystal Springs course in Belmont. The Bulldogs failed to qualify a team, as the men finished seventh in the Coast Conference and the women were short a runner due to an injury. CSM will be represented by two men — Thomas Setser and Jose Sanchez — as well as one woman, Danielle Day.

FOOT-BALL: The Foothill men's and women's soccer teams are pulling away from their competition, but not from one another. The women, who feature Stephanie Bales, have posted a 13-3-2 record with three games left in the regular season.

The men, with Brazilian twin brothers Paulo and Pedro Mendes, sit at 12-2-2 with also three games left. Paulo leads the Owls with 14 goals and seven assists, while brother Pedro has 10 goals and as many assists.

Bales also has 14 goals. Her state-leading 22 assists give her 50 points for the season, good enough for No. 2 in the state — one point behind the leader.

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