Cabrillo earns 8th seed, home game

Tyler Velasquez named Coast Conference-South MVP

Following his team’s loss to Cosumnes River on Dec. 17, Cabrillo College men’s basketball coach Tony Marcopulos told his team they were going to win their next 14 games.

It was partly a motivational play by Marcopulos. Part of the coach also believed what he was saying though.

“They looked at me like I was nuts,” Marcopulos said.

After running the table through the final 14 games of the season, though, the Seahawks instead proved their coach to be chair-voiced.

Cabrillo [22-3], which went undefeated through Coast Conference South play for the first time in school history, will host a NorCal Regional playoff game for the first time as well on Friday night against No. 9 Foothill [18-10].

“I’m glad we’re at home.”

Marcopulos said.

Tyler Velasquez will enter the game as the Coast Conference-South’s Most Valuable Player. He averaged 14 points and 6.3 assists per game, and is the third Seahawks player to win the award in the last six years.

Teammate Aaron Short was named first team all-conference after scoring 15.8 points and 7.4 rebounds per game. Frank Rogers, who had 10 points and 5.6 rebounds per game, earned a second-team nod.

Thomas Pierce earned honorable mention, despite nearly averaging a double-double with 10.2 points and 9.5 rebounds per game this season for Cabrillo.

The Seahawks, who haven’t lost since playing arguably their worst game of the season against Cosumnes River, are the No. 8 seed in the 18-team tournament.

They were actually awarded the No. 6 seed, but a bylaw protects the top three teams from playing a conference opponent in the second round. Top-seeded San Francisco [30-2] would have potentially faced conference foe Las Positas under the initial seedings, so Cabrillo was moved from No. 6 to No. 8 as a result.

“We were looking at 6 and we figured we’d be playing Foothill,” Marcopulos said. “It kind of worked out anyway. It was kind of coincidental that we still play the same team.”

Foothill and Cabrillo squared off on Dec. 30, and the Seahawks picked up a narrow road win, 48-47, in Los Altos Hills.

Tony Marcopulos, Cabrillo head coach, said Cabrillo was ahead in that game with 17 points, while Rogers and Velasquez each added 11.

“It was real physical. It was like a Division II or Division III college game — guys were banging around,” Marcopulos said. “It’s gonna be a really good game.”

A win for the Seahawks would advance them to the third round, slated for Feb. 29. They would take on either No. 1 San Francisco, No. 18 Mendocino [18-13] or No. 17 Contra Costa [20-6].