

No. 1 Torrey Pines spikers collect second straight win over Cathedral Catholic



Torrey Pines senior Delaynie Maple (#8) and junior Sophia Callahan combined on this stuff block.

By KEN GROSSE
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Beating a major rival is nice. Doing it twice in less than a week is even better. That's what the top-ranked Torrey Pines girls' volleyball team found out Thursday night, Aug. 29, after thumping No. 2-ranked host Cathedral Catholic for the second time in six days, 3-1 (25-16, 25-23, 25-27, 25-17). The win moved the defending CIF Open Division champion Falcons to 7-0 on the season and left Cathedral, the team they defeated last November to capture that title, 7-2.

Although those two victories have certainly cemented Torrey Pines as the early favorite to annex a third consecutive section crown, you won't hear Head Coach Brennan Dean buying into any of that hype.

"It's way too early in the season," countered Dean quickly when queried about his team's dominant position. "That's not a team (Cathedral) we will ever take for granted. It's well-coached, has a lot of really good athletes and we're going to see them again."

The Dons saw way more than they wanted from the Falcons in a one-sided first set when anything the visitors did, from hitting to serving to blocking and defending, turned out positively. Senior outside hitter Maya Satchell blasted five of her team high 15 kills in the first game and it appeared like it might be a quick night's work for Torrey Pines.



Senior Maddie Endsley registered a match high 18 kills for Cathedral Catholic.

But true to Dean's post-match comments, Cathedral Catholic showed some championship mettle, finding its footing and making Torrey earn every bit of its success the rest of the way. The Falcons jumped out to a 14-9 lead in set two but Cathedral stiffened up and grabbed its first lead at 17-16. With the Dons in front, 22-21, senior Megan Kraft put up a huge solo block that knotted the score and Torrey Pines got three of the next four to go up 2-0.

Torrey led early in the third set but the Dons reeled off five straight points to post a 16-12 edge. The Falcons used consecutive stuff blocks in a three-point run to knot it at 17. A Satchell kill made it 22-21 and Torrey Pines had match point at 24-23 but couldn't convert. Cathedral made them pay, taking the third set 27-25.

“They did a nice job of making some adjustments,” observed Dean. “They started serving us a little bit different and that gave us some problems—it’s something we’re going to have to manage if we meet again.”

The decisive fourth set opened in nip-and-tuck fashion but Torrey Pines poked ahead at 9-8, tallied three of the next four to force a Cathedral timeout at 12-9 and then took over down the stretch. Both sides looked a little spent at the end but Torrey’s steadiness in the clutch proved to be the difference. Kraft felt her squad’s defensive prowess was the key.

“Our team spends a lot of time working on our defensive game in practice,” she said. “Coach Dean always tells us defense is an attitude and the team as a whole really focuses on playing hard every single point.



Senior Megan Kraft had a big night for Torrey Pines.
(Ken Grosse)

“That effort contributed big time in helping our team stop Cathedral’s great offense.” Don senior Maddie Endsley was a force all over the court racking up a game best 18 kills. Seemingly effective attacking from any position, including out-of-system back row swings. She even produced some nifty defensive moves as well.

In addition to Satchell, Torrey got nice numbers from Kraft (11 kills, 3 aces, 3 blocks, 11 digs) and senior outside hitter Delaynie Maple (10 kills, 10 digs). Senior setter Carly Diehl was dished out 47 assists and senior libero Cami Appiani recorded 11 digs and three aces as her topspin jump serve kept Cathedral on its heels all night.

With Avocado West League play starting Tuesday against Carlsbad, Dean is focused on keeping his team's collective eye on the end of the year CIF and State Championship prizes.

“We constantly remind the team that we should be perpetually dissatisfied,” said Dean. On the first and last day of practice we have the same mantra—we can learn and we can get better.”

If that's true, count on it being a season to remember for the cardinal and gold.