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## Sophomores lead Mater Dei victory over Servite

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By **DAMIAN CALHOUN**  
STAFF WRITER

LA HABRA – With three key components out of action, Mater Dei coach Gary McKnight turned to the “kids” Friday night and they didn’t disappoint, even though they might have frustrated him at times.

Led by the sophomore quartet of **Spencer Freedman**, **Michael Wang**, **Reagan Lundeen** and **Harrison Butler**, the top-ranked Monarchs remained undefeated, knocking off Trinity League rival Servite, 65-53, in the semifinals of the North Orange County Championships at Sonora High on Friday.

Freedman led the Monarchs with 22 points. Wang and Lundeen had 14 and 11 with Butler chipping with eight, for a combined 55 of the 65 points.

“We had the four sophomores out there most of the time,” McKnight said. “They played very well. Being shorthanded, the guys are really stepping up and we’re pleased with them and giving them a lot of experience.

“At times they do some stupid things, but they’re getting better.”

Mater Dei (10-0) will face Ayala of Chino Hills in the final Saturday at 7:30 at Sonora. Ayala defeated Downey in the other semifinal Friday.

Mater Dei entered the game without **MJ Cage** (knee), **Bailey Stout** (hamstring) and **Matthew Weyand** (ankle) inactive due to injuries.

Coming into the season, McKnight thought the team’s depth would be a strength, and so far it hasn’t let him down.

“I felt we were 10 deep, with a couple others,” he said. “Now, all of sudden, we’re being tested with that 10-deep and when you have your three returning starters out, it makes it difficult.”

Freedman was able to get things on course in the first half, scoring 15 points on 5-of-8 shooting from the field.

Mater Dei extended its lead to 52-34 on a Lundeen basket early in the fourth quarter. Servite (7-3) then rallied to get within 56-48 with 4:22 left, but that was as close as it got.

The Monarchs then responded with a 7-0 run to take a 63-48 lead.

“The coaches have confidence in us and give us the freedom and allow us to do what we can,” Freedman said. “They believe in us and it is special to have four sophomores out there.”

Freedman shot seven of 10 from the field and made five 3-point field goals. Wang had eight rebounds.

**Cameron Griffin** led the Friars with 14 points. **Jacob Hughes** and **Pearson Parker** had 12 and 11, respectively. Griffins had 10 rebounds for the Friars.

Servite will face Downey in the third-place game at 6 p.m.

The teams will meet again in Trinity League play, Jan. 8 at Mater Dei and No. 27 at Servite.



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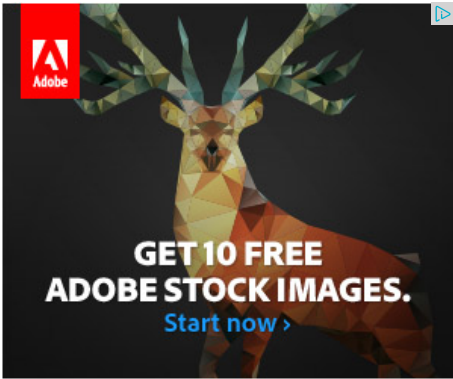
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