

Budd Bay wins Pacific Coast DIII title

Written by Cody Secker

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Portland, Ore. saw plenty of action this past weekend with a full plate of playoff rugby. This time it was for the DIII Pacific Coast Championship.

Four teams entered, and Budd Bay (Pacific Northwest 2) emerged with the top seed after back-to-back wins over Bay Area (Northern California 1) 22-15 and Modesto (Northern California 2) 44-17.

Budd Bay finished second in the Pacific Northwest to Bend the weekend prior. For that, they would face a Bay Area team whose forte is physicality.

Though Budd Bay prevailed, it was definitely an all-out battle until the bitter end. Back and forth both teams went with scoring and momentum swings. With less than a minute to play and the game tied, Budd Bay worked the ball down field and had a lineout near the attacking 22-meter line.

From there, a set play through the back line saw outside center Matthew Beagle make a tough run and, just before an ensuing tackle, pop the ball to Antonio Sitama on the wing for the winning score.

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“We pulled together to work as a team,” Budd Bay hooker and captain Aaron Turcotte said. “That gave us the drive to take the victory in those finals minutes of one of our toughest matches of the year.”

In the second game, Modesto matched up against Bend, and what a game that would turn out to be, going beyond regulation.

Late in overtime, Modesto broke through the Bend defensive line for the 20-15 win.

The next day's games consisted of a consolation match of Bend and Bay Area, which Bay Area won 21-0.

In the championship game, Budd Bay ran over Modesto 44-17.

“Our backline was the most powerful it's ever been and it seemed as though nothing could stop us,” Beagle said. “As a whole, our team was really on point both games and really clicked and found ways to get the job done at the right times.”

With both wins, Budd Bay will now take their seed down to Chula Vista for the National rounds of 16 and eight. In the opening game they'll face the West's third seed. Modesto will take the Pacific Cost No. 2 seed into Chula Vista to take on the Southern California champs.