

ORANGE COUNTY NEWS

Challenging draw: Woodbridge, Beckman and Crean Lutheran get ready for CIF baseball playoffs



Crean Lutheran starting pitcher Gavin Folsom and his teammates open the CIF Division 3 playoffs Thursday. File photo Paul Rodriguez, staff photographer

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Woodbridge (19-7), Beckman (20-6) and Crean Lutheran (23-4) have some challenging opening round CIF baseball playoff games coming up this week. Woodbridge, which finished second in the Pacific Coast League after defeating Beckman, 8-4, on Thursday, is on the road to face Paloma Valley (23-3) Friday at 3:15 p.m. in the opening round of the Division 2 playoffs.

“Division 2 has 38 teams in the playoffs and 19 teams won 20 plus games, including Beckman which is a wild card,” said Woodbridge Coach Tim Murray. “Four teams had 19 wins, including Woodbridge. That means 23 of 38 teams won a lot of games and it makes this division as good as any. The Pacific Coast League was as good as any Division 2 league so we are prepared for quality competition and will be ready to compete on Friday at Paloma Valley.”

The winner moves on to the second round on Tuesday, May 23, to face the winner of the St. John Bosco vs. Murrieta Valley-Martin Luther King wild card winner.

Woodbridge lost to Redondo Union, 2-1, last year in the CIF Division 3 finals but has been moved up to Division 2.

Beckman, which took third in the PCL, is a wild card team and plays on the road against Yucaipa (18-10) Wednesday at 3:15 p.m. The winner moves on to face Etiwanda (22-3) at Etiwanda on Friday.

Coach Jake Haney's Crean Lutheran team, which reached the CIF Division 6 finals last year, has been moved up to Division 3 and hosts the winner of Tuesday's wild card game between Ocean View and Bellflower today at 3:15 p.m. on Crean Lutheran's campus field.

Crean Lutheran lost to Academy League foe Sage Hill, 9-0, in the CIF Division 4 finals last year.

It was a different story this season. The Saints swept Sage Hill last week to finish as league champions. The Saints won Thursday's game, 4-3, to claim the league title outright.