



# Fontana Unified School District

Every Student Successful, Engaging Schools, Empowered Communities

9680 Citrus Avenue | Fontana, CA 92335 | Phone: (909) 357-5000 | [www.fusd.net](http://www.fusd.net)

## NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Dec. 3, 2025

**CONTACT:** Nancy Yeang

(909) 204-6012

## Fontana Unified Boys Water Polo Team Makes History with First-Ever CIF Championship

**FONTANA, CA** – Fontana High School's (FOHI) boys water polo team made history when it earned its first-ever CIF Division 5 Championship, clinching the title with a thrilling 15-11 win over Baldwin Park High School on Nov. 15. After years of dominating the San Andreas League, FOHI had its breakthrough year in CIF, led by a poised group of seniors determined to graduate with a legacy of winning.

FOHI's 2025 boys water polo team is made up almost entirely of seniors who have played together for years, inspiring a close collaboration and generating a confidence that helped them stay sharp through five tough rounds of a CIF tournament.

"The team ended 2024 on a good note, and we carried that momentum over to this year," FOHI physical education teacher and water polo coach Spencer Fernandes said. "It's been an honor to watch them grow, learn, and bond. To look back at where they started and see how far they've come, it's simply amazing."

The Steelers were led by senior Matthew Zubiato, who emerged as the team's offensive leader. Zubiato scored eight goals in Fontana's 20-8 semifinal win against Westminster, then followed that up with five goals, six assists, and four steals in the championship game against Baldwin Park. Zubiato was also named Athlete of the Week by the San Bernardino Sun.

FOHI senior Gabriel Maldonado also contributed significantly to the game, scoring four goals in the CIF final. Maldonado said he originally wanted to play football, but joined the water polo team after being persuaded by his father, a former water polo player himself.

"This is crazy fun for us, making history for the school," Maldonado said. "We're all seniors. There is great chemistry on the team. Our strategy for the game was to just be ready and to help each other when we could."

Fernandes, a FOHI Class of 2005 alum, has been coaching boys and girls water polo, as well as swimming, for 18 years, joining the coaching staff while still attending Chaffey College and Cal Poly Pomona. Fernandes emphasizes the basics, beginning each practice with more than an hour of swimming. Though the game requires athletes in peak shape, being mentally sharp is the key to winning, according to Fernandes.

Fontana High School's CIF win comes as the school prepares to retire its 70-year-old swimming pool at the end of the 2025-26 school year.

— more —

“Water polo is 30% physical and 70% mental. You’ve got to be tough and smart,” Fernandes said. “There are so many things going on in the pool, you’ve got to keep your composure to make the right plays. This team was so poised, they didn’t get nervous at all. Our goal from day one was to win a CIF championship.”

**PHOTO CAPTIONS:**

**FUSD\_WATERPOLO1:** Fontana High School’s (FOHI) boys water polo team celebrated their first-ever CIF Division 5 Championship win on Nov. 15.

**FUSD\_WATERPOLO2:** FOHI’s boys water polo team was led by senior Matthew Zubiato (athlete #18), who had five goals, six assists, and four steals in the championship game on Nov. 15.

**FUSD\_WATERPOLO3:** FOHI’s boys water polo team made history by clinching the CIF Division 5 Championship title with a thrilling 15-11 win over Baldwin Park High School on Nov. 15

###