

SPORTS

LAMORINDAS LOCAL SPORTS NEWS



Oakland Strokes Shine at Regional Championships

By Jennifer Wake

The Oakland Strokes rowing team, which includes many high school athletes from the Lamorinda area, wrapped up their 2007 rowing season with medal results evenly balanced between all teams at the Southwest Regional Junior Championships May 19 and 20 at Lake Natoma.

The varsity and novice crews brought home four silver medals for the women's third Varsity-8, women's Frosh-8, women's Frosh-4 and the men's Novice-8. Four bronze medals went to the men's Varsity-4, women's JV-8, men's Lightweight-4 and the women's Novice-8 B crews.

Women's head coach Ian Simpson was proud of efforts he witnessed by the entire women's varsity crew. Despite a few disappointments, everyone worked extremely hard throughout the season, maintaining an intense desire for constant improvement. Simpson was especially pleased with the medal winning finishes of his 3V-8 and JV-8 boats.

The silver medal winning 3V-8 was coxed by a steely Celena Chan (St. Ignatius), who kept her crew on pace in a battle to the finish against Marin. Jennifer Zitterman of Miramonte played a key role in the stroke seat, helping the Strokes come in second with a time of 07:29:01.

Oakland Strokes women's Freshman-8 squad, which is filled with talented athletic women, dominated the competition throughout the season. Coxswain, Molly Fehr (Miramonte) skillfully commanded her crew for 2,000 meters, with Kelly Bauer (Miramonte) follow-



The Men's Lightweight-4 all smiles at the awards podium

ing her lead in the stroke seat. Dana Walsh (Miramonte) was next, followed by Gia Hallaman (Miramonte), Nikki Dahlberg-Seeth (Miramonte), Charlotte Horsey (Head Royce), Nicole Sung-Jerczek (Piedmont), Ann Hofinga (Miramonte), and Joanie Larsson (Bishop O'Dowd) at bow.

In their quest for the gold they were outpaced by an impressive crew from Pacific at 06:56:40. Oakland came in second at 07:00:50 with Marin only seconds behind at 07:02:90.

Oakland's men dug deep and pulled out an exciting medal-winning finish in a race that was neck-and-neck down to the final meters. With the no-nonsense Leila Pakawongse (Berkeley) in the coxswain seat, the team pulled long and strong to stay with the pack.

Miramonte High senior, TJ Laher, rowed to precision in the stroke seat followed by Joe Wainwright (Bishop O'Dowd), Nick Hoff (Berkeley), Cole Masse (El Cerrito), Monte Melnick (Orinda Academy), Michael Luecker

(Campolindo), Richard Colby Foote (Encinal) and James Lenczowski (Miramonte) at bow.

Head Coach Dan Donoho was inspired by how the crew transcended their abilities out on the race course. Although the team never set a specific goal to win a medal or to get to the nationals, Donoho said they remained determined to do better than their last effort every time they entered a race. The strategy worked and the team was thrilled to qualify for the nationals with men's Novice 8-A finishing second with a time of 06:47:80, and men's Varsity-8 finished third with 06:14:90.

By medaling at the regional championship, these eight teams have earned the right to compete at the National Championships to be held next month in Cincinnati. Oakland Strokes in one of the premier junior rowing programs in the nation. For information about the Oakland Strokes upcoming summer camp program, visit the OS website at <http://www.oaklandstrokes.org>.

OBA Pinto League Sluggers Take Win

Submitted by Laura Dorma

In a nailbiting finish to their May 15 game, the OBA Pinto League Sluggers slid past the Bombers in the last inning to finish 25-22. The Bombers' strong offense was slowed when Sluggers PA Casey McGonigle got two outs at first, and fielder Jimmy Ricksen made a stunning

catch at the bottom of the fifth for the third out, leaving the Sluggers to enter the last inning 22-24. In the last inning, McGonigle's triple was accompanied by singles from Carter Supple, Emerson Smith, and Mike Dakis, who had earlier hit a home run, and the inning was crowned with a

home run by Jake Hassard, handing the Sluggers their 25-22 victory. Triples by Sluggers players Jack O'Melveny, Marky Presten and Stephen Schmidt were key in the early innings, and Sam Foss and Ethan Fischler contributed skillful fielding throughout the game.

Tough Loss for Acalanes Softball

By Kevin D. Shallat

The Acalanes Dons softball team had a lot of things going for them coming into a first round North Coast Section playoff game against the Las Lomas Knights on Tuesday, May 22.

With plenty of success against the Knights this year as they completed the regular season sweep against Las Lomas, the Dons had also scored 11 runs in the regular season against the same Las Lomas pitcher they faced Tuesday, Hannah Port, and had home field advantage in this year's NCS playoff game. But none of these factors helped the Dons in their NCS match-up against the Knights - they lost to Las Lomas 6 to 2.

It didn't take long for the Dons to put a run on the board when Acalanes standout player Yvette Dickson hit a fielder's choice to the shortstop in the bot-

tom of the first to score a run and record an RBI. Dickson has filled in nicely since replacing injured catcher, Sara Stenson, who has since moved to the designated player and first base positions.

Las Lomas shortstop Lauren Desino hit the second of back to back doubles in the top of the third inning to score the Knights' first run of the game. Acalanes did their best to respond by hitting the ball hard. Dickson hit a hard shot to center that was caught. Ashley Borrelli also hit a hard liner to left field, but came up empty.

Starting pitcher Haley Ward showed her maturity and patience in the top of the fourth inning. She gave up an initial hit and walked the next batter. Ward persevered through this initial adversity by forcing the next three batters to ground out or pop out.

"Ward is essential to our

game," said teammate Yvette Dickson, who said Ward did what she could to try to help the Dons win.

Ward pitched a tremendous game through four-plus innings. Soon after the top of the fifth had begun, head coaches Rory Ward and Victor Silva made the move to bring in number 10, Katie Gray, to pitch the rest of the way.

Las Lomas went on to score three runs in the fifth, and two runs in the sixth, and finish the day with six runs scored.

Two seniors did what they could for the team in their final game with Acalanes. Hannah Frascieri went three for four, while recording a double and a run scored. Sara Stenson also contributed, going one for three at the plate on the day.

"Normally we're good hitters," Dickson explained. Although Acalanes needed more runs to win, but they nearly matched Las Lomas in hit production - the Knights with 10, the Dons with 8.

Coach Rory Ward said the team fought hard but just didn't have enough energy to produce as well as they could with runners in scoring position. "We haven't scored many runs lately, which makes it hard to win games," Ward said.

Acalanes Baseball On A Mission

By Kevin D. Shallat

The Acalanes Dons baseball team had an important first round game in the North Coast Section playoffs Friday, May 26. With a home field advantage, the No. 1-seed Dons beat the Encinal Jets in a combined shutout, 7-0.

The Encinal baseball team tried their best to find the right attack against the Dons on Friday. Starting with small ball play, by hitting soft grounders to the right side to try and advance the runners into scoring position, the Jets soon shifted tactic, going for big home runs as the score widened in the Dons' favor. Fortunately for the Dons, the Jets never found a happy middle ground, and struggled to find a rhythm throughout the rest of the game.

The star of the game was undoubtedly Acalanes starting pitcher Mike Guglielmo. "Mike's been our gritty competitor all year long. He's fearless," Acalanes Head Coach Andy Tarpley said. Guglielmo pitched six strong innings of shutout ball, giving up only three hits in the process. "The thing about Mike is that he wants the ball in big games. He throws strikes with his fastball and curveball at any time in the count," Tarpley said.

Zach Boyd was the starting pitcher for the Jets. He struggled with his com-

mand early in the game. In the second inning he hit the first two batters, paving the way for the Dons' big inning.

After Boyd hit the first two batters, center fielder Dustin Montero hit a grounder to third. The Encinal third baseman was unable to get the force out. This loaded the bases for Acalanes.

Shortstop Ben Englehart then lined a single to center to drive in the first two runs of the game. He finished the game going two for three, with a run and two RBI's. Second baseman Joe Wallace then lined a shot into left field, driving in two runs of his own on a double. Third baseman Jake Floethe, and catcher Mike Stone would also follow with doubles.

With the game well in hand, Acalanes left fielder TC Lee added a long home run to left field in the bottom of the fifth. "It was nice to see TC hit a big bomb," Coach Tarpley said.



Mike Guglielmo throws a shutout, 7-0.

Photo by Tod Fierner

In the top of the seventh, Acalanes sent in pitcher Donny Miller to close out the game. Miller did a great job by getting three quick outs to end the contest.

As the North Coast Section playoffs continue, the competition gets tougher. Coach Tarpley explained how his team will use this past game to gather momentum for their next opponent.

The Dons will face local rival, No. 5-seeded Campolindo Cougars, at James Logan High School on Saturday, June 2. The exact time is yet to be determined.



Hitting the long ball

Photo by Tod Fierner

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