



SPORTS

LAMORINDAS LOCAL SPORTS NEWS

State Champs Defend Title, Advance in NCS Playoffs

By Kevin D. Shallat



Photo Gavin Schlissel

The defending women's state volleyball champion Campolindo Cougars hosted the Miramonte Matadors for the second time in less than a week. The two teams would match up again on Wednesday, Nov. 13, for the third time this year in an early North Coast Section matchup. Campolindo mounted an incredible comeback after being down two games to one, to win this match 3-2.

The first game went back and forth, with no team leaping too far ahead. The Cougars kept a three point cushion for most of the game. Campolindo outside hitter and middle blocker Alex Shurtz had a huge block around the net to take make it 18-15, causing Miramonte to call a timeout. Outside hitter Kate Canty served well for the Cougars – a big reason they won the first game 25-17.

With the home crowd at a deafening roar, and Campolindo winning the battle by the net, it was apparent that Miramonte would have to get aggressive in a hurry. The Matadors came out in the second game swinging, and jumped out to a 10-3 lead. With the help of a few Kari Johnson

spikes, the Matadors were right back in the match.

Miramonte star outside hitter Juliana Stivanicevic came alive with a statement spike to take the score to 11-3. However the Cougars would not go down without a fight. Great players don't panic, and when challenged, they often answer right back. After Stivanicevic's spike, freshman setter Mary Vaccaro would set up Canty for a thunder-

ous statement spike of her own that left the gym buzzing, taking the score to 11-4, and beginning one of the best comebacks of the season, as Vaccaro and her teammates would tie the score at 20-20.

The Mats earned the win in this game, beating the Cougars 27-25, but the comeback was a statement by the Cougars that did not go unheard. Campolindo head coach Scott Bishop mentioned how his assistant was kidding him that they should have gotten blown out in this game to save energy. Bishop said, "It was actually worth it not to do that, because we got a lot of momentum and we got our focus back a little bit, and got a little more confident."

Miramonte rode the high of winning the second game into the third game, playing with a determined mindset. Matador setter Mary Diamantidis once again got her teammates involved to scrap out a close win, beating the Cougars 25-23. However, Vaccaro and the rest of her teammates did not panic.

Campolindo outside hitter and middle blocker Chandler Moore played with a passion and inspired her team to a 25-23 win over Miramonte in the fourth game. In the short fifth and final game, the Cougars got out to a quick lead thanks to outside hitter and middle blocker Rachel Eberhard, as she came up with big plays around the net to win this game 15-5, and take this NCS match 3-2.



Campolindos Alessandra Neason (12) and Kim Condie (15)

Photo Gavin Schlissel

Orinda Teen Seeks Second World Title

Submitted by Jeanette Kermaninejad



Miramonte senior Naveed Kermaninejad

Photo provided

Most Orinda teenagers spent Thanksgiving vacation with friends and family, enjoying a turkey dinner on Thanksgiving Day. But one 17-year-old Orinda youth was eating turkey from a buffet line in a South Carolina hotel.

During Thanksgiving break, Miramonte senior Naveed Kermaninejad endeavored to win his second title at the Karate Super Grands World Games. This competition was hosted by the NBL (National Blackbelt League), which is the only international sport karate league that is based upon a series of open tournaments which rate and qualify blackbelt level players to become official sport karate world champions at the "Super Grands World Games."

Inspired at first by the Ninja Turtles of the 1990's, Naveed has been training in the martial arts for 12 years, discovering the commitment needed to train daily and the discipline required to learn the philosophy of the martial arts. He has won several local titles, a Sport Karate International amateur title, and an NBL "world title."

While most parents are kept busy shuttling their children between football, soccer and basketball games, there are a growing number of parents who take a more costly route and travel statewide and even nationwide to participate in the elite NBL sport karate circuit in a points race for the highest ranking possible by year end. Through a series of regional and national events competitors gain points depending on

the place taken at these tournaments.

During the 2007 season from March to September Naveed (who has chosen sparring as his specialty) attended tournaments in California, Oregon, Texas and Nevada. His goal was to repeat last year's title win in continuous sparring, but his real challenge was in point sparring. Junior continuous sparring divisions group competitors according to weight unlike point sparring which groups competitors according to age, 15 to 17 in his case.

The size and weight disparity is greater here and, as Kermaninejad has experienced, there are some very large 17 year olds in the division. Competitors come from around the globe, but mostly from the U.S., Canada, Central America and Europe and most are seeded.

Ranked in the top in continuous sparring, a series of bad luck has kept Naveed from a high seed in point sparring so he had to use all his skills and training to keep ahead of the top fighters. He took second in continuous sparring against a Guatemalan fighter named Juan Pablo Santiago. Many participants also competed in forms and weapons in dazzling displays of choreography and gymnastics during the week long tournament in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

Every evening, spectators enjoyed a show with the top two divisional performers of the daytime eliminations vying for first place and the coveted gold ring and embroidered black belt. More important than the prize is the prestige and bragging rights that are bestowed upon the winner.

Cyclocross: Good Fun for Everyone

By Mike F. Foley



Cyclocross racers hurdle obstacles during Bay Area Super Prestige Series

Photo Melissa Aycock

I've been a cyclist and competitive bicycle racer for close to twenty years, with the last two years including cyclocross. It's some of the most fun I've ever had on a bicycle while gasping, sweating profusely and (at times) bleeding.

What is cyclocross?

Considered 'the rugby of cycling,' cyclocross is a short-circuit (2-4k in length), multiple lap, bicycle race that becomes a one hour sprint over twisty and extremely varied terrain including grass, dirt, single-track and pavement.

Courses are designed for riders to dismount and run over obstacles at least twice per lap. There are different categories, A, B and C as well as Master's, juniors and single-speed divisions. While you can use a mountain bike to race, a cross bike is recommended. If you're just starting out you'll want to enter the Men's or Women's C category - 30 minute races - and go from there. In a pinch, a cross bike could be used for other types of road riding and they can also make good touring bikes.

This fall and winter sport has a great deal of history and fits nicely into an active Bay Area lifestyle. Cross emerged out of Europe in the early 1900s as a good off-season training regimen for 'roadies.' Many of the great Tour champions have used cyclocross for cross training in the winter. Since races never exceed one hour, riders can squeeze in enough training miles during a busy work week.

Cyclocross racing reminds me of what mountain bike racing used to be in the late '80s and early '90s: It's a great sport full of the right energy and grit. But while cyclocross can be really fun, it can also be rough on the body and the equipment.

At the second race of the Bay Area Super Prestige Series this year, I not only broke my chain, but I blew a tire, cut my leg and threw up breakfast in the parking lot behind my car – lovely. Overall, it was some of the most fun I've had all season. After finally being lapped by the leaders and passing my car for the fifth time, I decided it was time to pull out of the race – but in the end, I had a smile on my face for the effort. It made me want to race that much harder the following Sunday.

To give you some idea of the competition, last year I finished twelfth overall in the Men's 'A' 35-plus division. With two races left in the 2007 season I still have a shot at the top ten. The riders in the top ten are very tough to beat. They don't make many mistakes, show up on a regular basis and truly earn their places on the start line each week.

So you want to check it out? Maybe enter an event?

Don't be discouraged, everyone looks fast in all of their

'race' gear. The nervous anticipation before the race can get to you, if you let it.

All races start the same way. A field of 35-55 riders line up and start to push forward. The top ten riders (in the series/overall) from that category are called to the front line – added incentive to do well each week. Good positioning is paramount for the riders jockeying for the front. Every rider on the front row wants to be the first one into the first corner. Unfortunately, there's only enough room for one and this causes pile ups and good spectating.

The start of a cross race can be like a smash-up derby – riders get tangled up, bodies and bars collide, clicking cleats and dust, some shouting and elbows. Somehow the usual suspects emerge at

the front.

For the most part, everyone is here for the same reason; to compete and to cheer on their friends and loved ones. And afterwards nobody is afraid to open a cold beer for the effort. I've found it's the best place to spend a few hours on a Sunday blowing off some steam. It's the most fun you'll have at a bicycle race – I guarantee it.

You can find some of the best cyclocross racing right here in the Bay Area: <http://www.ncna.org/>.

Mike Foley is the author of 'Bicycling Beyond City Limits.' The Story of a 55-day, unsupported bicycle trip across the United States. For more information go to - <http://www.bicycling-beyondcitylimits.com>.

Have trouble keeping weight off?

- Physician diagnosis & treatment
- Medications &/or supplements
- Medical meal replacements
- Mindful eating coaching
- Solutions for stress, mood, sleep
- Personable, customized, simple

Weigh 2 Health
Can help you find & keep the healthiest you

SUMMER SPECIAL 20% OFF FIRST MONTH

Call now for a free consultation (925) 658-2500

Nathalie Bera-Miller, MD, MPH
Bariatric & Preventive Medicine
953 Mountain View Drive, Lafayette
www.weigh2healthmd.com



PROFESSIONAL AUTOMOTIVE

ENTERPRISES

- Auto Body & Collision Repair
- Computerized Color Matching
- Complete Detailing Services
- Expert Unibody Reconstructions
- Free Computerized Estimates
- Painless Dent Repair

All Work Guaranteed With Written Warranty

925-283-2160
3331 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette

Quality Service Since 1949

www.professionalautomotive.net

Correction: NCS Boys Water Polo Championship

The Nov. 14 NCS Boys Water Polo Championship game between Miramonte and Campolindo story included an error. The fourth Campolindo goal at the NCS Water Polo Championship was actually scored by Stephen Loomis.

LAFAYETTE HEALTH CLUB

rated #1 SINCE 1981

"Getting in shape can be fun! We are bigger than you think. Come in for a quick tour. No pressure, no contracts." -Debbie

Personal Training Showers Open 7 Days

Unlimited classes
Yoga • Pilates • Spinning • Circuit • Strength Training
Weight and Cardio Room

\$64/mo. Call for a free day.

Mon-Th: 5am-9:30pm • Fri: 5am-8:30pm • Sat/Sun: 7am-7pm
85 Lafayette Circle • Lafayette • 284-7732
Down from Chow Restaurant
www.lafayettehealthclub.com