

'zAthlete' Gaining Popularity Among Lamorinda Youth

By David Anderson

The recent popularity of online networking websites has yielded a new creation targeting athletes and fans. According to a recent press release, 'zAthlete' (a product of Orinda-based In-traware) aims to provide exposure for athletes by enabling users to share video, pictures, statistics and more.

The website provides a 21st century approach to recruiting athletes across the nation featuring a familiar user setup reminiscent of other online networking websites such as Facebook and MySpace. Members utilize a profile page in which they can post their statistics and upload pictures and video highlights. Coaches, fans and athletes are able to browse through picture and video albums, send messages and compare stats.

Launched in October, the potential for 'zAthlete' to succeed in providing exposure for athletes is high. The success of social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace lies in their ability to connect people all over the world. There is room for this site to succeed as well if 'zAthlete' can successfully connect athletes with coaches and recruiters at the college and professional level.

"I think it'll help a lot (with recruiting)," says Kimberly Sanguinetti, a senior member of the DFAL Champion Miramonte Women's Water Polo team. "There are a lot of schools that aren't as well known as (Miramonte) so I think that a lot of athletes in the Bay Area and all over the United

States can get recognized pretty easily. The website is growing a lot. More and more people are getting 'z pages'."

Athletes throughout Lamorinda seem to be on the same page about the potential benefits of 'zAthlete.' Andrew Wood, a freshman Rugby player at St. Mary's College adds, "There's no way to really get noticed unless your coach gets you noticed or someone comes to your game and sees you. So having something like (zAthlete) would be really helpful."

Due to the website's status as a "beta version" (meaning the current website is not the final version) it is still somewhat rough. The overall aesthetics of the site, for example, are simplistic and the section designated for members to post blogs is still under construction.

Although finishing touches are still being made, 'zAthlete' is serving its purpose quite well. The site provides a space for members to post athletic achievements and does so while accepting high quality pictures and videos of any size. To view the website, go to www.zathlete.com. Members must have a valid email address and be at least thirteen years old to sign up.



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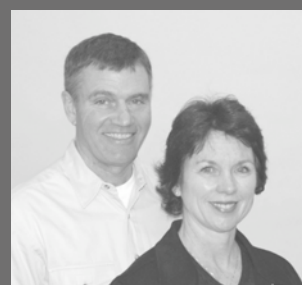
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