



Community Champions: Sports as a Metaphor for Life

By Rob Lucacher



Coaches Dean Myatt (L) and Steve Christensen (R) with the proud players of Team Barcelona Photo Rob Lucacher

On a recent Saturday morning, Team Barcelona, with coaches Dean and Steve at the helm, made it happen, by winning their LMYA soccer game and securing first place in their 5th and 6th grade girls division.

What is their secret? What does it take to prepare young boys and girls to more effectively compete by mastering the technical, emotional and procedural fundamentals of a competitive sport? If we use sports as a universal metaphor for life, how do we establish the essentials of teamwork, purpose and passion as the foundations for building success in everything we do?

Team building and individual achievement are the goals of Steve Christensen and Dean Myatt, two of our local LMYA coaches. Steve and Dean inspire their players through selfless giving and a passion for teaching while actively mentoring each player. This results in a purpose-driven commitment that we all seek to impart to our children so that they can effectively tackle the rigors and challenges of life.

These two men possess

complementary skill sets that, when combined, build a tradition of winning teams and proud team members. It's the unique chemistry that Coach Steve and Coach Dean bring to the games of soccer and softball that makes for a winning formula.

Coach Dean's essential strength and focus is on the technical elements of the game. He identifies the fundamental skills that need to be mastered, sets up a regimen for imparting these skills to his players, evaluates how the clash of wills will play out on the field and what techniques and discipline will be needed to overcome the barriers to success. On the other hand, Coach Steve understands and focuses on the human side of the equation, instilling confidence, joy, spirit and a sense of common purpose so individual players form a more perfect union we call a team. Drawing upon these collective strengths, some of the strategies they use to nurture the heart and skills of their young team members are pre-game discussions, post-game review and weekly recognition for exceptional individual performance.

Yet what makes their teams truly exceptional is how the coaches' good chemistry is translated into effective and purposeful leadership. The emphasis is not on winning but the quality of the competitive spirit as it unfolds on the playing field. After years of coaching together, Coach Steve and Coach Dean have come to know each other so well that each can anticipate the other's response to a specific challenge or opportunity. Building on the core philosophy that "success breeds confidence and confidence breeds greater success," they work together to instill this credo in the minds and hearts of all their players.

Despite having logged 17 seasons of LMYA coaching between them, they never tire of the challenge and opportunity that each new season brings: to educate, unify and inspire a new group of eager young charges. And as the final whistle sounds on yet another season, they file away another batch of great memories and hope to receive the ultimate gratification and measure of success – players who can't wait to sign up to play again next year.

Oakland Strokes Medal in 2008 Head of the American

Submitted by Irene Gessling



WV Lightweight 8, L to R: S. Goldman, A. Hofinga, R. D'Orazio, E. Lenczowski, J. Buffington, S. Coppock-Pector, A. Koenig, E. Sharf; not pictured, coxswain Mia Hamano Photo provided

The Oakland Strokes Women's Varsity 8 had a fantastic start to the season, winning the gold medal at the Head of the American Regatta Oct. 25 at Lake Natoma, Sacramento. Their time of 16:41 is the fastest time posted by a junior women's crew at Head of the American since 2001, and is a minute faster than the Strokes' own winning fastest time of 17:42 in 2005.

The rowers in the winning eight were Katie McKeen (Piedmont High School, grade 10), Nicole Sung-Jereczek (Piedmont, grade 11), Nikki Dahlberg-Seeth (Miramonte High School, grade 11), Camilla Polakoff (Bentley School, grade 11), Ali Mittelberger (Head Royce School, grade 12), Dana Walsh (Miramonte High School, grade 11),

Barbara Barnes (College Preparatory School, grade 12), Kelly Bauer (Miramonte High School, grade 11) and Molly Fehr – cox (Miramonte High School, grade 11).

The WV Lightweight 8 (pictured) became the first Oakland Strokes women's lightweight boat ever to win first place at the Head of the American. The crew finished with a posted time of 17:56, taking the gold.

The rowers were Eva Sharf (Head Royce, grade 12), Ayla Koenig (Berkeley High, grade 12), Sarah Goldman (Piedmont High, grade 11), Jessica Buffington (Berkeley High, grade 11), Sarah Coppock-Pector (Bishop O'Dowd, grade 12), Anne Hofinga (Miramonte, grade 11), Rosie D'Orazio (Bishop O'Dowd,

grade 12), Elizabeth Lenczowski (Miramonte, grade 11), Mia Hamano – cox (Piedmont, grade 12).

Oakland Strokes Men's Varsity 8 finished with a time of 15:27. The crew consists of coxswain Daniel Migdale (Miramonte), stroke Garrett Bell (Las Lomas, grade 12), Andre Ramos (Alameda, grade 11) Coleman Williams Campolindo, grade 12), Billy Deskin (Campolindo, grade 12), Stephen Gessling (Campolindo, grade 12) Alex Sheridan (Campolindo, grade 11), James Kwan (Piedmont, grade 11) and Matt Lenhart (Campolindo, grade 12).

The Oakland Strokes went on to take gold in the Head of the Estuary competition and Newport Autumn Rowing Festival.

SPORTS

LAMORINDA'S LOCAL SPORTS NEWS

MOL Football Champions



Photo submitted by Joanne Layschok

The MOL Football season came to a close over the weekend of Nov 8-9 with exciting play-offs and bowl match-ups. In the end, the Vikings (7-0 for the season) defeated the Cardi-

nals 13-7 in the NFC Division Superbowl (pictured), the AFC Division Bengals took the Bills 21-20 and in the Pac 10 it was the undefeated Irish over the Cardinals 14-8

Sherman Divers Make it Look Easy

(Based on information submitted by Steve Sherman)



Steve Sherman (5th from left first row) with his Diving Team Photo provided

A little water never hurt anyone! On a rainy Saturday, November 1, Lafayette's Sherman Swim School hosted the Sherman Fall Fun Meet. Sixty divers representing six diving clubs from around the Bay Area met to compete in the warm waters of the School's pools.

Divers from the Sherman Diving Team had a successful meet, including a 1st place spot for Moraga's Maren Kjell. Partial results (for Lamorinda divers):

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| 9 & Under Girls (Novice) | 6th place, Caroline King, Moraga |
| 11 & Under Girls (Novice) | 2nd place, Morgan Matrang, Moraga |
| 13 & Under Girls (Novice) | 2nd place, Rachael Purcell, Orinda; |
| | 3rd place, Carley Roberts, Orinda; |
| | 7th place, Lizzy Atkinson, Orinda |
| 13 & Under Girls (Junior Olympics) | 3rd place, Alyssa Parsons, Moraga |
| 14-18 Girls (Novice) | 6th place, Donna Brackett, Moraga |
| 14 & 15 Under Girls (Junior Olympics) | 1st place, Maren Kjell, Moraga |
| 16-18 Girls (Junior Olympics) | 2nd place, Heather Finertie, Moraga |
| 21-29 Women | 2nd place, Katie Copenhagen, Orinda |

Home Run Barrage

Lifts LBC to Desert Classic Championship

Submitted by Anne McNally



The LBC 12U Fall Ball Team Photo provided

Northern California's Lamorinda Baseball Club (LBC) 12U Fall Ball Team won the Las Vegas Desert Classic by defeating the South Bay Diamondbacks, also from Northern California, 11-3 in the championship game.

The LBC Fall Ball Team was made up of eight players from the 2008 11U TBS National Champion Lamorinda Cougars. In addition, the team was joined by two other 2008 Elite World Series participants: Michael Palos who traveled to Orlando with the Simi Predators and Noah Burnham of the 2008 10U Quarterfinalists Lamorinda Monarchs. Longtime Cougar Willie MacIver rounded out the squad as the team's shortstop.

In the championship game, starting pitcher Johnny

Breidenthal allowed 2 runs in 5 innings for the win. Tournament MVP Drew Downing came on to close out the game as he had successfully done throughout the tournament.

The tournament's most highly anticipated matchup occurred in the semifinals when LBC was pitted against the San Diego Stars. LBC's starting pitcher Daniel Slominski went the distance in the 3-1 victory.

The scoring for LBC began in the bottom of the first inning with a solo homerun by Palos. An inning later, D.B. Vidal drove in MacIver with a two-out single. In the bottom of the fifth, Breidenthal led off with a double off the wall. After MacIver's sacrifice bunt, Breidenthal scored on a wild pitch to provide the 2-run cushion.

The hard-hitting Stars didn't go away quietly in the top of the sixth inning. With the top of the order up, the Stars' lead-off hitter smashed a liner up the middle that was snagged by Slominski. The next hitter drove a ball to deep right centerfield that was tracked down by Walter Tucker. Then, with All-American Brady Aiken in the on-deck circle, third baseman Vidal made a play on a hard-hit grounder to end the game.

Earlier in the day, Joe Demers pitched a complete game 1-hitter in LBC's 9-1 win over the Las Vegas Warriors in the quarterfinals. The game was broken open by a grand slam by Slominski.

The story of the tournament was the power displayed by the LBC team. Even with a stiff desert wind blowing in from centerfield throughout the event, LBC pounded out 13 home runs in seven games. The attack was led by Palos and Demers, who each hit 5 homers. Slominski, who only played in three games, added two home runs and Breidenthal another.

Leadoff hitter Conner McNally and two-hitter Tucker consistently got on-base to set the table for the homerun hitters. Clutch line drives were also provided by Jake Rider, Downing, and Burnham to contribute to LBC's 73 runs in the event.