

SPORTS

LAMORINDA'S LOCAL SPORTS NEWS



Getting a Ticket to the Game

By Robin Schoettler Fox



Photo Tod Fierner

Need a ticket to an SMC game? Ask neighbors who've tried to buy one at the ticket office on game day – that doesn't work this season. Here's what does:

(1) **Don't be picky.** Click on SMCgaels.com, call (925)631-4392, or stop by the on-campus ticket office. Buy what's available now. Options are limited. Move quickly.

(2) **Clear February 21st on your calendar.** If any time on February 21st works for you, buy a Bracket Buster ticket now while they're easier to get. Once game time is announced in the next few weeks, tickets will sell quickly. Just know – the 7pm game time currently on the "Buy Ticket Now" SMCgaels.com link is a placeholder. The school had to enter a time in to make the program accept purchases. Print the Bracket Buster ticket that says 7pm and Neal McSherry, SMC's Director of Ticket Sales, says it's valid entry – just check back to see what the real tip-off time will be.

(3) **Keep checking back.** Ticket availability, according to McSherry, is fluid. Closer to game date, seats can open up. Student tickets left unclaimed, for example. Or tickets initially sent to competing schools to

sell on consignment to their fans might be returned unsold. Expect General Admission tickets.

(4) **Tap the secondary market.** We're not talking ticket scalpers here. Price is the face value on the ticket. SMC wants to fill all the seats, not just sell season tickets. So it's encouraging season ticket holders to resell individual game tickets that would go unused. Click on the SMCgaels.com ticket link. Anything priced above \$15 is coming from those season ticket holders.

(5) **Ask a neighbor.** According to McSherry, many season ticket holders live in Lamorinda. Buy. Beg. Trade for dog walking. Whatever.

Already got a ticket? You still have to get to tip-off. Just-in-time delivery doesn't work for that anymore either.

"Get there about an hour or an hour and a half before a game," says McSherry, particularly if you hold General Admission tickets.

Good seats – and parking -- go quickly.

Local Wrestlers Compete in Granada's Mat Classic

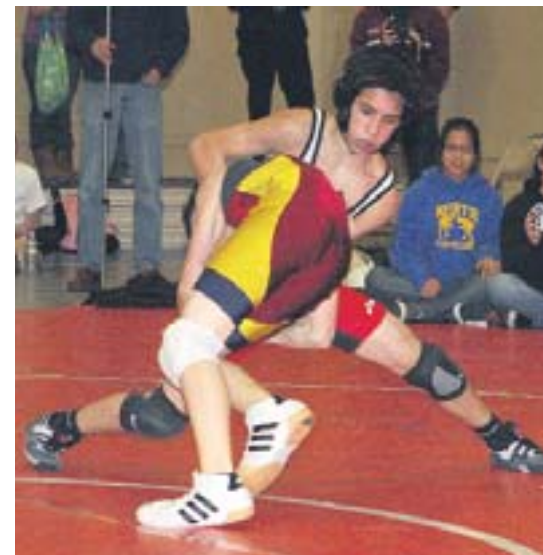


Photo Josephine Worth

Miramonte's Sam Worth (pictured w/ his Hayward competitor) wrestled a total of 5 matches to win the 145 pound weight class at the 8th annual Mat Classic hosted by Granada High School (Livermore) on January 3. Other local wrestlers who placed in the event include: Campo's Matt Kurkjian (fifth at 135 pounds) and Tom Flowers (seventh at 119 pounds), as well as Miramonte's Sean Ericson (eighth at 152 pounds).

Ringside at Campo's Dual Meet

By Robin Schoettler Fox



Campo's Wesley Caspillo, here defending, battled until he pinned Las Lomas Caldwell with 3 seconds left in the match



Campo wrestlers' excitement explodes when teammate Tom Flowers pins his opponent

There's something missing from the statistics from Thursday's dual wrestling meet between Campolindo and Las Lomas. The points, the pins, even the eventual Campolindo win (38-28), all that is true.

It's just that it felt like fans had witnessed something more than just a series of fourteen one-on-one wrestling matches.

"I told you it was going to be exciting," said Campo's head coach, Bob McLaughlin.

True. But it's not the missing piece.

Maybe it's just what happens when two essentially even teams come together with a full line-up, like these two teams had. Or maybe it helped that the competing coaches are actually friends.

What was clear was that by mid-match, it was easy to forget that center ring was just a mat, sitting in the center of the small Campolindo gym. Or, that the fans that filled the gym were these wrestlers' friends and family, many of them new to the program. And it was easy to forget that some of these wrestlers were this year's new recruits, people who hadn't always known one another.

Like Campo freshman Wesley

Caspillo, wrestling in the 103-pound weight-class, who had a thrilling come from behind victory, pinning his opponent with only 3 seconds left in the match, the crowd's roar filling the room at the ref's slap of the mat.

Or, senior Max Schenk, the latest addition to the Campo wrestling roster, on deck for his inaugural wrestle and who had attracted a cluster of new fans – his football buddies.

"It's more a fight, than a sport," Schenk said afterwards, having earned a few points before being pinned 3:01 minutes into the match. But he wasn't complaining. He'd been looking to join a new team, pursue a new sport.

Win or lose, everyone, including Schenk, knew that he'd solved a big problem on the Campo wrestling roster, filling a hole where the 215 pound slot had been. With Schenk's arrival, the team's forfeit days were over.

Campo has a large roster this year, having attracted more than 30 freshmen after demonstrations in P.E. classes. Wrestling is a tough sport, demanding across a variety of training and lifestyle disciplines. Some of those freshmen dropped off, but most have hung in there, wrestling both the varsity and junior varsity level.

"The kids really enjoy each other," said Campo's assistant coach and former Campo wrestler, Tom Renno, who also teaches at the school. "The closeness of the team is I think what keeps kids engaged, and they stay on the team instead of thinking, 'I don't really care about being here.'"

And there it was – the thing missing from the statistics. The things fans had witnessed.

Camaraderie.

Like they had each other's back.

DFAL Campolindo 38, Las Lomas 28 At Campolindo	
103:	Caspillo (C) p. Caldwell, 5:57;
112:	Allen (LL) p. Ingersoll, 2:59;
119:	Flowers (C) p. Sirott, 2:30;
125:	Aw (LL) d. Jackson, 12-3;
130:	Toupin (C) d. Larsen, 34-18;
135:	Barnum (LL) d. Kurkjian, 7-6;
140:	Andersen (C) d. Hunter, 12-7;
145:	Gallindo (C) d. Samuel, 4-1;
152:	Robinson (C) d. Barry, 10-5;
160:	Gardner (LL) d. Vohar, 7-5;
171:	Dougherty (LL) p. Smith, 1:04;
189:	Angelides (C) p. Gamble, 1:10;
215:	Hernandez (LL) p. Schenk, 3:01;
285:	Field (C) p. Cundy, 3:14.

Orinda Academy Eagles Chase School Record



Submitted by Mitch Goldman

The Orinda Academy boys' basketball team, shown here getting pumped before taking the court in mid-December, is off to its strongest start in the school's basketball program history, with a 12-4 record at press time, including

taking 2nd and 3rd place trophies in the Pescadero Hoop Dreams Small School Invitational and the Geyersville Small Schools Classic, respectively.

Orinda Academy plays in the Small Schools Bridge League

(SSBL), dubbed the "Bridge" league because about half of the games require one of the teams to cross a bridge. SSBL includes teams from Marin, Sonoma, and Napa as well as the East Bay cities of El Sobrante, Pleasant Hill, and Oakland.

This season the Eagles are led by "Twin Tower" co-captains, David Treas (#32) and Brandon "the beast" Davis (#30). Davis leads the league in rebounding and is, says Coach Mitch Goldman, the team's emotional leader, while senior Aubrey Love (#3) is the team's "energizer and defensive stopper," able to change the momentum of the game.

Co-captains Chris Scott (#22) and Dylan Goldman (#12), also seniors, run the offense, providing leadership and occasional clutch 3-pointers.

With this senior court leadership, Coach Goldman says that the 2008-9 Orinda Academy team may surpass the school record for season wins, currently held by the 1996-7 squad (15-6).

"I've coached almost 30 years and I've never had a team that has taken on more responsibility, worked any harder, or missed less practice time than this group of fine men," says Coach Goldman.

Lafayette Ice Hockey Goalie to Represent North America

Submitted by Christina Churchill



Photo provided

Lafayette's Nathan Churchill has been selected to represent North America at this year's 1891 World Cup of Hockey in Stockholm, Sweden. Nathan, a 12-year-old 7th grader at Stanley Middle School, is a goalie for the Los Angeles Selects PeeWee AAA-hockey team, currently ranked 22nd in the national standings. Nathan has been traveling to Los Angeles every Friday morning to practice and play hockey games with the Los Angeles Selects, and was selected to attend an elite tryout in Detroit, Michigan, held on January 1st.

Nathan beat out goalies from Toronto, Cleveland, Dallas, Detroit, and Chicago to secure the starting goalie position on the 96 West Coast

Selects AAA-team that he'll compete with for the 1891 World Cup of Hockey tournament. The team comes together for the first time in Iceland to practice for 4 days before going to Sweden to compete in the 1891 World Cup of Hockey in Stockholm.

Len Shapiro, an avid hockey fan and owner of Lafayette's Mountain Mike's Pizza (3614 Mt. Diablo Blvd), is hosting two Family Pizza Nights – January 29 and February 26 – to help defray Nathan's travel costs. 20% of all pizza purchases will be sent directly to Selects Hockey in Nathan's name. Come by anytime after 5pm.

For more information contact Randy Churchill at churchill-randy@gmail.com or 925-787-4622.

Local Rider is NorCal 11&U Equitation Champion



Sheri Scott Photography

Gabby Cirelli, a Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School 7th grader, is NorCal Hunter Jumper Association's 2008 11&U Equitation Champion, having competed in 7 horse shows to accumulate 38 points, the highest among competitors in her division. At the awards ceremony, Gabby was also presented with the first-ever Talia S. Klein Perpetual Trophy, created in memory of Talia Klein, the 2007 11&U Equitation Champion who was killed along with her father in a private plane crash just weeks prior to last year's ceremony.

Shown in the photo riding Calabria, a 6-year old gelding, Gabby competes as a junior horse rider on the A-show California circuit. Gabby trains with Lindsay and Matt Archer at Shady Lane Farms in Alamo. She rides 5 days a week and travels to horse shows about twice a month.

Regarding Joaquin Moraga, Gabby's mother, Danielle Cirelli, says: "The school has been very accommodating in working with her father in a private plane crash just weeks prior to last year's ceremony."



SMC Gaels Home Games

Sat, Jan 24	2:00 PM
Women's Basketball	San Diego
Thu, Jan 29	7:00 PM
Women's Basketball	Gonzaga
Sat, Jan 31	2:00 PM
Women's Basketball	Portland

Thu, Feb 5	8:30 PM
Men's Basketball	San Francisco Moraga (McKeon Pavilion)
Fri, Feb 6	12:00 PM
Women's Tennis	Rice
Sat, Feb 7	2:00 PM
Women's Basketball	Santa Clara

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