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DFAL Basketball Moves Towards NCS Playoffs

By Robin Schoettler Fox





Photo Doug Kohen

The DFAL boys' basketball league championship title already belongs to Miramonte, who'll be guaranteed a Division III NCS playoff berth and likely initial home court advantage. Undefeated (11-0) thus in the DFAL, the Mats have a Tuesday bye and then one last regular season game - at Alhambra on Friday.

The real battle among boys' varsity teams is being waged among the runners up, where NCS playoff berths are less assured.

Campolindo, last year's NCS Division III champs, faces Alhambra first this week, a team the Cougars beat 76-46 in the first half of DFAL play. Results of the Feb 17 game aren't available at press time but one thing is clear: The Cougars enter these final regulation games strong and confident, coming off an amazing quadruple (yes - 4) over-time 90-87 win against Dublin.

Meanwhile, Acalanes' first game this week is against Dublin, a team the Dons beat 65-61, on the Don's home court. But after losing such a tough battle to Campo, Dublin is undoubtedly hungry for a win. And it's the Dons' turn to drive down the 680.

However the week begins, everyone knows how it ends for these cross-town rivals - Campolindo and Acalanes face each other on Friday, always a hard-to-predict emotional event that can easily produce sell-out local crowds. In January, Campo beat Acalanes, a close 52-49, in the Cougar gym. Now the Dons' host the show. Game time? 5:30 p.m.

At midseason, the girls' DFAL basketball story had a similar ring - Miramonte registered an impressive 5-1 DFAL record, seemingly on tract for another run at the NCS championship. Back to back early February losses to Campolindo (71-61) and Acalanes (52-49) slowed Miramonte's DFAL momentum, and energized the competition. The Lady Mats enter the last week of regulation play at 8-3, behind Dublin (9-1), whose only league loss was to the Mats, 62-61, on February 6.

With a strong finish, on paper it looks like either Campolindo (7-3) or Acalanes (6-4) could potentially catch up as well. But the Lady Matadors have already played 11 games, get that Tuesday bye, and now face only Alhambra (1-9 DFAL). Dublin, on the other hand, starts the week hosting Acalanes, a team they beat the first round (43-33) but which is on a four game winning streak. Then Friday, Dublin faces Las Lomas (1-9 DFAL).

The first time the Lady Cougars battled Alhambra, it was a blow-out, 76-46. Even if Campo can repeat the win on Tuesday they still have to face the Dons at the end of the week. Last time, the Cougars beat Acalanes, 56-42. But now there's that Acalanes winning streak and the emotions this local match-up inspires. And an Acalanes venue. Game time is 7pm.

After Friday, varsity basketball moves to NCS playoffs. Brackets should post on cifncs.org on Sunday, February 22. First round games begin Tuesday, February 24.



Lauren Kimble Photo Jordan Fong

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