

Last Second Heroics Seals Victory

Acalanes defeats Las Lomas; Dougherty Valley

By Kevin D. Shallat



Acalanes defends against Las Lomas junior running back #5 Marquis Walters

Photo Doug Kohen

The Mike Ivankovich era has officially begun for the Acalanes Dons football team. The first year head coach jumped out to a fast start in league play on Friday, October 2nd, as the Dons hosted the Las Lomas Knights in their first league game of the year. Acalanes continued its winning ways on Friday, October 9th against Dougherty Valley. The Dons defeated Dougherty 21-14 and with the win improve to 3-3 overall and 2-0 in league.

The Knights looked poised to run away with the victory as they led 21-6 at halftime. However, the second half played out like a movie script for the Dons, as they came back to beat Las Lomas by one point, bringing the final score to 36-35.

Acalanes entered the game coming off a tough preseason in which they managed only one win, beating Justin-Siena 35-20, while dropping two.

Friday's regular season opener looked grim in the first half. The Dons managed only one score in the first half of this game, which came on a five yard run by senior runningback Bo McSwine, but the

Dons missed their PAT. The team was also given quite a scare when Acalanes senior tight end, Tommy Capello, was taken off the field with an apparent concussion. "Giving the thumbs up to his teammates and inspiring them to continue, letting them know it was okay, showed a lot of courage," said Ivankovich.

The Dons came out of the locker room a different team.

Senior runningback Tyler Malley returned the second half kickoff 36 yards, which set up a 64-yard touchdown run by McSwine. Seconds later, the Dons recovered the football on an onside kick from senior kicker Ben Ewing. The two runningbacks for Acalanes combined for 197 rushing yards on the game.

At the 10:34 mark in the third quarter, Acalanes' junior quarterback Michael Leamy converted their first pass play attempt of the game to junior wide receiver Lucas Levine. The play only garnered five yards, but it was enough for a first down and enough to get Leamy back on track. Leamy finished 5-13 for 61 yards, but it was his pass plays on third and fourth downs kept Acalanes alive.

Las Lomas increased their lead to 28-20 in the fourth quarter but Acalanes was able to tie the score on a fourth down pass play to senior tight end Mat Lewis in the right hand side of the end zone. Leamy went right back to Lewis in the same spot for the two-point conversion, tying the game at 28-28.

After Las Lomas runningback Marquis Waters scored a touchdown to give the Knights a 35-28 lead, the Dons were forced to try and tie the game with just over three minutes to play.

With 24 seconds to play, Leamy connected on a touchdown pass to Lewis. All the Dons needed to do was convert their PAT to take the game into overtime. Instead, coach Ivankovich decided to go for a two-point conversion. McSwine received the handoff and bulled his way straight up the middle for the two point score, and the one point victory.

When asked about the play call of the coach in the last few seconds of the game, Leamy said, "That's what I wanted the whole time. Everyone wanted that, and we knew we'd get it. There was nothing stopping us."



Acalanes' running backs, seniors Bo McSwine and Tyler Malley (pictured), combined for 197 rushing yards in the game

Photo Doug Kohen



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Women Hit the Jack Pot in Vegas

OCC Tennis Club Finishes Third at Nationals

Submitted by Riki Sorenson



Back: Laura Pagano, Linda Jones, Julia Bates, Miyuki Sheppard, Marianne Lehman, Linda Davidson, Sarah Loughlin, Susan Lundstrom, Sheila Eversole, Ayako Schaham, Blair Paige, front Sharyn Lawrence, Riki Sorenson

Photo Jen Pottheiser

Lamorinda women's tennis team captured third place at the United States Tennis Association (USTA) National Women's Team 4.0 Championships in Las Vegas on October 4. The tournament included sixteen other regional champions. The team competed for the first time in the tournament, besting 176 local teams to earn the berth.

The team, sponsored by the Orinda Country Club (OCC), has a roster of 26 players, thirteen of whom traveled to Las Vegas to compete for the national title. Players range in age from 28 years old to 60 years old.

OCC prevailed in its first three matches of the Nationals weekend with three 4-1 victories, to earn a spot in the final four.

Beginning at 7:30 a.m. on Sunday morning, they faced the Las Vegas team on their home turf, in extremely windy conditions. OCC battled, but lost 1-4. They turned around for a second match at 10:00 a.m. versus Michigan, winning 4-1 to earn third place.

During competition Marianne Lehman suffered a potentially career-threatening wrist injury, forcing her to captain from the sidelines. Another team member, Sharyn Lawrence, suffered from bronchitis and was sidelined as well.

"These are the women who paved the road so we younguns could compete. They got us through a pressure-packed series of play-offs, districts, and sectionals to make it to Nationals. It is not only

bitterly disappointing that they could not participate, but their absence weakened the team significantly," noted Julia Bates, a young mom and rookie on this year's team.

The team is captained by Lehman (Moraga) and Linda Davidson (Orinda), and coached by Brian Thomas of OCC. National's participants include singles players Riki Sorenson, Ayako Schaham, and Blair Paige, and doubles players Sarah Loughlin, Linda Jones, Susan Lundstrom, Sheila Eversole, Bates, Miyuki Sheppard, Laura Pagano and Lawrence.

Davidson (Orinda),

Lawrence, Loughlin, and Lehman (Moraga), considered "seniors" by USTA definition (over 50), have been playing recreational tennis for twenty years. This generation just missed the benefits of Title IX, but these women have cultivated their athleticism and competitive spirit out on the court.

The team also includes a "youthful" group of women (mostly in their 40's) who did benefit from Title IX, participated in high school and collegiate athletics and who now, after raising families, are re-starting their athletic careers through competitive team tennis.


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