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Lady Mats Volleyball Fall in NCS Semi-Finals

By Tom Owen, submitted by Tony Diamantidis



The 2009 DFAL Champions Miramonte Lady Matadors. Top row from Left: Margo Boyd, Kirsten Rutledge, Maddie Higgins, Captain Lissa Gilbert, Captain Haley Sayres, Audrey Breitweiser, Coach Shannon Ross. Middle Row: Isabelle Shapiro, Captain Mary Diamantidis, Captain Juliana Stivanicevic, Sarah Vaccarro, Sophia Diamantidis. Bottom Row: Jane Siri, Mollie Swan. Photo: Tony Diamantidis

honorable mention.

Miramonte was ranked #2 in the Bay Area for most of the school season, behind only San Jose's Archbishop Mitty High School, which was also ranked as the nation's number one high school team.

First year head coach Shannon Ross will be tuning up her skills as coach of the Xceleration Volleyball Club's 15s team during the high school offseason, before returning to coach the Lady Matadors again next year.

From the five departing seniors, two are pursuing college volleyball paths: Stivanicevic has committed to play for the California Golden Bears of UC Berkeley, and Diamantidis is in the final stages of securing a spot at Columbia University.

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After one of the most successful seasons in its history, Miramonte's playoff run ended with a 3-0 loss to visiting Drake High School on Wednesday, November 18th. Miramonte, 26-3, captured the Diablo Foothills Athletic League title with a perfect 12-0 record.

Miramonte was ranked first in the North Coast Sectional (NCS) seeding meeting and received a bye in the first round of the NCS tournament. The Matadors faced Sonoma Valley High School in the second round and easily won with a 3-0 sweep, 27-25, 25-4, 27-25. In the semi-finals the Mats faced the Sir Francis Drake Pirates. Miramonte came out slow against the visitors and fell behind in the first game. A late rally brought the Lady Matadors close, but they could not overcome the slow start and lost 22-25. In the second set Miramonte came out strong but could not maintain momentum and Drake again took control. The second set ended the same as the first with a 22-25 loss for the Mats. In the last game of the match, Miramonte seemed unable to control Drake's quick tempo and fell 18-25. Drake will meet Bishop O'Dowd in the NCS final.

The Miramonte Lady Matadors had a season of success. The team finished first in the Albany Invitational tournament and third in the Northgate Invitational tournament. Six players receive DFAL All-League honors, which included all five graduating seniors. Senior outside hitter Juliana Stivanicevic was named league MVP for the second consecutive year. Senior setter/middle hitter Mary Diamantidis was named to the all-league for the third year, including first team honors for the second consecutive year. Senior outside hitter Haley Sayres received first-team all-league honors and is on the all-league team for the second year. Senior libero Lissa Gilbert and sophomore setter Sarah Vaccarro were both named on the all-league second team, and outside hitter Michelle Ent received