

# SPORTS LAMORINDA'S LOCAL SPORTS NEWS



## Mats Basketball Records Fourth Preseason Victory

Miramonte Defeats Terra Linda

Submitted by John Hatfield



Davis Louie (#1) contributed nine points in the victory. The Miramonte Matadors boys' varsity basketball team used a combination of a powerful defense and a spirited offensive effort to defeat the Terra Linda Trojans on Friday, December 18th.

County League and have a 3-2 record in the pre-season.

The Mats came out strong in the first quarter, quickly took the lead and led the rest of the game to achieve their fourth victory, 75-55.

Brown attributed the victory to strong leadership by the three senior co-captains—forward Chris Hatfield, forward Spenser McDonald and guard Davis Louie—and to a great overall team defensive effort. “The Mats held the up-tempo Trojans to a low scoring game with the Trojans only scoring 22 points in the first half. This is one of the best team efforts of the year. All 12 team members played well together and I’m very proud of them and their accomplishment tonight,” said Brown.

The Matadors’ offensive success was a team effort with balanced scoring from five of the returning varsity players; Hatfield



Front Row from left to right: Kazz Tamura, Nick Mora, Troy Akin, Grant Huhn, co captain Davis Louie, Brian Henson  
Back Row from left to right: Payam Vadi, Ross Dolbec, co-captain Chris Hatfield, Co captain Spenser McDonald, Ross Anderson, Anthony Piganelli, Jack Pietrykowski

Photo Jordan Fong

with 14 points, senior guard Troy Akin with 12 points, senior guard Payam Vadi with 12 points, McDonald with 10 points and Louie with nine points.

Coach Brown noted McDonald’s defensive effort in holding Terra Linda’s Christian Manoli

to far less than his average. Hatfield’s double-digit rebounding and four assists were also influential in the game’s outcome.

McDonald and Hatfield agreed that it was “...great defense and playing hard. Now that we have our football guys back

and they’ve played a few games we’re really coming together as a team.”

Friday night’s game was part of a very tough pre-season for the Mats. Miramonte will be going to the Torrey Pines Tournament in San Diego in December.



Spenser McDonald (#2) added ten points for the home team



#11 Grant Huhn, #3 Kazz Tamura



#35 Anthony Piganelli, #10 Jack Pietrykowski Photos Andy Scheck

## Six Pack Plus One Sign with Top Schools

Seven Miramonte Rowers to Row at Collegiate Level

By Lou Fancher



Coxswain Molly Fehr (Miramonte) and rowers (from stroke to bow) are Camilla Polakoff (Bentley High School), Nikki Dahlberg-Seeth (Miramonte), Kelly Bauer (Miramonte), Ali Mittleberger (Brown), Dana Walsh (Miramonte), Barbara Barnes (Stanford), Nicole Sung-Jereczek (Piedmont High School), Katie McKeen (Piedmont High School) Photo Leann Petersen

There’s something in the air at Miramonte High School. Little else could explain the seven young women rowing their way to graduation and entry into the nation’s top colleges.

Derek Byrnes, head coach of the Oakland Strokes (OS), where the seven Miramonte girls train and race, cannot explain this year’s phenomenon, but does speak to the transformational impact of rowing. “Rowing creates a determined, more vocal, more self-assured young woman,” he says.

There’s a hypnotic factor to learning a single skill, then practicing it over and over before performing it—like meditation, it focuses the mind. And like all sports, it tests the body. “Once you start, you can’t stop,” says Bill Fehr, Chair of OS’s fundraising. “At 500 meters the pain sets in and you have to find an inner strength to keep going ’cause if you stop, it’s all

over.” Not a rower himself, but father of Molly Fehr, the team’s coxswain, he downplays his own words but not his daughter’s achievements.

Molly Fehr, steering the boat and guiding the crew of eight rowers from her position as coxswain, presents an impressive picture. At 5’3”, she’s a sixteen-year old charismatic commando hidden in a petite package. Headed to Stanford, the top school in the NCAA’s Division 1 women’s rowing rankings, Fehr understands her role. “You’re directing eight girls who are all bigger and stronger than you are,” she says. Earning their trust and respect comes from being on top of every practice. “The best boats are the [ones with the] girls who are best friends, or who become so during the season,” she explains, offering the first glimpse into the Miramonte girls’ success.

Rowing appears to attract a special breed of athlete. Nikki Dahlberg-Seeth, once an avid basketball player, discovered a surprising affinity for the sport. “My mom

dragged me to the summer camp,” she admits, “but after I started the first season, it was definitely something I wanted to do.” Asked what particular skills she brings to the team, her answer is simple, but revealing: “I’m good at following.” She’s not shy, or falsely humble, she just gets it. “There’s a code of conduct,” she says, “we talk to each other, but you’re not pointing at someone and saying what’s wrong, because it’s about the team.” Sitting in a boat, attending to Fehr’s calls, and rhythmically mirroring the stroke rower, has taught Dahlberg-Seeth the value of community and the power of cooperation.

Whatever lessons the Miramonte Seven have learned, it’s clear that rowing has made them magnets



2007 freshman four with cox. Left to right: Gia Hallaman, Kelly Bauer, Dana Walsh, Molly Fehr, Nikki Dahlberg-Seeth Photo Beth Anderson

for college recruiters. Dahlberg-Seeth will attend the University of Michigan, Fehr will row for Stanford, and the remaining five rowers have signed National Letters of In-

tervention with Lehigh, Harvard, the University of Virginia, and the University of Pennsylvania (Wharton). While this year’s “six-pack plus one” hail from Lamorinda, the OS

welcomes student athletes from all over the East Bay. The club offers scholarships for kids from underserved communities and two week trial periods for novice rowers.

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