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## Former Campolindo Rivals Work to Build JV Water Polo Team

By Lucy Amaral



Senior Jeffrey Strausser at Campolindo Water Polo summer practice Photo Lucy Amaral

Two Miramonte grads, taught to see Campolindo as their ultimate foe, now hope to build its JV water polo team into a highly competitive, successful program. Orinda residents Jon Conner and Yurii Hanley have taken over the coaching positions for Campolindo's boys' 2010 JV water polo team.

"There is so much talent in this area," said Conner. "We want to build a strong JV program and develop these players not only with the sport, but in their overall lives."

The Campolindo boys' water polo team, a powerhouse in the past, has slipped in recent years said Conner. Last year, Campolindo came in sixth place in the 2009 NCS Boys Water Polo Championship, while Acalanes and Miramonte battled it out for first place.

Both Hanley and Conner played water polo for Miramonte - their team won the 1985 State Championship - and for Cal before returning to Orinda to raise their own families. Both men also spent time coaching Campolindo water polo at one time or another, so the role is a familiar one. "There is a need for parent involvement in high school sports in the community," Connor said. "A lot of coaches choose club sports exclusively so that leaves high school sports without support. We saw (Campolindo's) ad in the paper and realized

they needed help."

Conner said that his goal is to make Campolindo's JV team not only a strong feeder for Varsity, but a place that is fun and where kids actively seek out the team. "We want Campolindo to be successful, have a great time, and get back to the same competitive level as Miramonte and Acalanes," said Conner.

Previous experience with water polo is not necessary, explained Conner. "We are looking for athletes," he emphasized. "Players will feel more confident if they are good swimmers, but it's a sport that takes all shapes and sizes." He added that the eye-hand coordination of a baseball player and the teamwork of basketball players are great examples of potential players.

"Yurii and Jon bring many years of experience between them as both players and coaches to Campolindo Boys Water Polo," said head varsity coach Dan Reyes. "I am thrilled they have decided to join the program as junior varsity coaches and am excited for where our team is headed with them on board."

Practices for the season begin August 16. For more

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