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It Only Takes One Dons defeat rival Campolindo, 1-0

By Alex Crook



Sam Palano (25) struggles with Bryan Berlier (3) for control Photo Doug Kohen

On a chilly January 26th, a rivalry was renewed on the pitch as undefeated Campolindo hosted Acalanes in a boys' soccer matchup.

The Cougars came into the match on a two-game winning streak, while Acalanes looked to snap a single game skid, a loss to Berkeley. Campo sat atop the DFAL standings having defeated the Dons in their December 10th matchup, while the Dons came into the match at number two; things were about to change.

There were some great chances for both teams in the opening forty minutes, as both the Dons and Cougars went back and forth exchanging missed opportunities.

Late in the opening half, Campo senior captain Jaison Kimura was awarded a free kick which was blocked. Kimura quickly recovered the ball and floated the rebound over Dons junior goalkeeper Jackson Foote for the easy goal. But after some reviewing by the referees, the goal was waved off, and the game remained scoreless.

Campo finished off the half with a few chances, but could not capitalize, and both teams went to halftime without a goal.

The second half picked up where the first left off, with tremendous effort and physicality. But seven minutes into the second half, Acalanes senior forward and captain Nick Pereira received a great

pass from the middle of the field and easily converted it into a goal to put the Dons up 1-0.

That was the spark Acalanes needed and they controlled the tempo the rest of the way.

Campo put together a late surge, but it was not enough to overcome the Dons' defense.

Acalanes held on to take down their rivals from Moraga, 1-0. With the win the Dons take sole possession of first place in DFAL - although each team only carries one loss, the Dons have one tie to the Cougars two.

"They had their chances but it came down to execution like we expected. They had control of the game in the beginning but once the game got going it was very even. Our attitude didn't change much in the second half, except we were more focused about defense after the goal," said Pereira, whose lone goal sparked the Dons to victory. Pereira currently leads Acalanes with six goals on the year.

After the loss, Cougar senior goalkeeper Alex Mangels said, "It's tough, but it's really hard to go undefeated the entire season. Not a lot of teams can do it. We thought we could, but clearly tonight we just weren't on top of our game. We were outplayed a little bit, and it just took that one goal to put us away."

Up next, the Dons look to stay hot as they take on Alhambra in Martinez, while Campo tries to get back on track when they visit Dublin.

Fellow Lamorinda rival Miramonte is hanging in there with a 4-7-3 record, most recently coming off of a 2-1 loss to Dougherty Valley. The Mats currently sit in sixth place in DFAL.



Adrian Chow-danel (4) heads the ball Photo Doug Kohen

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