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Football Season Preview

By Caitlin Graveson



Acalanes returns Spencer Henderson a Defense Second Team All-DFAL selection. Photos Benjamin Williams

against Analy of Sebastopol.

"I expect him to continue to improve every game this year and be that much better," Schram says. "He is one of the top quarterbacks in the nation."

Miramonte also returns top players for their senior season in wide receiver Jack Pietrykowski, Second Team All-DFAL player last season, Luke Carrillo on defense, Second Team All-DFAL, and Miles Honen, and Kevin Booze, Honorable Mentions

The Matadors lose eight all-league players to graduation.

"It's tough, we lost a lot of linemen, but we have really skilled athletes coming back," notes Schram.

Miramonte travels to Analy for their opening game on September 2. Tough preseason match-ups come in Kennedy High School of Richmond and Fremont High School of Oakland on September 9 and 16, respectively.

"We hope to stay healthy and play well every game to defend our title," Schram states.

In Moraga, Campolindo faces a rebuilding year. Plagued by injuries last season, Campolindo still managed to sneak into the playoffs, but lost in the opening round to eventual winner Cardinal Newman.

"We had so many injuries in a year we could have done something," head coach Kevin Macy says of the 2010 season. "We are a small school and are sort of hopeful one year and then rebuilding the next."

Campolindo finished 5-6 overall last year but only took one game in league play against Dublin, finishing 1-5.

This year playoffs seem to be a long shot. "This year, it's a much bigger goal," Macy admits.

"We have no returning players with any line experience," he adds, "They are brand new to the varsity experience."

The Cougars return an experienced quarterback in junior Bret Stephens. Stephens, a Second Team All-DFAL selection last year, will return for his junior season.

"We have a strong quarterback," Macy says, "All of our success will have to run through him."

Although regretful about putting that much pressure on Stephens, Macy believes he can handle it. "It's tough to put pressure on him like that, but he is not going to freeze up in that situation."

"They are all ready to go in that family," Macy says, referring to Stephens's family football legacy.

Campolindo also returns wide receiver Karl Thorton, a Second Team All-DFAL selection, for his senior season and Jaime Vega and Dan Fadelli, both Second Team All-DFAL defense selections.

Campolindo opens its season with a home game against Moreau Catholic on September 2. Other match-ups include games against El Cerrito and St. Patrick/St. Vincent on September 16 and 23, respectively.

"We are a small school but there is a risk that teams might lose. We will play anybody we can get," Macy says.

Acalanes also qualified for the playoffs and lost in the first round last season. The Dons finished 5-6 overall and 2-4 in league play, taking games from Dublin and Campolindo.

The Dons expect to be better this season, retuning over half of their starters from last year.

Summer ends mid-August for fall athletes with the start of practice and football players know this better than anyone. Working two-a-days beginning on August 15, the Lamorinda football programs are gearing up for the season beginning on September 30. Miramonte looks to be Lamorinda's top contender, while Campolindo faces a rebuilding year and Acalanes hopes to take advantage of returning players.

Miramonte finished atop the DFAL standings last year, going 5-1 in league play, their only loss to second place Las Lomas. The Matadors finished 11-2 overall, recording their second loss of the season from the eventual NCS winner, Cardinal Newman of Santa Rosa, in the semi-finals of the NCS tournament.

The Matadors experienced a coaching change in the offseason. Head coach John Wade left the program and was replaced by longtime assistant coach Jack Schram. Before coming to Miramonte in 2006, Schram was the head coach at Encinal in Alameda from 1990-2005.

"I am looking forward to it," Schram says of his first season as Miramonte head coach. "We want to win every game."

The Matadors may have a chance to do that with quarterback Ross Anderson at the helm. Returning for his senior season, Anderson was named First Team All-DFAL last year. He led the Mats in their playoff run as a junior, notching 152 yards on 22 carries in the opening round

"We will be competitive but to what degree, we will have to wait until we play some games to find out," says head coach Mike Ivankovich of the 2011 Acalanes team.

Acalanes returns Second Team All-DFAL selections in running back Aaron Edwards and defensively Michael Brady and Spencer Henderson.

"We have a lot of senior returning starters," says Ivankovich, "that's what you want."

"We don't want to be rebuilding forever, our goal is to win a league championship," Ivankovich explains.

The Dons lose top players to graduation most notably, Trent Baker, a First Team All-DFAL selection for offense and defense.

Offensively, the Dons will mix things up this year, Ivankovich says. "We are adjusting a little bit this year to be more productive in the passing game and less predictable offensively."

Acalanes is also strong at the running back position, with four players vying for the starting position. "It will come down to who's productive," states Ivankovich.

Preseason begins for the Dons with a road game at Ygnacio Valley on September 3. The Dons will also face playoff teams from last season, San Marin and Healdsburg High School on September 17 and 23, respectively.



Ross Anderson is predicted to be one of top quarterbacks in the DFAL this season.



The Matadors welcome Jack Schram as the new head coach.

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