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Dons Upend Mats in Close Game Campolindo stays perfect in DFAL

By Conrad Bassett



James Griffin (22) Photos Andy Scheck

Last week all three of the Lamorinda boys' teams played a rivalry game. Miramonte hosted Acalanes on January 23 and the Mats traveled to Campolindo on January 25 to complete the first half of the Diablo Foothill Athletic League regular season. All teams brought winning overall records into the rivalry match-ups.

In a game that had 12 lead changes, the Dons (12-6 overall) managed to hold off the Matadors (13-4) to win, 58-56.

Before the game, Dons' coach Darrell Hirashima, Jr. noted that his team was prepared for the challenge. "The team looks ready tonight and our players are improving as a team. I am looking for a strong inside game from Buster Souza."

Miramonte's senior captain Ross Anderson opened the scoring on a short jump shot and a few moments later, Dons' senior James Griffin answered with a 3-point shot to take the lead.

The Mats held a 20-16 lead at the end of the first quarter behind sophomore Joey Goodreault's six points and junior Kiran Shastri's free throws. Shastri went five-of-six from the line.

In the second quarter, the Dons came out on fire. Acalanes outscored Miramonte 20-11 to take a 36-31 lead at the half.

To start the second half, Griffin scored Acalanes' first seven points to help build the Dons' biggest lead, 41-33. Following an exchange of baskets, the Mats rallied back. They went on a 12-0 run led by Shastri's seven points to regain the lead, 47-43.

The fourth quarter was close and neither team led by more than four points. The Dons had a 53-52 lead with 1:47 to go.

The Mats fought back to within one with 7.9 seconds when Buster Souza came up with a big play inside. He blocked Shastri to give Acalanes the ball with seconds left in the game. Miramonte immediately fouled Dons' senior Trevor Masland who made one from the charity stripe, leaving Miramonte with seven seconds to tie or win. The Dons played tenacious defense and the Mats did not make their last shot.

Griffin led all scorers with 25 points. Souza paced the Dons with 10 points, 10 rebounds and three key blocks.

Shastri led Miramonte with 19 points, while Goodreault added 18.

Just two days later, on Wednesday night, the action moved over to Moraga where Campolindo hosted Miramonte before a packed crowd. The Matadors struck first on a layup from junior Derek Lin, but that was Miramonte's only lead of the game.

On the next possession, Campo junior Jack Evans nailed a three to give the Cougars the lead. The teams exchanged baskets with Campo leading 12-9 at the end of the first period.

Campo started the second quarter on a 17-4 run on their way to a 39-20 halftime lead.

Campo added to its lead in the third period at one time leading by as many as 28 points. Senior Griffin Piatt added seven points.

In the fourth quarter, Miramonte closed the gap by outscoring Campo by 18-11, but could not overcome the third quarter deficit. The final was 66-46.

Evans led Campolindo with ten points. Shastri had 21 for Miramonte.

Campo coach Matt Watson was pleased with how his team played together. "So far we have had seven different kids get game high score, which goes to show how dedicated the kids are to the team concept."

"These kids work hard in practice to make each other better every day. They are very team-oriented kids and these young men are very good basketball players, but they are even better people," he continued.

The week was completed with some non-rivalry games. On Thursday, Miramonte dropped a close non-league game at Concord 72-65 and is now 13-7 overall and 3-3 in the DFAL.

Last Friday, Campolindo ran its record to 7-0 DFAL and 18-2 overall by beating Alhambra 80-53, and Acalanes fell to 13-8 (2-5 DFAL) losing 57-45 to Las Lomas.

Acalanes played Campolindo on Tuesday, January 31 after the press deadline. Miramonte travels to Acalanes on February 14 and hosts Campolindo on February 16.



Jack Evans (21) had ten points against Miramonte.

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