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Mats, Dons play in NCS Semifinals; Qualify for NorCals

By Conrad Bassett



Senior Taylor Kizziee had 13 points on Senior Night.

The first two rounds of the North Coast Section playoffs were completed last week and the semifinals will be played tonight. Both Miramonte and Acalanes had byes in the first round. Miramonte blasted Tamalpais and Acalanes defeated Anly in the second round to move on to the semifinals.

After the initial seeding meeting on February 19, all three Lamorinda girls' teams were selected to play in the NCS playoffs.

Miramonte finished its regular season at a perfect 26-0, winning their final at home on Senior Night over Campolindo, 65-38. All of Miramonte's players contributed to the final win including senior Taylor Kizziee, who led the team with 13 points. The near-capacity crowd honored her by singing "Happy Birthday." The Mats undefeated season put them in the second seed position behind Bishop O'Dowd (Oakland) who was last year's champion.

Campo picked up the #4 seed and Acalanes the #5 seed and were placed with first round byes and scheduled to face each other. However, the day after the seeding meeting, Campolindo was dropped from the playoffs because they did not meet the qualification requirements.

"It is extremely disappointing, I thought we were deserving of a spot. We played a tough schedule with games against high seeds in divisions 2 and 3. I thought the number 4 seed was where we belonged, but rules are rules. We wish the other Lamorinda teams the best of luck," commented Cougar head coach Elgin Leslie on their changed post-season status.

With Campolindo out of the postseason, Acalanes moved into the fourth seed. Acalanes edged Anly 47-42 on Friday, February 24.

The Lady Dons got behind early, trailing by seven after one period. They roared back to take a 26-22 lead at the half, but went into the final period tied at 37. Led by senior Sophie Taylor the Dons regained the lead and held on to win.

Taylor had a monster game with 24 points, ten points and seven rebounds.

Their reward is a visit to Chabot College tonight to face the #1 seed and perennial powerhouse Bishop O'Dowd. Regardless of the outcome, they will play in the Northern California Championships that begin next week.

Miramonte dominated Tamalpais in their Friday match-up. Other than a 2-2 tie in the first minute of the game, Miramonte had the lead. The Mats jumped off to a 29-4 lead after one period and led 50-18 at the half. Senior Devon McDonald had all 18 of her points in the half to lead the Lady Mats. Sophomore Breanna Alford added 14.

Coach Kelly Sopak was pleased with his team's intensity. "We struggled a bit in the early going just getting the ball in the hoop. However, our defensive rotations and ball pressure were spectacular. Tonight was another example of our defense picking up our offense."

With the win, Miramonte also qualified for the NorCals.

Miramonte's girls will host 24-5 San Marin (Novato) tonight at 7:00 p.m.



Breanna Alford recorded 14 against Tamalpais.



Sophie Taylor had 24 points in the Dons' win. Photos Kevin Nguyen



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