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Miramonte, Campolindo Tennis Teams Neck-and-Neck for DFAL's Top Spot

By Marissa Harnett

Like clockwork, the start of high school boys' tennis seemed to trigger the season's rains. Now at the midway point, having squeezed in make-up matches between downpours, the three Lamorinda teams are racing toward the championships.

Defending DFAL champion Campolindo is in a head-to-head battle with cross-town rival Miramonte for 2012's top DFAL spot. Each team has just one loss. Toss in the dark horse, Dougherty Valley, also recording one loss, and a three-way battle for first is underway. Miramonte and Campo have identical 6-1 records. Acalanes logged a win over Las Lomas making their DFAL record 1-4.

The Mats enjoy a slight edge over the Cougars overall record, boasting a 15-1 record compared to Campo's 14-2. Miramonte's one loss came on Thursday, March 22 when Campo hosted the Mats in their first dual match meeting of the season. The Mats took on Campo in an early season tournament and took a solid, 6-1 victory. Feeling confident, the Mats hoped to defeat the Cougars in similar fashion the second time around. The Cougars had other ideas and took home the 5-4 win.

Head coach Petro Petreas was pleased with the victory. "The Miramonte match went exactly according to plan; we won the matches I thought we could win, and we had a shot in the ones I thought we would lose. It was nice to avenge our loss to Miramonte in a tournament early in the season."

On the other side, Miramonte head coach Mike McCollom expected certain wins that didn't materialize. "Tennis is never the same. It's who shows up on a given day. It's highly unpredictable. Much respect to Campo."

There were nine close matches (see sidebar for results). With the conclusion of the #2 singles match, the teams were tied 4-4.

In that deciding match, all eyes were on Miramonte senior Michael Krakaris and Campo freshman Tilden Oliver. Oliver pulled out that set 7-6 (7-5) and then the second set and match, 6-2.

Krakaris admitted, "I kept looking for his weaknesses. He had a good day. It was a tough loss." Both players handled the pressure with class. Krakaris confessed, "There was definitely some pressure and I knew it was the deciding match. I just played my game."

Despite the loss, McCollom couldn't be happier with his team this year. "We are having an amazing season. Each class is remarkably strong creating a real balance of talent."

Although the Mats lost a large number of players to graduation last year, the team gained five talented freshmen. McCollom looks forward to staying strong in the coming years seeing growth and improvement.

"We have more depth, but lack of experience. We keep getting better," said co-captain Trevor Rechnitz.

Like Miramonte, Campo lost four top players to graduation last year, but filled the vacancies with skilled freshmen. But unlike Miramonte, the Cougars will lose another big group of seniors again this year.

Petreas recognizes the need to take advantage of his current talent. "We have to go for it this year. We have the personnel, we just need to step up and play good tennis when it counts. Our league has gotten more competitive, which will force us to be extra serious about every match."

Both teams are hoping to finish well in DFAL and go into the NCS tournament with a good seed. The rivalry continues on April 24 when Miramonte and Campo will meet again in their final regular season match.

Results of Miramonte at Campolindo:

Singles

L. Bohhuslav (M) d. M. Tsvetkov (C) 6-2, 6-2
 T. Oliver (C) d. M. Krakaris (M) 7-6 (7-5), 6-2
 McCormick (C) d. P Martin (M) 6-4, 6-4
 H. Aasman (C) d. T. Rechnitz (M) 6-1, 6-3
 L. Boersma (M) d. N. Elliott (C) 6-2, 6-0
 A. Lilichenko (M) d. P. Rei (C) 6-4, 6-2

Doubles

A. Tan/K. Rechnitz (M) d. Limino/Howard (C) 6-1, 6-3
 Tobin/Sienkicwicz (C) d. N. Weikert/B. Hummer (M) 6-3, 6-4
 Weiner/Mano (C) d. D. Stein/L. Kelly (M) 6-3, 6-2

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