

Published August 15th, 2012

Prep Football Season Begins in Lamorinda

Campo works to defend title; Miramonte, Acalanes look to dethrone

By Simon Tryzna



Cougars try to defend title. Photos Ohlen Alexander

As summer winds down and school steadily approaches, football practice is underway. Each Lamorinda high school team hit the practice fields on Monday, August 6, marking the beginning of the football season. Each team is filled with cautious optimism as they hope to bring home an NCS title.

Last year, the Campolindo Cougars, powered by a strong defense and potent offense, went undefeated in DFAL. They finished 14-1 overall, winning the NCS to earn a place in the Division III CIF State Championship Bowl.

This year, however, is a new year and a new team. "This team is nearly completely made up of new personnel and it would be unfair to have last year's results hang over the heads of any group of kids," said Campolindo's head coach Kevin Macy. "This year's team will have to establish its brand and because of the change in personnel, they will have to establish their own unique style."

Of the championship winning team, only quarterback Brett Stephens is a returning starter. Stephens, who was All-League in 2011, will have a young receiving core to work with.

"[They] will have to assume the pressure of developing at a fast rate to allow Brett Stephens to use all

his skills and experience," said Macy.

Despite having mostly new starters on each side of the ball, the Cougars are aware that they still have a huge target on the back.

"After going to the state game, every opponent we face will need no motivation because they will be playing the defending champs," Macy explained.

The Cougars will play mostly small, private schools in preseason. The toughest non-conference matchup will be against El Cerrito (7-2-1 last season).

The Miramonte Matadors will be looking to dethrone the Cougars. Their only DFAL loss was to Campolindo.

While the Cougars have young starters on both offense and defense, the 2010 DFAL champion Mats will be bringing back six offensive and two defensive starters in hopes of regaining the league title.

The team focused this offseason on its strength and conditioning and will look to have a heavy passing attack. Coach Jack Schram's team will face a tough non-conference slate, including its season-opener matchup against Marin Catholic, the NCS runner-up.

While Campolindo and Miramonte finished at the top of the DFAL standings, the Acalanes Dons finished fifth in the league. However, Coach Mike Ivankovich's team was better than the record indicated. Despite their 4-6 overall record, the Dons lost two games by a combined four points.

While going 2-4 in league play, Acalanes had the second lowest points against and they remain optimistic about the upcoming year.

"We were close," said Ivankovich. "[We] could have been 7-3, or 3-7." After a losing season, the coaching staff made a few changes.

"In the offseason, we fully evaluated our offensive schemes, and totally changed the defense," said Ivankovich.

With the Dons running a year round program, the team responded well to the new system by being really competitive in the summer seven on seven games against the likes of Las Lomas and De La Salle.

With a week of practice in, Ivankovich could not be happier about where his team is headed. "I'm really excited and had the best double-days as a coach. This is the most fun I've had in a while."

The Dons open their season in Hercules, who was a 14-seed in last year's NCS Playoffs.

Football Dates to Remember:

Preseason openers:

Campolindo at Moreau Catholic on 8/24

Miramonte hosts Marin Catholic on 8/24 at 7:00 p.m.

Acalanes at Hercules on 8/24

Regular Season Openers:

Miramonte at Dublin on 9/21

Campolindo hosts Acalanes on 9/21 at 7:00 p.m.

Rivalry Games:

Campolindo at Miramonte on 9/28 at 7:00 p.m.

Acalanes hosts Miramonte on 10/05 at 7:00 p.m.



Acalanes



Miramonte Coach Jack Schram (Lamorinda Weekly archive)

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

[back](#)

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA