

LAMORINDA SPORTS

NCS Water Polo Titles up for Grabs

Today's games to determine Finalists

By Marissa Harnett



Miramonte eased into the NCS semifinals defeating opponents by at least ten goals in the first two rounds. Photos Andy Scheck

The Lamorinda high school water polo teams stormed through the playoffs to make it half-way to the North Coast Section championship. All three girls' teams and two boys' teams moved into the semifinal round after the November 3 games.

Boys:

The boys' teams all enjoyed large margin wins in the first rounds. First seed Miramonte managed a decisive 16-6 second round win over Monte Vista, while an unlucky draw landed #5 Acalanes and #4 Campolindo together in the quarterfinals. Acalanes defeated the Cougars in a 13-12, down-to-the-wire, match.

Having lost to Campo just two weeks ago, the Dons were familiar with their rivals and their game. Head coach Clarke Tamariki made some tactical changes for this match. "We made a couple of matchup adjustments on defense to help slow down their top shooters," he said.

Acalanes came out aggressively in Saturday's match in Campo's pool. The Dons scored two minutes into the game on a penalty shot. Campo answered back seconds later, setting the tone for a competitive match. At the end of the first half, Acalanes netted the ball at the buzzer, giving them the 6-5 lead.

The second half saw action similar to the first, but rougher and more intense. By the start of the fourth pe-

riod, Acalanes was down three goals. With the help of two more penalty shots, the Dons clawed back to take the lead, bringing the score to 13-12 with just 44 seconds remaining.

Time-outs stretched the last seconds into nail-biting minutes. The semifinal berth hinged on the final six seconds. With all time-outs exhausted, final action resumed with Campo in possession of the ball and the ability to send the game to overtime.

The Acalanes defense proved to be insurmountable for the Cougars and the clock ran out before Campo could net the ball.

"The boys are definitely excited to win the game and move on to the next round of the playoffs," Tamariki said. Today's semifinal match against 12-time NCS winner and reigning champion, Miramonte, will be a tough one with speed and a strong goalie challenging them. "To prepare for the game (today) we will have to adjust our offense to slow down their team counter attack," Tamariki added.

Miramonte/Acalanes action begins at 7:15 p.m. tonight at Miramonte.

Girls:

The Lamorinda girls have dominated the NCS bracket this year. The final four is comprised of all three local teams.

Third seed Acalanes plays Sir Francis Drake tonight at 6 p.m. at home.

The Lady Dons sailed into the quarterfinals with a bye in the first round and a 14-point win over Ukiah in the second round. Head coach Misha Buchel admits that it will be tougher moving forward and recognizes that Campo is the team to beat. "Campo is by far and away the favorite in this tournament. They've only lost one game all year and just won the Nor Cal Championships tournament."

Also tonight at 6 p.m., #1 Campo hosts #4 Miramonte.

Miramonte head coach Trevor Rose echoed Buchel. "Campo is hands down the best team in NCS, if not northern California. If we can get past them it'll be one of the best wins in recent history for the MHS women's polo program. They have an excellent coach, and great players so it'll be tough."

Miramonte defeated San Rafael 17-3 and Northgate 11-7 in the first and second rounds, respectively. Campo had a first-round bye and beat Marin Catholic 21-2 in the second round to get to the rivalry game.

Even though Campo has the edge with a 2-0 season record against Miramonte, head coach Kim Everist admits that it will be a mental and statistical challenge to continue to win. "We are treating this game as if it is our first match-up against them. They are a good team, aggressive and athletic and they have some very key pieces."

Semifinal matches: **Today**, Wednesday, November 7

Boys:

(1) Miramonte vs. (5) Acalanes at 7:15 p.m. at Miramonte

Girls:

(1) Campo vs. (4) Miramonte at 6 p.m. at Campo
(2) Acalanes vs. (3) Sir Francis Drake at 6 p.m. at Acalanes

Finals: Saturday, November 10 at Acalanes - time TBA.



Campo hosts a determined #4 Miramonte in the semifinals. The Cougars defeated the Mats both times they faced off this season.

Playoffs Schedule

Volleyball: #1 Campolindo has a first round bye. They will play their first game on November 10 at home at 7:00 p.m. They will play the winner of the #8 Sir Francis Drake/#9 Acalanes game.

#9 Acalanes will play on Wednesday, November 7 at 7:00 p.m. at #8 Sir Francis Drake.

Football: #4 Campolindo will host #13 Terra Linda on Friday, November 9 at 7:00 p.m.
#7 Miramonte will travel to play #10 Tennyson on Saturday, November 10 at 1:00 p.m.
#8 Acalanes will host #9 Bishop O'Dowd on Friday, November 9 at 7:00 p.m.

Note: Girls' tennis played the first round yesterday. See cifncs.org/sports/tennis for updated schedule. Water polo playoffs are today. See above for details.

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