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## Miramonte Earns Lamorinda Bragging Rights, Prepares for Playoffs

By Hunter Hewitt



Junior forward Breanna Alford had 27 points and 12 rebounds against the Dons. Photo Ohlen Alexander

and Alhambra on Feb. 4 and Feb. 6, respectively.

Miramonte hosted Campolindo (20-4, 8-2), its other rival, on Feb. 4. The Cougars, who entered the game with the second-best record in the DFAL, were looking to hand the Matadors their first loss in league play.

Following another quick start by the Matadors, Campolindo was able to narrow the margin to seven points in the second quarter, but it was all Miramonte from there. Senior forward Laura Hickey led the Cougars with 12 points.

Junior guard Megan Reid, a dual-sport star who missed the Acalanes game because of a soccer match, helped lead Miramonte to an 80-43 win. She finished with 18 points and five steals.

"That's a great team," Campolindo head coach Elgin Leslie said of the Matadors. "We have to play our best and hope they have an off night to beat them, and neither of those happened tonight."

After defeating both Acalanes and Campolindo twice this season, Miramonte now holds the unofficial Lamorinda crown. Although the bragging rights are enjoyable for the Matadors, greater hopes have emerged as playoffs near.

Last season, Miramonte entered the postseason undefeated, but fell to the eventual state champions Bishop O'Dowd twice - once in the North Coast Section (NCS) finals and again in the Northern California regional finals. With both schools playing extremely well again this season, a rematch in the playoffs is almost inevitable.

Matadors' head coach Kelly Sopak continues to repeat a "one game at a time" mantra to his players, but a common goal is surely present amongst them.

"We want to take every opponent seriously, but our goal is to win the last game of the season," he said. "We want another shot at O'Dowd."

Gill echoed the sentiment. "We're taking it one game at a time, but I think we're further ahead than last year," she said. "We have so many threats, it's incomparable to any team I've ever been on."

When asked about a possible rematch with Bishop O'Dowd, Gill admitted that the thought of revenge had surfaced, and that her team will embrace the challenge if given the opportunity.

"We are definitely ready for that one," she said.

The NCS playoffs begin on Tuesday, Feb. 19.

With the postseason approaching, Miramonte (24-1, 11-0) continued its stellar season by defeating its Lamorinda rivals for the second time and remaining undefeated in DFAL play.

The Matadors hosted Acalanes (11-13, 4-6) on Feb. 1, and the result was a near replica of the previous matchup between the two teams.

The Dons, who hoped to avenge their 81-20 loss to Miramonte in January, struggled again with the relentless full-court pressure of the Matadors.

Miramonte came out aggressively from the start, scoring the first 15 points and building a 52-12 lead at halftime. The second half wasn't much different.

Behind nine points, eight assists and five steals from senior guard Carly Gill and 27 points and 12 rebounds from junior forward Breanna Alford, Miramonte cruised to an 86-23 victory over Acalanes. Senior guard Jamie Jacobs led the Dons with eight points.

"Overall, we played hard and didn't quit," Acalanes head coach Chris Russell said. "Miramonte is a great team, but our execution on finishing shots really hurt us."

Fortunately for the Dons, they were able to bounce back from the loss with key victories over Dougherty Valley



Jamie Jacobs #33 Photo Kevin Nguyen



Senior forward Laura Hickey #32 led the Cougars with 12 points against the Mats. Photo Ohlen Alexander

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