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Volleyball Teams Prep for Season

By Michael Sakoda



Maddie Goodreault (center) sets the ball at Miramonte's practice. Photo Andy Scheck

With the first day of practice last week, Lamorinda's high school volleyball teams are gearing up for the 2013 season that gets under way in September.

Last season, Campolindo had an incredible 30-5 record including going 11-1 in the DFAL. The Cougars earned a trip to the State Championship game in San Diego for the second time in three years, where they were defeated by Cathedral Catholic.

"The performance last season exceeded my expectations," said head coach John Vuong whose team was ranked 17th in the state and 63rd in the nation last year.

Nine Cougars graduated after last season, leaving pretty big holes in Campo's roster. Coming back for the Cougars are juniors Maddie Browning, Annie Doyle, Kelley Wirth, Kenzie Brown and Kaylyn Murray, sophomore Kirsten Sibley and senior Natalie Meniktas.

"We have seven players from the state final game returning," said Vuong. "Kelley Wirth, Kirsten and Natalie will definitely be stepping into larger roles."

Despite losing nine players to graduation, Vuong expects his team to remain top competition. Still, he keeps his sights on each individual game.

"We'll focus on one game at a time and hope we have a shot to make the postseason," said Vuong, "I'm really excited, looking forward to another great season."

Acalanes finished last year with a 10-11 record, including a 6-6 mark in the DFAL, earning themselves a trip to the NCS playoffs. They were ousted by Drake in the first round.

"They were competitive last year," said newly appointed head coach Todd Travis. "They finished in the top half of the DFAL and made it to NCS."

The Dons will return six players from last year's team including seniors Rachel Cox and Katie Nall, juniors Molly Dalziel and Ying Stroebe and sophomores Grace Bolen and Reilly Webster. Acalanes has also brought up Maddie Graham, Dory Grobeck and Molly Armstrong.

"[They] are my key newcomers," said Travis. "I expect contributions from everyone, but I expect [Graham] and [Dalziel] to step up and take on larger roles this year, to go along with returning starters."

The Dons hope to improve on a solid league performance last year and make it back to the NCS playoffs. "The girls and I have high expectations for the upcoming season," said Travis. "We feel that no one has worked as hard, or as smart as we have this summer. We are a very young and talented team, who will certainly make noise in the DFAL this season."

In Orinda, Miramonte is looking to bounce back from a tough season last year. The Mats finished 4-20 with a 3-10 mark in DFAL play.

"Last year was definitely a struggle for us," said head coach Dave Masdeo. "It was a rebuilding year, and we had a young team-a lot of inexperience."

This year, the Mats return all but three players and so will have the experience they lacked last year. "I think we're going to improve in all areas," said an excited Masdeo. "We have a lot of talent returning. We have a solid team this year."

The Mats will be led by two experienced players. "Maddie Goodreault and Maddy Miller are going to step into big roles this year," Masdeo explained. "They're going to be really solid for us."

Masdeo is cautiously optimistic about his team's performance this upcoming season. "We're just going to take it one game at a time," he explained. "I think we're going to do really well in our league and hopefully make it into the

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Ying Stroebe and the rest of the Dons look to build on last year's success.

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