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Miramonte Girls' Basketball Strong as Ever

Campo, Acalanes look to unseat

By Conrad Bassett



Megan Reid

The 2012-2013 girls basketball season brought much attention to Lamorinda as the Miramonte Matadors went through a second straight undefeated Diablo-Foothill Athletic League season on their way to a spectacular 27-3 record. Miramonte again looks like the top favorite, but Acalanes and Campolindo are looking for the upset.

This year, Miramonte returns their entire team from last year, except graduated, four-year player, Carly Gill. Head coach Kelly Sopak notes that she will be hard to replace.

"Sometimes, we have to realize that people are not replaceable. Carly provided too much for one person to replace her. We simply will all have to step up to fill that void, including our coaching staff."

Sopak certainly has those tools-seniors Megan Reid, Bree Alford, Nadine Maserweh and Allison Miller return as does junior Kaitlin Fenn and sophomores Sabrina Ionescu, Keana Delos Santos, Jesse Wilson and Uriah Howard.

Sopak added, "Masarweh has improved tremendously since last season and will likely start this year."

Newcomers include freshman Elle Louie and senior Mariah Seals.

Those who saw the team play last year will note that Sopak freely substituted and there were always fresh players on the court.

"We will carry 11 on varsity and all 11 players will play," said Sopak. "I hate to compare teams but I have never felt more comfortable with my entire roster as I do this season. We may have a starting lineup for the sake of having one, but I look at it as if we have 11 starters. They are all unique and bring something different to the court but I could not tell you on any given night who is going to carry us."

And as always they will have a challenging schedule including traveling out of state twice-to the NIKE TOC in Phoenix and to Gillette, Wyo. to play in the Energy Classic.

Over in Lafayette, the Acalanes Dons have a new varsity coach, Chad Wellon, who will be looking to improve on last year's team that struggled to an overall 12-14 record.

He knows the players as he coached the Dons' freshman team last year.

Wellon has a young team with only two seniors-Ariel Padua and Krista Federas.

Wellon said, "So far Julia Lyons, a sophomore point guard and team captain, has really taken on a leadership role and has been a consistent scorer for us."

Wellon added that his young team will also be helped by a freshman. "Another player to watch out for is Roni Marrone, freshman forward. She also has been a consistent scorer and contributor over the first part of our season."

So far, the Dons are off to a good start. They opened the season with three wins in their first four games, and they will be playing most of their pre-season games locally.

Campolindo is also starting the season with a new head coach. Art Thoms is moving up from the assistant position in the Cougar program. Campo went 25-6 a year ago with only two DFAL losses, both to Miramonte, and went as far as the Nor-Cal semi-finals. They lost three starters to graduation including Laura Hickey and Courtney Seyranian.

"Laura and Courtney were great players and leaders last season. We also graduated a third starter, Rachel Riddle. It will be hard to replace them," Thoms said.

Still the Cougars do bring back some depth. "Seniors Ashley Ewing and Meagan Adachi are returning starters from last year and Sierra Regan is a senior and has earned a starting position," Thoms explained. "Ashley, Meagan and Sierra were voted team captains and we will look to them for leadership."

"Freshman Brooke Panfili will step into a starting guard role," added Thoms.

The Cougars will also stay local playing several non-league games and playing in the West Coast Jamboree along with Acalanes.

All coaches agreed that the entire DFAL will be a solid league again this year. Dublin won 21 games last season and has won their first three games this year. Dougherty Valley has a solid history. Las Lomas and Alhambra should be improved as well.

Wellon summed it up, "Every game will be tough!"
DFAL regular season begins on Jan. 7



Nadine Maserweh



Julia Lyons



Krista Federas



Ashley Ewing

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