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Mats Beat Dons in Girls' Soccer Campo remains undefeated

By Marissa Harnett



Cecelia Gee prepares for her first goal. Photos Andy Scheck

Nearly halfway through the league schedule, the girls' high school soccer top teams are beginning to emerge. Campolindo has risen to the top, currently standing undefeated at 4-0-1 in league and 9-0-2 overall. Miramonte is just behind with a record of 2-1-1 in league (6-2-1 overall). Acalanes trails at 0-4-1 in league (2-4-1 overall).

Miramonte traveled to Acalanes on Jan. 10 to face-off in their first meeting of the season. Both teams came out strong, controlling and passing the ball with precision and finesse, but Miramonte won 2-0. While the first half was very competitive and remained scoreless, Miramonte possessed the slight edge with more scoring opportunities.

Twice during the first half, Miramonte left their net empty to bring goal-keeper, senior Mali Tehaney, onto the field. Five minutes into the game she attempted a header off of a corner kick. At 18 minutes, Tehaney abandoned her post again to take a free kick. Teammate Emma Nushi headed it at the goal, but could not capitalize. Later in the game, Tehaney left her net untended for a third time and then had to sprint back to kick out the ball that was rolling straight toward the goal.

"We do it when we need a physical presence for corner kicks," said Miramonte head coach Mohamed Mohamed. "It's worth the risk, and it creates some excitement," he added.

Hoping to end the first half with the lead, Mats' senior defender Jane Fessenden broke away with five minutes remaining and dribbled unchallenged to the goal. The shot, however, went wide left leaving no score at the break.

The second half began much the same way, with Miramonte's offensive pressure colliding with Acalanes' aggressive defense. By minute 13, amid a cluster of players at net, Mats' sophomore forward Cecelia Gee managed to sneak the ball low into the left corner.

Ten minutes later, Gee came back for another. She fired off a hard shot from the top of the box across and into the upper right corner to sink the second and last goal of the night.

Mohamed thought it was "a beautiful game to watch." He noted that although the team has six experienced seniors, it is predominately a young team that keeps getting better. "Sophomores Cecilia Gee, Gina Crosetti, and Maggie Maguire had a fantastic game. They are very strong, very mobile."

Although the Dons did not come out on top in Friday night's game, numbers do not tell the full story.

"Our results have not been as good as we would like, but the team has been playing good soccer," said new Acalanes head coach Evan Sassano. "We have been improving every week, which is a sign of a serious team. I am very pleased with the response from the players."

A young team creates unique challenges. "One of our biggest challenges has been against time," Sassano said. "With a new group, you have to get on the same page as soon as you can. We have showed great promise and I am confident we will improve. It is only a matter of time for when we really start to gel."

Tonight in Moraga at 6:15 p.m. the Lady Mats will attempt to upset Campo's six game winning streak, wrapping up the first round of rivalry contests.

Campo is aware of the target on their backs. "I try to create a bubble for my team. I make sure that we concentrate on the task at hand and not pay attention to anything else," said Campo head coach Ernesto Silva. "We respect every opponent and realize that everyone wants to beat the team atop the leaderboard....we pressure ourselves to play at our best every time we step into the field."



Cecelia Gee



Caroline Clark looks up field in the Dons' 0-2 loss to Miramonte.

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