

Cougars, Dons Face Off in DFAL

By Conrad Bassett



Carrie Trent

The Lamorinda girls' high school basketball teams completed their preseason with mixed results, but each team felt the tournaments and travel competition prepared them for DFAL.

Acalanes (7-7 preseason) and Campolindo (6-5 preseason) each won their DFAL openers. Acalanes beat Alhambra 36-28 on the road and the Cougars beat Dougherty Valley 67-42 in San Ramon. Miramonte is undefeated 13-0 overall.

On Jan. 10, Acalanes traveled to take on Campolindo for the second time this season, the first in DFAL play. The two teams played in the Walnut Creek Classic tournament in December and the Cougars won 70-28.

The second time around, the Dons were much more competitive, even taking the lead at times. However, a tough third quarter put the Dons down and they could not recover. They lost to Campo 71-53.

Acalanes coach Chad Wellon said, "[All] I can say is, I was extremely happy with the way we came out and started the game. We played with a lot of heart and passion the entire game."

The Dons scored the first eight points of the game as junior Carrie Trent nailed two back-to-back three-point shots.

Cougars' senior Ashley Ewing stopped the run with a layup and free throw, and the Cougars pecked away reducing the lead to 19-18 after a high scoring opening period.

The teams went back and forth in the second period before Campo went on an 11-1 run behind two long range shots from freshman Brooke Panfili to give Campo the lead, 40-32, at halftime.

The Cougars opened up the third period slowly but then went on a 15-0 run behind



Brooke Panfili led all scorers.



Ashley Ewing

Photos Gint Federas

Ewing and sophomore Emily Lyall, who each contributed multiple baskets on their way to a 21 point lead.

The teams each scored 14 points in the final period. Trent led Acalanes with 12 points and Panfili led all scorers with 20. Ewing added 19 to go with eight rebounds, six assists and seven steals. Lyall scored 11.

Art Thoms, Campo coach, commented, "I was extremely proud of the way our girls kept their composure and dealt with the adversity. It was a lot of fun to see both teams giving a great effort in front of a good crowd."

In preseason, Miramonte went 12-0, winning tournaments in three different states and playing high level competition. They won the Big House Invitational in Petaluma, their own Mats Tip-Off Classic and then spent the holidays beating top teams from Texas, Arizona, and Colorado at the Nike TOC in Phoenix before heading to the badlands of Gillette, Wyo. to win the Energy Classic title.

Coach Kelly Sopak said, "Not only did we play well on the court, but the team is much closer off the court with the two travel trips, one of which required a 6+ hour bus ride together."

Last Friday, the Lady Mats opened their season with a win over always tough Dublin on the road by a score of 75-33. Miramonte led 20 to 4 after the first period and never looked back.

The three teams each played after the press deadline on Jan. 14. All three teams return to action with home games on Jan. 17.



Julia Lyons puts up a shot.

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 Cecelia 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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