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Cougars Look Dominant in Early-Season Match

By Spencer Silva



Photos Gint Federas

pool shot on cage- it deflected just off the post.

Both teams scored a combined three goals in the second half.

After the game, Acalanes head coach Misha Buchel pointed to the lack of defense as the team's weakness. "Our defense was poor all game. We pride ourselves on being tough to break down," she explained. "We gave up six goals in the first quarter, after all. But we scored a few that kept us in the game."

The Cougars, in turn, attributed their second quarter outburst to a change in approach. Coach Kim Everist described the transition, "At the quarter break we had to re-focus. ... We made a couple of adjustments defensively that helped our counter-attack and gave us the momentum." The shift proved successful; they stymied the Dons' offense for the rest of the match.

Both teams have important match-ups soon. Acalanes will face another DFAL rival in Las Lomas (7-6) today. Buchel expects the team to improve as its members gain more experience in the pool. "We are very young and inexperienced. As a result, we see improvements each and every game," she added. "We're hoping that by playoffs we'll be tougher to break down defensively and have enough offense to challenge the top teams."

The Cougars, on the other hand, have two rival matches on the docket. The first of which will be Oct. 8 when they take on cross-town rivals Miramonte in what will be the Matadors' first conference match of the young season. Campolindo has looked dominant in the early going, outscoring their opponents 111-45. Their only two losses have come at the hands of the EBAL's San Ramon Valley, who they play at home the following Tuesday.

"We've played [SRV] twice, in [tournament] championship games this year. We have our sights set on the NorCal championships and also play them at home Oct. 14," said Everist.

As for the Lady Mats, head coach Megan Calderazzo says her team is hitting its stride. The Mats were recently given a confidence boost when they defeated a higher seeded Sacred Heart squad in a tournament two weekends ago. Calderazzo said her squad has been conditioning extra hard for the Oct. 8 rivalry match against the Cougars. "This cross town rivalry is a big deal," she said. "We have been fine-tuning certain aspects of our game plan to better match up against the strong players (they) have."

There was no stopping Campolindo's girls' water polo team in the Cougars' first rivalry match of the season. Campo (8-2) traveled to take on Acalanes (7-5) on Oct. 1 and the Cougars came away with a definitive 13-5 win.

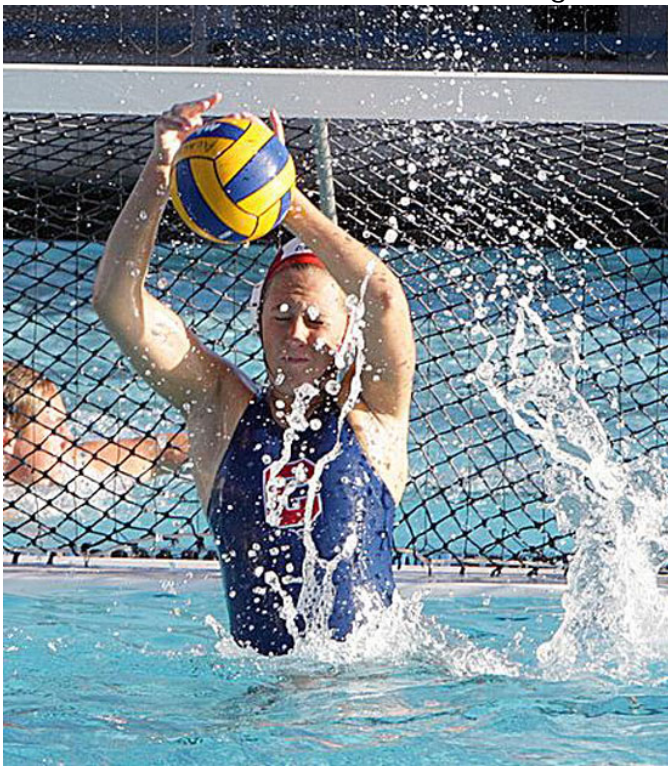
Echoes of cheers and chants filled the air to begin the match, and, within seconds, the Cougars jumped out to an early lead. Senior Rachael Lewin scored the first goal off of a penalty throw. She ended the game with four goals on the night.

The score was close at the end of the first quarter. The Cougars were up 6-3. To start the second quarter, they scored five unanswered goals, giving them an 11-4 lead at the half, a lead that proved insurmountable for the Dons.

Early in the third quarter, in what was one of the match's more exciting moments, Campolindo's senior goalie Madison Tagg nearly sunk a cross-



Rachael Lewin scores first for the Cougars.



Madison Tagg makes a very close cross-pool shot on goal during the game.

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