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Lamorinda Volleyball Teams Spike Competition

By Scott Wu



Kelly Wirth Photos Gint Federas

The 2014 girls' volleyball season is underway, with Campolindo (4-0), Acalanes (2-0), and Miramonte (3-1) getting off to very strong starts. The three teams' winning league records come after a solid preseason. Campolindo is 12-4 overall. Acalanes is 8-4, and Miramonte is 14-5. The Lamorinda teams are at the very top of the DFAL standings, respectively, and are the only three teams in DFAL league play to own winning records.

The Cougars have been a force to be reckoned with this season. They have not lost a set in league play.

"Our biggest strength this season is our outside hitters Kelley Wirth and Kirsten Sibley," head coach John Vuong stated. The Cougars, who have made it to the NCS Division III finals three of the past four years, are not new to the spotlight.

"We should do well in the postseason. Our goal is to make it back to the NCS final," said Vuong. With a strong upperclassmen presence and a drive to win, the Cougars are yet again an obvious threat to take the NCS title.

"The team just needs to work hard and push each other in order for us to maximize our potential this season," said Vuong.

Miramonte, who shocked a powerful NorCal team in Amador Valley this preseason, could be this year's DFAL dark horse.

The Matadors are led by senior co-captains Lauren Foster and Vanessa Tang, who are two of the just three seniors on this year's team. They have effectively guided star underclassmen such as

power hitting sophomores Layne Estes and Caroline Schafer.

"Despite the fact that the team is young, we have a lot of depth and experience, which gave us a lot of momentum going into league play," head coach Lisa Bachtold said.

Their lone loss came to Campolindo on Oct. 2. Both teams were undefeated, winning in straight sets, heading into the game. Although the Matadors got off to a strong start, even notching 20 points in the second set, they could not overcome the Cougars' offense. Campolindo kept its streak alive and again won in straight sets.

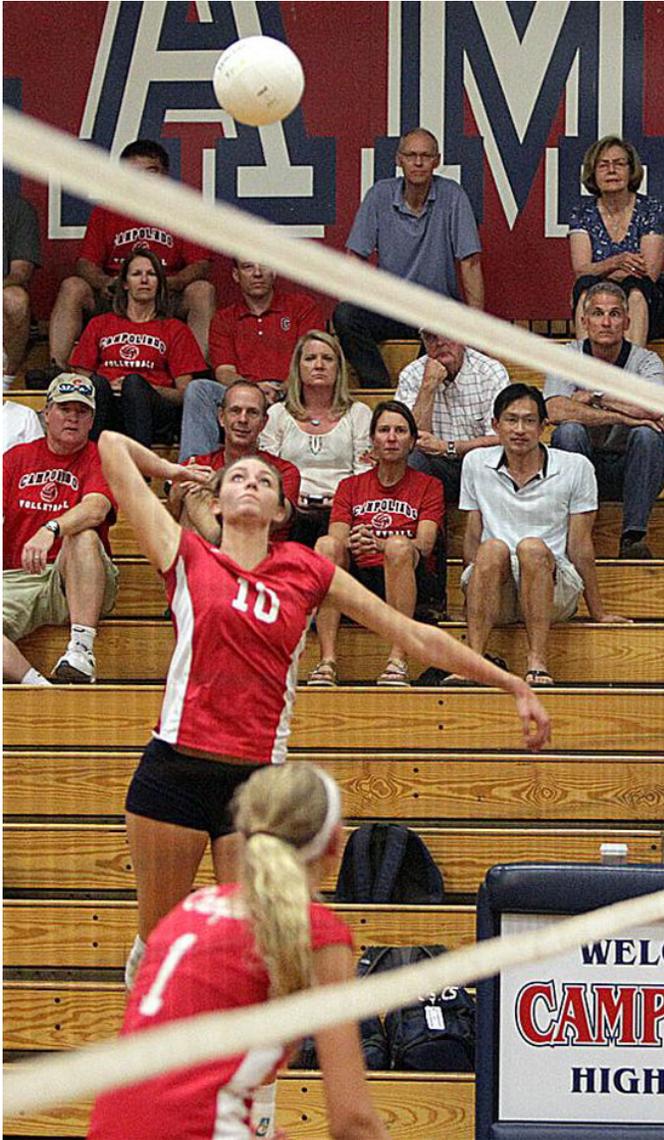
"The atmosphere of this team is dynamic, as there is a very competitive energy on this team. We need to take advantage of every opportunity on the court to challenge ourselves to get better," says Bachtold.

The Acalanes Dons, who sit in second place in the league standings, are a team on the rise. With a new head coach in former-UCSB volleyball standout Todd Travis and five returning starters, Acalanes is poised to threaten Campolindo's bid for another league title.

"Our two biggest strengths are our depth and our experience. Additionally, we have a great team chemistry this year," Travis said. The Dons have stayed perfect at home, but they face a pair of tough opponents when they travel to both Campolindo and Miramonte for two of their next

matches.

"We have a chance to finish atop the league this year, and we're ready to work hard in order to do this," said Travis.



Kirsten Sibley has been a leader for the Cougars.



Sophomore Layne Estes has been a key piece for the Mats.

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[back](#)

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