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## Campo Volleyball Season Ends in State Tournament

By Scott Wu



Lauren Budde and MacKenzie Brown

Photos Gint Federas

After a strong start in the NCS playoffs, the Lamorinda volleyball teams were unable to take home a championship. All three schools qualified, and Campolindo even advanced to the CIF State Tournament. Miramonte was ousted in the second round of the NCS. Acalanes lost in the semifinals.

On Nov. 19, Campolindo hosted the Dons in the semifinals. A powerhouse, Campolindo (29-7) had not lost a set in the NCS playoffs and had already swept No. 4 Acalanes (23-8) during the regular season.

In the match, the Dons looked to senior Molly Dalziel, who had seven kills in the first set. Acalanes' junior Hannah Roberts and senior Dory Grobeck both served well for the Dons. Despite the tough play from Acalanes, Campolindo managed to hang on to beat the Dons 25-22 in the first set.

The second set belonged solely to the Cougars, who utilized multiple kills by Yale-bound senior Kelly Wirth and junior Emma Johnson to win 25-16. Acalanes put up a fight in the third set, but it was not enough and Campolindo recorded the sweep.

While content with his semifinal win, head coach John Vuong was eager to play No. 3 seed Sonoma Valley in the final.

"After the win, we needed to be mentally tough and put all of our focus on the upcoming performance," said Vuong.

In the NCS finals on Nov. 22, Wirth was a dominant force. Early in the first set, she had one spike from the back of the court that seemed to make its way through three different Sonoma defenders. However, the Cougars lost the first set 21-25.

"Sonoma played better defense and had

fewer digs than us, especially early in the game," said Vuong of the match.

Campolindo dropped the second set 21-25. In a must-win third set, Campolindo took control. A hard hit from senior Lauren Budde ensured that Sonoma would not sweep the match. Campo pulled out the 25-21 win.

In the fourth set, Campolindo took a quick lead with a pair of kills by sophomore Sabrina Smith, but could not hang on. They lost 25-23.

Despite the loss in the final, the Cougars still earned a spot in the CIF State Championship Tournament. "Despite the tough loss, our team played well, and the players are excited as we look towards the state championship tournament," said Vuong.

Campolindo was given the No. 6 seed and played No. 3 El Camino High of San Francisco. Although they jumped out to an early lead, winning the first set 25-20, the Cougars lost the next three sets.

Although the score of the final game did not reflect their dominance, the Cougars' season was truly remarkable. They finished the season 29-9.



Sabrina Smith

## Saint Mary's Basketball Programs Off to a Hot Start

By Spencer Silva



Aaron Bright



Lauren Nicholson

Photos Tod Fierner

With the basketball season underway, the Saint Mary's Gaels once again field two of the better teams in Northern California. Both the men (5-0) and women (5-1) have begun the season strong and appear poised for success in the WCC.

On Nov. 29, the Saint Mary's men defeated the Cal Poly Mustangs 82-56. They extended their home winning streak against non-conference opponents to 33 games, a streak that ties with Illinois for fifth best in the NCAA.

The Gaels are led by senior Brad Waldow, a preseason All-WCC pick who is averaging 21.6 points. The only other returning starter from the 2013-14 squad is senior Kerry Carter, who made four of the team's 15 three-pointers in Saturday's game.

The most noticeable difference from last season, however, is the absence of Stephen Holt. Holt ended his Saint Mary's career 10th on the all-time scoring list and is now attempting to carve out a career in the NBA.

The team is adapting well to its new personnel. Aaron Bright and Desmond Simmons, who are fifth-year transfers from Stanford and Washington, respectively, are new faces in the starting lineup. Redshirt freshman Emmett Naar has also stepped into a starting role and appears to be developing chemistry with Bright and Dane Pineau.

After Saturday's game, Coach Bennett spoke about the outlook of his team.

"This was our best performance yet," he explained, "this team, more than any team I've coached in awhile, has a chance to really improve. They're not close to their ceiling."

The Saint Mary's women also played on

Nov. 29, securing a 67-63 win over Idaho State, and with it the title to their third straight Hilton-Concord Classic.

Junior Lauren Nicholson has starred in the early season. She was named tournament MVP Saturday after her 25-point effort in the championship game. She and the rest of the team have been tasked with picking up the slack left behind by Jackie Nared, Danielle Mauldin and Kate Gaze. Nared and Mauldin were First Team ALL-WCC in 2013-14.

"For every three that we lose, we expect that three more girls will breakthrough and contribute," said head coach Paul Thomas. "The culture here with this program is important. We don't coach the starters any different from the bench players. We treat everyone the same."

The team is also bolstered by the return of Carli Rosenthal, a key player around the basket who spent most of last season injured. The starting lineup is rounded out by freshman Stella Beck, junior Shannon Mauldin and senior Hayley Hendrickson.

Thomas enters his ninth year as head coach of the women's team and his emphasis on consistent free-throw shooting and winning on the road are still key pillars of his philosophy.

"We're consistently Top-5 in the country in free-throw shooting," he said, "and we play a game that travels well. The style of defense and offense we play allows us to win games on the road. Anyone who follows college basketball knows how important it is to win over the road."

The men's next game is at home against Boise State on Dec. 6. The women host Cal State Northridge on Dec. 4.

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