

# Girls Soccer Teams Harbor High Hopes as DAL Season Approaches

By Karl Buscheck



The Acalanes Dons

Photos Gint Federas



The Campolindo Cougars



The Miramonte Matadors

Embarking on his first season as the head coach of the Miramonte girls soccer team, Barry McQuain wasn't on the sideline back in February when the Mats lost out in the NCS Division 3 title game.

Even still, the new coach can feel the impact of that runner-up finish on his new squad.

"I think it makes you want it," said McQuain, whose Mats are off to a 3-0-1 start. "It makes you want it even more."

The Mats, who open up the Diablo Athletic League slate with a trip to Campolindo on Jan. 6, beat Albany on the road, 2-1, on Nov. 30, tied Bishop O'Dowd, 1-1, in Oakland on Dec. 3, hammered St. Mary's, 5-0, in Albany on Dec. 6 and cruised past Oakland Tech, 5-0, on the road on Dec. 9.

"Our No. 1 goal is to have a successful season and we're going to try to have a lot of fun," McQuain said before stopping to correct himself. "That's actually No. 1 (to have fun). That's what we talk about first. Then we have specific goals. We want to win our league and we want to win NCS."

As the Mats chase those goals, the team will be relying on a quartet of seniors to set the tone. Tessa Viola has emerged as the de-facto team manager, as she works her way back from an ACL tear last season. McQuain is targeting a Senior Night return for Viola.

The other three seniors are Morgan Johnson, Mia Grillo and Samantha DeVecchi. McQuain called Johnson the defensive "rock," credits Grillo with directing the offense and dubbed DeVecchi the "on-field captain" who runs the game.

"There are three captains and they're really guiding the team," McQuain said. "They're the heart of the team."

The Cougars, who begin the league campaign with a showdown against the Mats next month, are angling to rebound from a 2015-16 season that saw them left out of the NCS postseason picture.

"Last year, we were unlucky, but at the same time, we didn't perform at the same level I thought we would," said head coach Ernesto Silva.

"Our league is extremely competitive. All the teams we play are extremely good," Silva added. "Right now, we're just focusing on being able to play at the level that I know

we can."

To achieve that goal, Silva emphasized the importance of having all his players buy into his coaching philosophy, which he admitted could be a different message from what the players are used to hearing while playing for their respective club teams.

The message is resonating so far, as the Cougars own a 3-0-1 record in nonleague play. The team tied Mt. Eden, 1-1, in Hayward on Nov. 17, crushed Pittsburg, 7-0, at home on Nov. 30, dispatched Hayward, 6-2, on the road on Dec. 2 and topped Ygnacio Valley, 3-0, in Concord on Dec. 9.

"I think what is very positive about what I've seen from these girls is that they're very close," Silva said. "There's not one player that stands out. It's a collective effort right now."

Acalanes has spent the opening weeks of the season studying up on the offensive system of new head coach Anthony Rascon. While the coach has been putting his players through classroom sessions as part of the learning process, the crash course isn't just about strategy and technique.

"The most important thing is building team chemistry," Rascon said. "And that's what we're doing right now in order to get ourselves in a position where we can be contenders for the championship of NCS."

After losing to San Ramon Valley on the road 2-0 on Nov. 29, beating St. Patrick St. Vincent by forfeit at home on Dec. 2 and losing to Monte Vista, 2-1, in Danville on Dec. 9, the Dons are 1-2 in nonleague play.

Throughout the nonconference and DAL schedule, the Dons will be leaning on a crew of established contributors. Senior Molly Davis anchors the defense as the center back, senior Callie Ericksen and junior Emily Smith operate in the midfield and junior target striker Kierra Krawec has a "cannon-like" shot. Krawec is joined up top by star senior striker Caroline Clark.

"She has a great left foot and she's a very promising player. She reminds me a little of myself," Rascon said with a chuckle. "That's why she caught my eye. I think she's a very effective offensive player and I am assuming she's going to have lots and lots of goals this season and hopefully going to be voted (league) MVP."

# Campo Cross Country Runners Reach State Podium

Submitted by Eric Yabu



Campolindo boys first row, from left, coach Chuck Woolridge, Ethan Sauerberg, Ray Diaz, Andrew Tseng, Kyle Flett, Navid Boozarpour. Second row, from left, coach Andy Lindquist, Niki Moore, Teddy Buckley, JJ Yabu, Richard Gong, coach Joey Woolridge and coach Jeff Thomas.



Campolindo girls runners Hannah Ruane (#228) and Isabella Chao (#223) lead the pack at the start of the Division 3 girls race.

On Nov. 26 at Woodward Park in Fresno, the Campolindo boys and girls competed at the California State Meet. For the first time since 2008, the Campolindo boys team claimed a spot on the podium with a third place finish in the Division 3 race.

They were the only Northern California boys team to finish in the top three. Joining them as medalists were their teammates Isabella Chao and Hannah Ruane, who finished in sixth and ninth, respectively, to claim individual awards.

# St. Perpetua Girls Basketball Team Goes Undefeated

Submitted by Rhodora Del Rosario



Back row, from left, coach Brian Frechman, Carolyn Colachico, Violet Martin, Dulci Vail, Addi Ames, Campbell Evans and coach Mark Del Rosario; front row, from left, Mylie Jacquet, Natalie Frechman, Ella Del Rosario and Leila Hamadi.

The Saint Perpetua fourth-grade American girl's basketball team went undefeated and won the 2016 Thanksgiving Turkey tournament.

### Correction:

In the Nov. 30 issue of the paper, the article "Campo Boys Cross Country Team Finishes 3rd at State" incorrectly listed Navid Boozarpour as the Cougars' fifth-place finisher at the NCS Championships. Edward Buckley was Campolindo's fifth finisher at the race.

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