Diablo Alliance 10U All-Girls Team takes bronze in USA Water Polo Spring Sunday Tournament

Submitted by Rhodora Del Rosario

Back row from left: Sadie Suppiger, Ally Larson, Addi Dankworth, Sarah Wright, coach Mary Collie; middle row from left: coach Robby Arroyo, Quinn Arroyo, Molly Stryker, Ella Del Rosario, Tess Schirmer, Audrina Kang; bottom row from left: Elise Gratton, Chrissy Flynn, Maya Stafford and Chloe Chua Photo provided

Diablo Alliance Water Polo Club's 10u team took third place at the USA Water Polo's Spring Sunday tournament April 15. The all-girl team started the tournament with an easy win over Stanford and then faced CC United all-boys top team for a bid at the gold medal game. While CC United controlled the tempo of much of game, the girls battled to within one goal before losing 8-6. In the bronze medal game, Diablo faced Lamorinda Water Polo Club's top team (also an all-boys squad) and got out early and maintained a lead the entire way. Led by strong defense and a speedy offense, the Diablo girls were not only the top girls team in the tournament, but also one of the top teams overall. This win complements the team's win at the Mini Frozen Cup back in the winter, and sets the team up for a great summer season as they look forward to the Junior Olympics.

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Cal Rugby returns to SMC to face Linwood

By Jon Kingdon

Justin Dunn Photo Alex Ho

Playing in front of a loud and raucous crowd at Saint Mary's College last Saturday, the University of California clearly outplayed Linwood University in a D1A semi-final game winning by a final score of 43-22.

For California and Lindenwood, this was a "road" game. Originally scheduled to be played in Marietta, Georgia, Cal only had to travel 15 miles to Moraga while Lindenwood (St. Charles, Missouri) travelled 2,021 miles to St. Mary's. California head coach Jack Clark had no complaints. Said Clark: "Our schedule had changed a bit. We did not have to fly out on Thursday and lose a day."

Explained D1A Commissioner Kevin Battle: "It's important that we do what's best for the growth of the college game. Crossing the country with five days' notice is financially prohibitive." Added executive committee chairman Paul Keeler, "It is important for us to maximize exposure and support the teams, to support the game. Having teams compete regionally helps achieve that goal and helps manage costs to our members."

Cal saved $40,000 by avoiding the trip to Georgia and helped Lindenwood with the cost of their travel.

California has three seniors from Lamorinda on their roster: wing Justin Dunn from Campolindo and flyhalf Jamie Howells and Wing William Fuller, both from Miramonte.

With Cal ahead 24-14 at the half, Dunn outleaped a Lindenwood player on a kick down the field giving Cal possession, leading to the first score in the second half. Nine minutes later, Dunn sprinted down the left sideline to score for the second time to put Cal ahead 38-17, clinching the victory for Cal.

The last time Cal had play in Moraga, they had lost to Saint Mary's 21-12. Dunn said that inspired the team today: "We did not want to lose again on this field. The key to the game was that, though we made some mistakes, we did not have any turnovers."

Dunn, a business administration major, was recruited to play football at California and only began playing rugby in college. He will continue to play rugby in graduate school: "I will be going to study at Oxford next year and will be playing rugby there as well."

California will be playing in Santa Clara next Saturday against Life University who defeated Penn State in their semifinal game. Life University will be traveling 2,474 miles from their campus in Marietta, Georgia. They probably find little comfort that California will be traveling three times as far as they did getting to Moraga, 45 long miles. Hopefully the traffic will be light.

Lamorinda tennis teams sport winning records in playup to NCS

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Acalanes head coach Valery Jorgensen, an Acalanes graduate herself, knows what it is like to play in such a difficult league. Battling the top teams in the league, College Prep, Miramonte and Campolindo, the Dons bring a 5-4 record into the home stretch of the season. Jorgensen appreciates the effort her players put forth each match: "They really enjoy winning and they are always competitive and fight in every match. We have had a lot of close matches and we have fought for every point. Through hard work and dedication in the off season, we've seen a lot more consistency than last season."

Unlike Miramonte and Campolindo, who both have strong doubles teams, Acalanes relies more on their singles players. Says Jorgensen: "Singles are our strength though we are a team of depth. We have a lot of similar talent but we just to find consistency and the combinations in our doubles play."

The Dons top two players have been Trenten Tso and Ryan Everly who have been playing 1 and 2 singles and are also the leaders on the team says Jorgensen: "They have carried the team winning almost all of their matches. They along with Cole Brightbill have taken it upon themselves to organize extra practices and bring camaraderie to the team. On the court, Nick Broback and Ed Collinson have been a constant support for the players."

Freshman Alex Thornton has been the most pleasant surprise on the season, according to Jorgensen: "Alex was new to me though not to his teammates. Alex played soccer, so he came to the team a couple of weeks into the season. He was initially a little nervous, but he has stepped up and played in some top doubles and singles matches."

The Dons are hoping for an at-large bid into the NCS tournament. Says Jorgensen optimistically: "What helps is that that we and Campolindo are the only teams that have defeated College Park and if they win the league, it would help us in our at-large bid."