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Acalanes-Miramonte girls water polo face off in rivalry game

By Jon Kingdon

Whenever there is a so-called rivalry game, commentators are always quick to say that with such games, you can throw out the record book. A comment like this generally occurs when one of the teams has a bad record. However, when both teams come into a rivalry game with top records, it becomes that much more of an anticipated event.

Such was the case when the undefeated (13-0) Acalanes girls water polo team took on the defending champion (8-2) Miramonte team Sept. 26 at Miramonte High School. In a match that lived up to expectations, Acalanes remained undefeated, coming out on top 10-6.

Leading 7-2 at the half, Acalanes held off a late charge by Miramonte who got as close as 9-6. Acalanes head coach Misha Buchel's strategy was to attack and be aggressive: "We were really pushing the ball up the pool and feeding the ball inside to Lexi Rowell, Claire Rowell and Jewel Roemer and we were able to take advantage of a number of power plays."

This however was a game won by the defense. The Dons were particularly concerned with containing Miramonte's Katie Lyons and were pleased with holding the Matadors to only six goals. Goalie Ava Donleavy had several stops in key situations and was, as Buchel described her, "a rock back there." Besides Donleavy's performance, the defense led by Alex Fellner and Rowell protected Donleavy with several blocked shots.

Miramonte will have a chance to get their revenge the last game of the season, which will be played at Acalanes.

Reach the reporter at: sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com

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