

Lamorinda boys soccer preview

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Photo Gint Federas

The smothering defense has been led by goalies Lucas Allen, who was all league last season, and Joe Etheridge. Carney appreciates the value of both of his goalies: "Lucas is extremely athletic and he can make any save. Joe has been

solid in goal when called upon. He is good with his feet and can also play on the field. Overall, we defend very well and it has been a good team effort. Center back Conner Gregg has been our vocal leader on the field and has been

pulling more than his weight." Despite the team's initial success, Carney is keeping things in perspective: "With 13 teams in our league, there are any number of schools that can win the league. Anybody can beat anybody else on any given night. We're taking it a game at a time. As long as we're up near the top of the standings, we'll talk about it at the end of the season."

Miramonte

Coming off an 18-4-2 season and having graduated four of their top five scorers, it is taking Miramonte some time to adjust. The Matadors have started the season off with a 2-3-2 record. Head coach Masood Ahmadi knew that it was going to take time for this season's team to start to gel: "We lost a core of senior players. We are a young team that is getting used to each other and the players are learning their roles. It's putting the pieces

of the puzzle together. The players are working hard and we lost one game, Acalanes (1-0) and tied Los Lomas (2-2) due to a late mistake in each game. The team has shown lots of promise and energy."

The offense has been led by midfielders Kent Barbir and Giovanni Sponzilli. Says Ahmadi: "Kent is very strong with the ball and can be both a playmaker and a finisher. Giovanni has really grown and improved. He leads by example and has been a great leader. He is good coaching up the younger players and is always positive." Conor Roemer has also been a force on the offense along with Luca Argast who is also going to be used on defense.

Junior Ethan Luckenbach has taken over as the team's goalie with the graduation of Cole Kelez said Ahmadi: "Ethan has had big shoes to fill. He is gaining experience but

he is not afraid to make mistakes and learn. He is very coachable without a big ego. He is all about the team."

The defense is led by Eric Heillman who was also a lineman for the football team, Simon Neuwirth-Stein and Cayden Weiszmann. Says Ahmadi: "Eric is doing very well. He is a great decision maker and runs very well for someone so big. We moved Simon to fullback from offense and he has made the transition very well. Cayden has shown a good learning curve as well."

Having played seven games in 14 days, Miramonte does not play another game until Jan. 9. Ahmadi sees this as a way to help the team come together: "The air quality issues set the team back because we were making so many position changes. This big break in our schedule will allow us to focus on training hard and to continue to work on our team chemistry."

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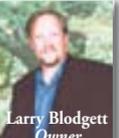
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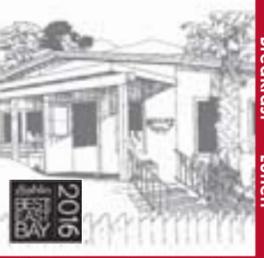


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