

Published February 20th, 2019

Girls soccer roundup

By John T. Miller



Sami Kolin

Photos Clint Federas

Sasha Sadoff

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Celia Campo



Taylor Walthal



Angelina Basso

Photos Clint Federas



Maddie Zuber

Both Miramonte and Campolindo girls soccer teams advanced to the semifinals in the North Coast Section tournament with wins Saturday, Feb. 16. No. 1 seed Miramonte will host No. 4 Analy of Sebastopol, while No. 3 Campolindo travels to No. 2 Petaluma. Both matches will tip off at 7:00 p.m. Feb. 20.

Miramonte defeated Sir Francis Drake of San Anselmo 2-1. Senior Taylor Walthal answered an early goal by Drake with a powerful clean shot in the first half for the tie, and junior Jordan Goularte added the go-ahead goal.

Coach Barry McQuain was pleased with the team's effort: "We made some adjustments at the half to control the middle of the field and had as many as 15 shots on the goal."

Acalanes played into the semifinal round with a 3-0 defeat of Encinal High Feb. 13. Sasha Sadoff, Lara Disman, and Maddie Zuber scored for the Dons, while junior Olivia Pellegrini - filling in at goalie for the injured Kate Carter - shut out the Jets.

With 15 minutes left in the game against Campolindo, Pellegrini was forced to leave with a gash above her eye that required stitches. The ensuing red card left Campolindo down a player, but they prevailed. Aliye Wingate scored for the Dons, while Sami Kolin, Celia Campo, and Ella Colombini scored for Campolindo.

The following is a brief wrap-up of the Lamorinda schools' regular seasons:

Miramonte (13-3-3; 9-1-2 league)

McQuain, in his third year as head coach at Miramonte, nearly accomplished the team's preseason goal of winning the league, eventually finishing second to the top-ranked Division II team, Northgate High.

Miramonte was led this year by a strong core of seniors. McQuain praised center defenders Alison Whipple and Taylor Johnson who anchored the defense along with midfielder Isabel Fine. McQuain called Taylor Walthal an offensive threat. "She was deceptively fast and shot with both feet equally well."

McQuain gave special recognition to senior Teveen Aghababian, who was out the entire season with a torn ACL. She came to every practice and helped manage and keep teammates on tract. Aghababian was named a co-captain along with Whipple and Johnson.

Miramonte outscored their opponents 53-13, with Angelina Basso (8 goals, 9 assists) and Alex Ziem (7 goals, 7 assists), both sophomores, leading the way. A pair of juniors, Mikayla Smith and Kate Blanchard, split time in the goal, producing 11 shutouts. Juniors Olivia Grillo and Sabrina Grant also played well defensively.

"Northgate was clearly one of our best efforts this season," said McQuain. "I felt good about the game, as neither team dominated. By tying the league champions, we kind of put an asterisk by them."

The toughest loss was to Campolindo. "We outshot them 15-5, but they had a beautiful combination pass that went in to beat us 1-0, said McQuain.

With 15 girls returning, the Matadors expect to compete for the title next year, also.

Campolindo (11-4-3; 8-2-2 league)

In his first year at Campolindo, Luis Pinto led the Cougars to a third place finish in the tough Diablo Athletic League, giving them a huge boost going into the NCS playoffs.

After six years as an assistant coach, Pinto took over the program, saying, "I hope to pick up where Ernesto Silva left off and continue to build the program."

Juniors Celia Campo and Devon Ortman headed the Cougar offense, with Campo, from her left forward position, leading the team with 11 goals, while Ortman provided six assists. Pinto praised Ortman, saying "She adapted to a new position this year as a midfielder and was the key to the start of every transition."

Mallory Lewis, a junior goalie, started the last eight games of the season and contributed strong performances in 1-0 shutouts over Clayton Valley and rival Miramonte.

The three graduating seniors -Savannah DeCarlo, Nicole Huebner and Julia Colombini--served as co-captains for the team. "They did an excellent job leading the team and helping us to peak at the right time," says Pinto.

The Cougars went 8-1-1 over the last 10 games to climb into third place in the league.

Pinto also credits the six juniors on the team for being a strong influence and being able to lead without having the title of captains.

In addition, four freshmen improved dramatically and took over starting roles this year, giving Campolindo strong hopes for another competitive season next year.

Acalanes (10-5-5; 4-4-4 league)

First-year head coach Nick Barbarino, who worked the previous few seasons as a Miramonte assistant helping out with all levels, led his team to a No. 6 seed in the NCS playoffs this year.

The Dons were led in scoring by senior Sasha Sadoff with 11 goals and 13 assists, while junior goalie Kate Carter allowed only 15 goals until a concussion interrupted her season with a game-and-a-half left.

Barbarino also mentioned sophomore centerbacks Sami Hansen and Aliye Wingate as important contributors to the team's success, along with junior Ivy Souza, a durable midfielder, and utility player Megan Go, a sophomore who played just about everywhere.

According to Barbarino, "My senior co-captains K.K. McDonagh and Malika Haji brought leadership on and off the field and kept the team together." Another pair of seniors, Emma Workman and Ava MacKay were inspirational. "Although they didn't always play, they provided the team with a positive attitude and supported the girls at all times."

Seniors Lara Dissman and Maddie Zuber also contributed goals and offense throughout the season.

Although their league record left them in the middle of the pack, Barbarino said, "We gave up a couple last minute goals resulting in ties, so our record could have easily been better." The Dons tied Campolindo twice and split the season series with Miramonte 1-1.

With losing only two senior starters, the Dons boast a lot of young talent and look forward to competing for a title next year.

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[back](#)

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