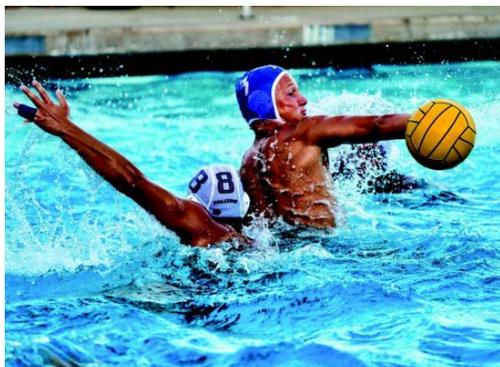


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Campolindo leading Acalanes and Miramonte in water polo

By Jon Kingdon



Peter Archer, Acalanes Photos Gint Federas

Ryan Lenahan and Tom McGuire and Brock Samanian who was named honorable mention. Having won their first four games, the team is starting right where they left of last season.

"We graduated a lot of people but we have a lot of returning swimmers," says Price. "It's one of our biggest senior classes we've had in a long time. Still we're younger and have a lot of players that have been in the program for a long time that have had a lot of experience."

In the goal, it's something of an embarrassment of riches for the Cougars. Logan Estes who brings size, athleticism, a good frame and experience, was forced to miss most of last season due to an injury. As a freshman, Temkin stepped in and very much earned the Goalie of the Year award. We have a goalie dilemma with Logan and West," says Price. "Actually, we're fortunate to be in that situation."

There are also two brother combinations that are going to be key contributors, seniors Jack Larsen and C.J. Rago and their sophomore brothers, Ben Larsen and Luca Rago. As expected, the key players on offense are Soren Jensen and Tom McGuire. Ryan Lenahan and C.J. Rago are being counted on to be the anchors on the defense in front of the goal.

The leaders and senior captains are Luke Vanderberghe, C.J. Rago, McGuire and Jensen. "We have a good sophomore and junior class," said Price. We're looking for the younger guys to lead as well."

With the success of last year's team and the strength of this year's team, it could be easy to be overconfident but that is something that Price is addressing: "They better be hungry. People may be saying that last year was their year and they've lost all these guys so it's a chance to ignite our fire and play in the underdog role. We have a really tough schedule with a number of top teams in competitive tournaments since we only have three home league games. It's going to be challenging but it will make us stronger come NCS. We've never repeated and that is our goal."

Acalanes

Acalanes head coach Eddie Arroyo, beginning his second year with the Dons after a 10-13 season, is feeling a lot better about his team: "We definitely have a starting point that's a lot higher than we had last year because the players are more familiar with what we're expecting them to do."

After starting off the season with five straight victories over Leland, Alhambra, Tamalpais, Rocklin and College Park, outscoring their opponents 66-18, there appears to be a lot to support Arroyo's positive expectations.

There are four seniors on the roster who are the co-captains of the team: Mac Darin, (second team all league), Charlie Bettencourt, (honorable mention all league), Mike Winther and Scott Murphy. "We're expecting a lot out of our seniors," says Arroyo. "They are motivated and working hard. They are leaders in and out of the pool."

The senior group will be leading the offense along with junior Jay Morris who is expected to be a key offensive threat.

With 12 players that were either named first team, second team or honorable mention in the Diablo Athletic League last year, it's a constant and ongoing process for the Lamorinda Boy's Water Polo teams to replace and replenish their rosters. With nine returning all-league players to the Lamorinda teams (though not evenly distributed), there is a feeling of strong optimism pervading through each team's pool.

Campolindo

Despite losing four first team and one second team all-league players, Campolindo head coach Miles Price heads into the season confident about his team's potential for repeating as North Coast Section champion. Despite losing so many top players, the Cougars return the league's most valuable player, Soren Jensen, the goalie of the year, West Temkin, two second team all-leaguers,

Parker Tompkins, a junior, is starting in goal and has a strong supporter in Arroyo: "Parker is the man. He's been playing extremely well. He's definitely one of those players that gets pumped up for the games."

Youth will be served for the Dons as well. Sophomore Eli Berkowitz is expected to be the shut down player on defense and freshman Andrew Sappal should be a factor on offense, says Arroyo: "Andrew is improving really fast and is going to play a key role for us as a counterattack player."

For Arroyo the key for success is the Don's execution: "We have to do things right in key moments, especially in the 6-on-5 opportunities. Last year our percentage in those situations were not as high as we wanted them to be so we have focused on that area."

The Dons are scheduled to play in three tournaments, The Roche Tournament, The Pleasanton Invitational at Amador and in the Southern California Invitational. It's a difficult schedule for Acalanes, says Arroyo: "We have one of the toughest leagues in the state. We all have traditionally strong programs. And we get to play them all twice."

Miramonte

Miramonte made it to the NCS semifinals last year, losing to San Ramon Valley by a score of 14-13. Head coach James Lathrop is going back to fundamentals right from the start: "We're working hard by trying to start off by getting good at the basic things. We've been having good scrimmages prior to the start of the regular season and I just want to do a good job in building our fundamentals."

The team co-captains are seniors Jackson Painter (first team all league) and Brady (second team all league) and Blake Hoover. Painter has committed to Stanford and the Hoovers will be attending California next year. Lathrop is relying on the senior group, as a whole, to provide direction for the team: "Our seniors are leading the way. We're trying to make it fun and for it to be about the team in and out of the pool. We've put dodge ball teams together and created a fantasy football draft. We're trying to make it fun and make it all about the team."

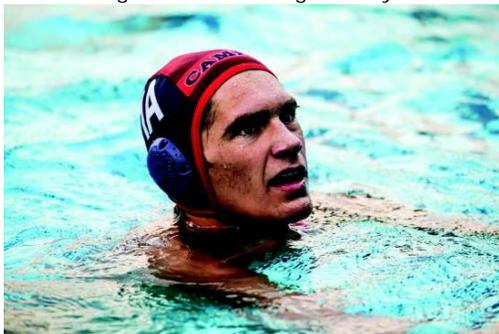
Stepping in as the starting goalie is Oliver Von Karl, who was not eligible to play last season and has been playing very well. He should get a lot of help from junior William Thomas, who is expected to step up and play a bigger role on defense, but it's a group effort that Lathrop is looking for: "Defense is also a team game. We need multiple players to guard the other team's top players."

It's the same for the offense, says Lathrop: "We're relying on everybody, not just one or two players. The key for us is in having the ability to react to what the defense is doing and have a multitude of guys to step up and score, pass or make the play."

All four classes will be represented on the Matadors' roster, says Lathrop: "We had a very successful JV team last year and we're relying on some of those kids stepping it up and we have a huge group of juniors that are all competing right now and doing a great job of it. We may have a number of role players."

Lathrop has scheduled a number of tournaments for the team such as playing in the Elite Eight in Southern California with the idea of testing themselves against the top teams in the country.

It's the minutia of the game that is going to be the key for Miramonte to be successful, says Lathrop: "We're keeping it simple and doing the little things really well, not complicating the game. I want us to do well with our fundamentals and playing as a team and having fun. It's teaching the young kids how to be young men and learning life lessons along the way."



West Temkin, Campolindo



Jackson Painter, Miramonte

Reach the reporter at: sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com

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