

LAMORINDA SPORTS

Dewitt named to the 2019 USA Select Under 17 Team



Boo Dewitt

Photo provided

By Jon Kingdon

The accolades continue to come in for Miramonte lacrosse player Boo Dewitt. After being named the Most Valuable Player in the Diablo Athletic League and making the All-American team for the second time, De-

witt was named to the 2019 USA Select Under 17 Team. This is the first time that such a team has been selected. There is also an Under 15 and an Under 19 team along with a National team that will go to the Olympics. Their first matches will be against teams from Ontario, Canada the weekend of

Oct. 18-20 in Maryland.

There were regional tryouts around the country for about 300 girls that were by invitation only and from these 300 players, 70 were invited back to Maryland to try out for the team, which comprises 22 players.

On Aug. 30, while sitting in her comparative governments class, Dewitt received a text from her father to check her email which informed her that she had been chosen for the U17 team: "When I saw that I had made it, I almost started crying in class because I was so overwhelmed with emotions of relief and excitement. It was the coolest feeling ever."

When she got the invitation in July, Dewitt, who will be attending UC Berkeley next year, knew that she was going to be competing against the top players in the country and she put her preparatory efforts into overdrive: "I trained a lot on my own and got some Cal players to play defense on me and push me so I could get intensity workouts in. I did a lot of conditioning, shooting sessions with my high school teammates and wall ball every day to prepare myself. As a captain of the team last year and when I hurt my knee as a sophomore, I learned how to become a better teammate and a leader through my actions and that helped me during the tryouts as they were definitely looking for people that are good teammates."

The combined tryout en-

tailed individual events in the broad jump, the vertical jump, and 10-yard spring buildup for time and agility drills. There was also 2 on 2, 4 on 4 and 7 on 7 team competitions designed to show who was able to play unselfishly and creatively with the other players. As competitive as it was, the players were there for each other, said Dewitt: "Every single drill was really intense and was meant to push us and all the girls were putting in a total effort. It was an intense setting but everyone was super supportive of each other, cheering each other on and being the best teammates we could be. That does not always happen and that was really cool."

There was more than just competition on the field for the players, said Dewitt: "A top high school coach talked to us about what it means to be a good teammate and to be the best player and person you can be on and off the field and how it was important to have a short-term memory when you are playing and make a mistake and not think about it, and how you can recover from it. We also had a sports psychology session and a recruiting session for the juniors."

Though lacrosse is a national sport, the best players and teams come primarily from the East Coast, says Dewitt: "Everyone there is so good and there are so many good club and high school teams where they play all the time. It was the

best competition that I have played against and I just learned to go hard with everything that I did."

Of the 22 girls on the squad, 20 of them were from East Coast states (Connecticut, Florida, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Virginia). Dewitt and a player from Illinois were the only members of the team west of Pennsylvania.

Players on the national senior team were used to evaluate the competitors and Dewitt got to meet Taylor Cummings, who is regarded as the best female lacrosse player in the country and a three-time winner of The Tewaaron Award, which honors the most outstanding male and female collegiate player and recognizes the Native American heritage of the sport of lacrosse when she played at the University of Maryland: "Taylor Cummings has always been my role model and inspiration. It was cool to meet her and some of the other evaluators."

Dewitt invests about two hours a day on lacrosse with running, lifting and skill work and besides playing for Miramonte and the Tenacity club team, her goal has been to play for a national team like the USA Select U17 Team: "It's always been my dream to play for my country and represent it because I feel that it's the ultimate and highest level that you can play."

Lamorinda Cross Country



Photo Gint Federas

Lamo archive

By Jon Kingdon

In a recent report by the National Federation of State High School Associations, there was a decline in sports participation for the first time in 30 years for the 2018-19 season. They must not have included the Lamorinda high school cross country teams which have a combined total of nearly 300 participants (Miramonte-115, Campolindo-85, Acalanes 85).

Campolindo

Campolindo head coach Chuck Woolridge, whose cross country teams have been a perpetual force through the years, attributes the success of the program to the athletes and their forebears: "We've been fortunate to have generations of athletes that come into our program, learn how we do things and pass it on to the next group of athletes. There is a lot of community support and a really robust athletic program at Campolindo, not just with cross country. We were lucky to have Chris Walsh who established the program in the '90s and 2000s and I've been here now for 14 years."

With some early season injuries on the girls team, the Cougars are taking the season a step at a time, says Wool-

ridge: "We're being cautious because we have great talent and it's a long season so we're trying to put the pieces together slowly."

Paloma Hancock, the number one finisher at state, is the team's leading runner and is just now getting back to running after suffering a stress reaction in the spring. Sophia Webster, who finished second at state, is also returning from an injury in the spring.

With Hancock and Webster out, the leading runner for Campolindo has been Alicia Hober. Freshman Ellie Buckley has also impressed Woolridge, bringing experience and a pedigree to the team: "Ellie looks to be somebody who's going to contribute to the varsity squad. She ran for the Diablo Valley Track and Field Club and is the younger sister of Teddy Buckley (now running at the University of Kansas), who was our top runner the last three years."

Leading the team both on the track and off have been Hancock, Hober and Ellie Guthrie and Sarah Naughten.

The Campolindo boys team is carrying on their tradition of success, says Woolridge: "We're ranked No. 2 in the state and in Division III

and we are motivated to do better after being beaten by Maria Carillo (Santa Rosa, the No. 1 ranked team). We know what the challenge is that lies before us and we're going to try and take the next seven weeks to try and close the gap."

Senior Cayden Hein has stepped into the role as the

leading runner this year, following Teddy Buckley's graduation and junior Dylan Gunn is ranked just below Hein. "Those two finished third and

fourth in our first meet," said Woolridge. "We are looking for them to be a good force up front for us."

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