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Miramonte makes it to NCS Finals and into State Tournament

By Jon Kingdon



Eliza Bates Photo Gint Federas

It was a successful season for the Lamorinda Girls Tennis teams though they were not shown the respect they deserved by the seeds they received for the NCS championship. Campolindo was seeded 10th, Miramonte 7th and Acalanes 6th.

Campolindo unfortunately opened the tournament against Miramonte, losing by a score of 6-1. Miramonte and Acalanes went on to prove the seeders wrong. Miramonte defeated the No. 2 seeded Dougherty Valley and Acalanes upended the No. 3 seeded San Ramon Valley setting up a match between Miramonte and Acalanes in the NCS semifinals, which Miramonte went on to win by a score of 5-2. Later in the day, Miramonte would lose to Tamalpais 4-3 but still qualified for the state tournament by making it to the finals. The Matadors went down in the first round of the NorCal tournament to Granite Bay.

"We had a very complicated season," said Miramonte coach Mike McCollom. "This was only the fourth match all season that we had our team together with all of our players and we did well in each of those matches. It's hard to win a championship from the seventh seed and I believe it's only the third time a seventh seed has made it to the championship."

The Matadors were led by Amber Lee, said McCollom: "Amber is a warrior and an amazing player who is very spirited with her teammates. We were very lucky to have her as a human and as a teammate."

Besides Lee, Macey Dowd and Henrietta Schmuck were the key singles players and the doubles teams were led by Shaili Lakhotia and Peyton Smith.

Acalanes coach Drew Diefenbach took away a lot of positives from the season: "We were successful results wise (16-5). We did better than last year and we can say that we finished in the top four in the NCS. We won the Diablo Athletic League and advanced further in the NCS than we had done in a long time. Our goal was to get to the finals and we fell just short but as a team it was better than last year. Everybody on the team did great. We have a great core of freshmen players that are all team players and will be carrying on the culture."

Though the No. 1 player for Acalanes, Eliza Bates, was unavailable for the team tournament, she returned to win the North Coast Section Division I singles championship, defeating Solia Valentine from Berkeley High School by a score of 7-6, 6-0. The tournament has been held since 1977 and Bates is the first female from Acalanes to win the singles crown. Jasmine Toni also competed in the tournament, winning in the first round but losing to Valentine in the second round. "Eliza played well all season and certainly deserves recognition for how well she played with the team and in the singles tournament."

Campolindo coach Sunan Faulker saw the season as being ultimately successful: "We came in second in our league and showed that we were a very good team. We were very strong in doubles with our number one team of Juliet Barliet and Francesca Restrepo and our number two team Sarah Vranesh and Sarah Warner that went undefeated in the regular season. (Senior) Kate Brown was very tough against the top player. It was fun to see her improve and have some success this year. (Sophomore) Claire Ross has really improved and could be our No. 1 singles player next year."



Photo Gint Federas



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