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## Onward and upward for Lamorinda wrestling

By Jon Kingdon



Photo Gint Federas

After a month of practicing, the Lamorinda wrestling teams are now ready to compete against anyone besides their teammates. The growth of the sport in Lamorinda continues with each of the teams' male and female wrestlers.

### Acalanes

Ken Trainer has stepped in as the head coach at Acalanes as Micah Canestero has taken a paternity leave in Brazil. Trainer has probably the top two wrestlers in Lamorinda in his co-captains, Steven Williams (160), who was first team all-league last year, and his son James (126). Both are considered favorites to make it to the state tournament at the end of the season.

"Steven and James are our best and toughest wrestlers," said Trainer. "I'm able to turn over a good portion of the practice to them to give them a chance to be leaders."

It's been a very positive experience for Trainer so far: "I've learned that our wrestlers learn quickly. They bounce back from tough practices and they all have each other's backs. It's a family environment where the upper classmen are taking the younger wrestlers under their wings."

Sophomores Lucas Haase (132) and Matt Soto (145) have made great strides from their freshman year and Trainer is looking forward to bringing them to the local tournaments. Jakob Ross has come over from the football team and will be wrestling at 136 pounds. Anthony Mirabito, who will be wrestling at 170 pounds, has also looked impressive.

Of the 33 wrestlers on the team, only three of them are females and they are all freshmen but have impressed Trainer: "They're all very driven and each has their own agenda for being driven. Overall, it's the most physical group of freshmen I have seen for a while and should be good for years to come."

### Miramonte

In his third season as the head coach at Miramonte, Jason Rosiak is the longest tenured wrestling coach in Lamorinda. After a 4-2 record in league matches last season, which was highlighted by its defeat of Campolindo for the first time in 15 years (48-36), Rosiak is looking for the team to take the next step up: "Our team is a little smaller but we're a more focused and aggressive squad. We have a lot of freshmen that can contribute right away and some upperclassmen that should do well in the tournaments and league matches."

The three captains of the team, Ryan Edmister (152), Shannon Lipp (138) and Dylan Welch (113), have all stood out to Rosiak: "Ryan put in a great deal of work this offseason. I'm looking for Shannon to springboard closer to the state meet this year after making it to the second day of the NCS tournament and Dylan, who placed in the league tournament, should have a solid season."

Lipp, who is in her third year of wrestling, has made a big jump from her sophomore to her junior year, says Rosiak: "Shannon has always had good first moves. She has focused on putting together a Plan B, to have moves to fall back on when her initial moves are not working."

Two freshmen that have jumped to the fore are Hanna Ripper (138), who comes to wrestling with a competitive jujitsu background, and Nathan Meyer (120), a multi-sport athlete who has brought a lot of energy to the team.

The key for the success of the team to Rosiak is simple: "We're working together as a team and are continuing to create a strong wrestling culture and work ethic."

### Campolindo

In their second season as co-head coaches at Campolindo, Louis Suba and Nikko Triggas are, like the other coaches, ready for the tournaments to begin: "We're done with the weeding out process so we have the group that will be with us the rest of the season," said Suba. "It's a good group. We have a number of wrestlers that came to our open mats all summer long and most did not miss a session and we saw improvement in leaps and bounds."

With a number of young wrestlers, Triggas is looking to his veterans to provide the direction: "We're excited about this year. We have some upperclassmen that can really lead the program and help direct the younger wrestlers."

Though they won't have the wrestlers to fill in at the heavyweight slot, the Cougars should be able to fill the other 13 spots. Co-captains Adrian Bautista and Noah Hamann, who made second team all-league, will be wrestling at 120 and 126, though it is still up in the air as to who will be at either weight. It's an ongoing process, says Suba: "We go week to week to see who deserves to wrestle on the varsity or the JV team."

There are a total of 10 girls on the team. Sophomore Isabelle Lurie has shown a major commitment over the summer and has become a leader on the team, said Suba: "Isabelle made all of our open mat practices after wrestling as a freshman. She even went to some wrestling camps on her own and has improved her speed, strength, quickness and technique."

Lurie also brings a background in jujitsu and was looking for a sport with team bonding: "I went to the open mats and found that I really like the people and enjoyed the sport. The atmosphere and environment is really good in that we are all very supportive of each other. I've gotten a lot more self-confident and more sure of myself. I wasn't very good when I began but I put a lot of effort in and hope that it will pay off this season."

Sophomore Walker Johnson has also made great strides over his freshman year, says Suba: "Walker went to some camps over the summer and has improved a lot. He will be wrestling at 160 pounds this year. He made NCS last year and I'd be surprised if he did not make it this year."

Ohia Paris has worked hard to put on the weight to be able to wrestle at 106, says Suba: "Ohia did not miss any practices and is one of the hardest workers on the team and we're looking for big things out of him this year."

Triggas says that he and Suba are taking the long view with their team: "We're hoping to have some of experienced wrestlers push through to state this year. We've got some work to do. The culture is starting to build a little bit. It will take a couple of years to get the culture where we want it to be but we're building this program up to where it can be. We want fighters that grind for every point and never give up."

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