

# JANUARY GAMES

UNIVERSITY CREDIT UNION PAVILION

**JAN. 9**  
MEN'S BASKETBALL  
vs. BYU // 8:00PM

**THEME: RED OUT**

GIVEAWAY:  
FREE T-SHIRTS FOR ALL FANS  
COURTESY OF UNIVERSITY  
CREDIT UNION.

**JAN. 11**  
MEN'S BASKETBALL  
vs. SANTA CLARA // 5:00PM

**THEME: SMC GARDEN GNOME NIGHT**

GIVEAWAY:  
FIRST 1,000 FANS  
RECEIVE A PATTY MILLS  
GARDEN GNOME  
COURTESY OF COMMON  
INTEREST.

**JAN. 23**  
MEN'S BASKETBALL  
vs. USF // 7:30PM

**THEME: AUSTRALIAN HERITAGE NIGHT**

GIVEAWAY:  
FREE SAINT MARY'S  
AUSTRALIAN HERITAGE  
T-SHIRTS FOR ALL STUDENTS.



# LAMORINDA SPORTS

## Lamorinda girls basketball shines in West Coast Jamboree



Lauren Frechman

By Jon Kingdon

The Christmas break has become far more than just a time for college football bowl games. For the East Bay, it's become a tradition to watch high school girls' basketball at the West Coast Jamboree Tournament.

In 2000, David Jackson put together the first West Coast Jamboree Tournament with 56 schools. In the two decades since its inception, it has become the largest girls high school basketball tournament in the country. In this, its 20th anniversary, there were 136 different high schools competing in 17 different brackets, with eight teams in each bracket, that were played at various high schools

around the East Bay. The competing teams came from all over the state of California along with schools from Nevada, Oregon, Hawaii and Canada. In the past 20 years, there have been over 25,000 players and around 2,500 different teams that have played in the Jamboree.

All four of the Lamorinda high schools competed in their respective brackets: Acalanes in the Emerald bracket at Benicia High School, Campolindo in the Ivory bracket in Livermore at Granada High School, Miramonte in the Diamond bracket and The Bentley School in the Onyx bracket, both playing at Las Lomas High School in Walnut Creek. Miramonte (second place), Acalanes (third place) and Campolindo (third



Mia Mastrov

Photos Gint Federas

place) won two of their three games and Bentley won their opening game finishing in fourth place.

The West Coast Jamboree is a 501(c)3 nonprofit that hired the company Hoops4-Girls to run the tournament. There are three tournament directors: Harold Abend, Clay Kallam and Miramonte head coach Kelly Sopak. Each had their own responsibilities, according to Abend: "I do the state rankings for Cal-Hi Sports and I go through the rankings and work with Clay and Kelly setting up the top three brackets, along with handling the marketing, hotels and sponsorships. Clay does the national MaxPrep rankings and does the bracketing for the other 14 divisions and handles all the finances. Besides helping with the brackets and working with me to attract the top teams, Kelly, along with his daughter Lauren Sopak, an associate tournament director, are in charge of all the operations."

This is the seventh year that Sopak has served as a tournament director: "We raised about \$50,000 from sponsors for the tournament and we donate the money back. All of the host sites receive money for hosting the games."

The West Coast Jamboree is the only high school tournament that offers scholarship opportunities to participants. This will be the third year in which at least three \$2,500 scholarships are awarded based on the players academic grades, athletic achievement, sportsmanship, leadership and with needs based criteria as well.

Making this tournament particularly special was the participation of the Paradise team that was devastated along with the entire town by the 2018 Camp Fire. An anonymous corporate sponsor covered the entire cost of the expenses for the Paradise team.

The effort in putting together the brackets is the key to the success of the jamboree and keeps the teams returning each year, says Sopak: "Clay and Harold do a fantastic job in evaluating the teams so the brackets are really balanced all the way through. A lot of time goes into getting those brackets scheduled and the other part of it is not having league opponents playing each other and always trying to play out of town teams. They do such a great job that when the scores come in, there is very rarely a blowout. In almost every bracket, you will probably get a game you can win, a game that's going to be a 50-50 and a game in which you will be an underdog."

Miramonte defeated Daramonte (Reno, Nevada), Buchanan (Clovis) and lost to Salesian Prep (Richmond) 75-65 in the championship game.

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Jordan Allred



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