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A difficult season and coaching changes in Lamorinda Wrestling

By Jon Kingdon



Jason, Justin and Jessi Rosiak photos provided

so I was able to move to Walnut Creek and was able to jump in last year as the team's head coach."

Rosiak and Suba each made their decisions for familial reasons. Rosiak's daughter, Jessi, a recent Campolindo graduate, will be a freshman this fall at the University of Edinburgh (Scotland) and he wants to be free to visit her. Suba accepted the offer to replace Rosiak because his son will soon be attending Miramonte. "Broady will be in eighth grade this year," Suba said. "If he wrestles next year, I wanted the opportunity to coach him myself rather than have someone else fill that position."

Attending The University of Edinburgh will be a unique experience for Jessi who will be studying finance and economics. The University of Edinburgh opened in 1583 and is the sixth-oldest university in the English-speaking world. Alumni of the university include Charles Darwin, Alexander Graham Bell, Robert Louis Stevenson, and Arthur Conan Doyle.

"Jessi looked at the globe and saw that the university had a little bit of everything that she wanted along with being able to do some traveling," Rosiak said. "If there is any time in life to do something different, she decided that during college was the time, not to mention that the tuition is like that of a UC school."

The California COVID protocols for the wrestling teams were the most extensive of all the sports due to the need for so much physical contact. Several of the meets were held outdoors on the football fields. "Our athletes and coaches had to be tested once a week and before each match we had to have instant PCR COVID tests," Rosiak said. "This was to ensure that we were staying virus free and only the wrestlers on the mat were allowed to remove their masks."

With wrestling normally a winter sport, it was a unique experience for the teams to be able to wrestle on the football fields under the lights. "Wrestling outside allowed the parents to watch the matches from the stands," Weitzman said. "It really changed the environment from being in a small gym."

Initially the wrestlers were encouraged to wear the masks during their matches. "After a while, the kids couldn't breathe," Suba said. "It was too limiting for them. In practice, we did have appropriate spacing, and they would only have one partner for the entire practice. It was essentially an ad-hoc schedule. We would call another team and set up a match so we would have two matches a week. It was certainly a big change, but we were just thankful to have a season."

The numbers were limited at Acalanes, but the team was comprised of 13 wrestlers. "That was a good number under the conditions," Weitzman said. "The kids were fantastic to work with and the community came together to put on some really fun matches and exhibitions outside, which one coach referred to as 'Grappling on the Gridiron.'"

Rosiak is pleased to have someone the caliber of Suba to replace him: "Louis is a good strong person who really knows technique. He is also familiar with the wrestlers at Miramonte. He coached a number of them because, with the diminished numbers of wrestlers this year for both schools, Campolindo and Miramonte often joined together as one team for the matches."

Suba, who wrestled at Indiana University and coached at Sacred Heart Cathedral (S.F.) will be bringing much of what he learned coaching at Campolindo: "I'm going to take a lot of things that I learned coaching

with Nikko. My style will have some similarities, but it won't all be the same."

Weitzman is bringing in his own coaching philosophy to the Dons: "I want the kids thinking about and focusing on two things - strong fundamentals and also really utilizing flow wrestling to be able to transition and constantly work through a series of breakdowns and attacks that all flow into each other so when they hit their moves, it's through a sequence and not just a single move and takedown."

What Rosiak did in his four years at Miramonte was not lost on Suba. "Jason generated a lot of interest in the community and got the numbers up and I hope that I can continue that," Suba said. "Right now, we have our regular off-season program going on with an open mat twice a week which several local wrestlers have attended in the past. It gives the kids an opportunity to keep training in the off-season. I believe that the only way you get better at wrestling is to wrestle."

Even though Rosiak could not make the full-time commitment in the winter to coach, he is not going to disappear. "I'll be coaching my son, Justin, who is 9, in wrestling, soccer and baseball and I can also be a 'free agent' assistant coach if anyone else is looking for help."

Rosiak takes great memories with him from his four years at Miramonte: "I was fortunate in that I was able to work with some great student-athletes and families. When I started out, there were only two returning wrestlers and pre-COVID we had over 30 wrestlers on the team. Two of the years, our team won the best GPA in the North Coast Section. They were good students as well as athletes. We went from no females on the team to as many as eight. Next year, I believe that junior Hannah Ripper has a good chance to qualify for state. Finally, in 2019, we defeated Campolindo in a dual match for the first time in 15 years with the victory clinched by a young woman, Yazee Mendez."

Weitzman is looking forward to joining the coaching fraternity: "There is a great deal of experience with Nikko, Louis and Jason and I'm looking forward to getting to know them better. They care a lot about the programs and their kids, and it's always been a joy to talk with them. I'm looking forward to wrestling with them and against them."



Louis Suba, who will coach Miramonte next year, with his son Broady photos provided

Reach the reporter at: sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com

[back](#)

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