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Lady Mats tennis racks up wins

By John T. Miller



Top row, from left: Sophia Kan, Nicole Hui, Laura Boifort, Emma Molyaner, Ellie Foster, Elena Sullivan, Lily Lincoln, Lauren Anthony, Zoe Zimmerman, Olivia Reiss, Riki Sorenson, Denisa Dvorakova; front row: Grace Liu, Nicole Guo, Alison Rhee, Reily George, Olivia Rhee, Audrey Kosla Photo provided

After finishing up the preseason with a 6-1 record - their only loss coming to San Ramon - and opening the Diablo Foothill League (5-1), the Miramonte tennis team is poised to make a run at the DAL championship this year.

Riki Sorenson took over the head coaching job in last year's COVID-shortened season after six years as an assistant coach. She has previously served on the Orinda School district board and been a full-time Mom, before taking a math and science position at Miramonte.

With 21 girls on the roster, Sorenson relies on local volunteers Julie Silverie, Aaron George, and Paul Liu to help with the program. "They've been extraordinary and desperately needed," says Coach Sorenson. "It takes a huge commitment to be able to help the girls."

Miramonte graduated a very talented group last year, but the program is still strong. Their No. 2 singles player, sophomore Soliel Skjorshammer, usually does not practice with the team, but instead is tutored off-campus at a private club. Recently, another top sophomore, Juliette Krumholz, left the team to focus on her individual tennis.

Sorenson gives credit to her three senior captains, Riley George, Laura Boifort, and Olivia Rhee for their leadership, saying, "They've been anchors on the team all year for us and are there every day."

She also gives credit to two other main competitors, Elena Sullivan, a junior, and Ellie Foster, senior, who are in the lineup every match.

In addition, according to Sorenson, the team added a ray of sunshine when Czech exchange student, Denisa Dvorakova, asked if she could work out with the team. They got permission from the governing board to put her on the roster and she is now their No. 3 singles player. "She's a very special person and the girls loved her from the start," says Sorenson.

The team faced many challenges, including a lack of a court to practice on - they had to carpool to various locales, including renting the SMC court - and a COVID scare when Sorenson's parents both came down with the virus. The biggest challenge, however, comes off the court, says Sorenson. "All these girls are capable in many areas of their lives. They are in leadership, in high-end academic classes, and other extracurricular activities. Tennis is a great release from the stress."

Next up for the Matadors was the Battle of the Bay in Atherton, where they faced two of the top teams in the state, Menlo School and St. Francis.

Lamorinda Weekly will feature Acalanes (5-8 overall and 4-2 in league) and Campolindo (12-2 overall and 6-1 in league) in its Oct. 27 issue.)



Elena Sullivan, Olivia Rhee (at net) Photo provided



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[back](#)

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