

CCU Water Polo alumni represent the USA at the Fina Junior Water Polo World Championships in Prague



Dash McFarland (left) and Brock Zamanian

Photo provided

Junior National Team water polo players Brock Zamanian (attacker) and Dash McFarland (center), CCU Water Polo

alumni and teammates at UCSB, competed in the Fina Junior Water Polo World Championships in Prague Aug.

28-Sept. 5. The FINA Junior Water Polo World Championships is an international water polo tournament for players age 20 and under that is held every two years in a different country (2019 was in Kuwait) and is nine days long, consisting of one game per day with 8-minute quarters, in a 30-meter pool (versus the 25-meter course that is played in the U.S.). Each country is allowed a roster total of 13 players, 11 field players, and two goalies. Team USA had players from UCSB (Brock and Dash), UCSD, USC, Cal, Long Beach State, and Pepperdine.

The battles in the pool resulted in wins against Slovakia, the Czech Republic, and Germany, and losses to Spain, Montenegro, and Serbia. Team USA's final game on Day 9 was a nail-biter against Greece, winning by one goal at 12-11 to take 7th overall.

Being a former Orinda Aquatics swimmer, Zamanian loved the bigger pool and was impressed with the swim-

ming speed of the competition, making it even more challenging to gain the advantage on counter-attacks. "It was the hardest water polo that I have ever played, but I learned a lot and had fun," said Zamanian, who earned the Player of the Match award against the Czech Republic and was Team USA's second-highest goal scorer in the tournament with 11 goals.

As a center, McFarland drew 16 kick-outs (2nd overall for Team USA) while his defenders attempted to steal the ball from him. Over the course of the tournament, it was McFarland's strength and physicality that he could rely on as he faced steep competition. McFarland said, "The defenders were so tough, but it really prepared me for the college season upcoming."

Upon returning home, the focus is now on college water polo and NCAA qualifications.

-Submitted by Orinda resident

Lady Mats tennis racks up wins



Photo provided

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

By John T. Miller

After finishing up the pre-season 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 Alcalanes (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)



Audrey Kosla

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