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WEEKLY

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Campolindo's outside hitter, senior Audrey Baumer Photo Gint Federas

Lamorinda volleyball teams make playoffs; Miramonte advances to NorCal regionals

By Jon Kingdon

With all three girls volleyball teams making the playoffs, after suffering through the pandemic this past spring, it would have to be acknowledged as a successful season in Lamorinda: Campolindo was 10-0 in league play and finished the season with an overall record of 16-10 and making it to the second round of the Division I NCS Championship; Acalanes finished with a 12-11 record after losing in the first round of the Division III NCS Championship; and Miramonte with a 15-4 record lost in the third round of the Division III NCS Championship.

Miramonte
 Despite last year's abbreviated season and an 8-16 record the year before, head coach Leslie Ray's optimism prior to the start of the regular season proved prescient. "The players bought into the system, and we became more of a team," Ray said. "They came to understand that each player had a role on the team. Our practices were competitive, and they had the mindset that every game mattered."
 Though the loss in five sets in the NCS semifinals to Archie Williams High School was painful and disappointing, the pain was ameliorated in that

since it was a semifinal game in the tournament, it qualified Miramonte to play in the Northern California Regional Championship. "We were prepared to play Archie Williams and we stuck with our system, not allowing any distractions to get in our way. The girls played with great heart, and it was a back and forth match all evening. All of the girls were super excited to get into the playoffs," Ray said. "I've had to work to keep them focused by telling them that going into the playoffs is a new season and that every time we play in these games, we have to play like we're behind."
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Quincy's Dixie Fire Base Camp, from left: Jacob Airola, Dan Elbanna, Travis Dulli, Keith Larson and Jon Bensley

Local firefighters describe deployment during this year's historic fire incidents

By Vera Kochan

The firefighters with the Moraga-Orinda Fire District and the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District are not only charged with keeping Lamorinda safe, they choose to volunteer in other jurisdictions when blazes become out of control for local fire companies, like the historic Caldor and Dixie fires.
 Moraga Station 42 Captain/Paramedic Jacob Airola and Firefighter/Paramedic Katy Himsl, along with Orinda Station 43 Captain/Paramedic Jon Bensley and Engineer/Emergency Medical Technician Steve Rogness are just some of MOFD's personnel who volunteered for deployment to the season's most terrifying fires.
 This year, Airola responded to three incidents in the capacity of Safety Officer, spending 16 days in August at the Dixie Fire and 16 days between late September and early October during the Caldor Fire. He also assisted the Governor's Office of Emergency Services with COVID-19 prevention and outbreaks within the State Operations Center for eight days in June.
 "A (Line) Safety Officer primarily focuses on preventing injuries to those working at the incident," explained Airola. "These include interventions such as traffic control measures, identifying/creating escape routes and safety zones, and writing incident reports to prevent future injury/accidents from occurring."
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Working as Engineer during LNU Complex, firefighter Katy Himsl drives through a flaming landscape. Photo provided

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