

# Campolindo Athletic Department chosen Division State School of the Year for 7th time



Photo Karin Testa

Track & Field winners of NCS 2022. From left: Kyrstin Wilson, Sara Tabibian, Meagan Kennedy and Mari Testa

By Jon Kingdon

For the seventh time, and the

sixth time in the last 11 years, Campolindo was named the Division State School of the year (2022, 2020, 2019, 2015,

2012, 2011 and 2005) by Cal-Hi Sports. Except for 2020 when the Cougars were the Division 2 program of the year, the other six years they were classified in Division 3.

Since Ray Meadows was named the athletic director at Campolindo in 2019, it's the third time the school has won that award. "I stepped into a really fortunate position as the athletic director with a lot of long-tenured coaches on staff," Meadows said. "This has really contributed to the consistency and success of the programs that we have at Campolindo."

Meadows ascribes the long-term success at Campolindo to Bob Wilson who was the athletic director when he began his teaching career in 2004. "Bob really set much of the foundation for the success of the athletic program at the school," Meadows said. "The principal at the time, Carol Kitchens, was very supportive of athletics and in my time as the athletic director, working with our principal, John Walker (who will be moving on to the district office next year) has been incredible in

terms of his support for athletics."

In picking the best schools by division, Cal-Hi focuses on teams that have been particularly successful in various sports. With Campolindo, it was not a difficult choice with the particular success of eight different teams: girls cross country (state champion), boys cross country (second in the state), girls track and field (NCS champions), boys basketball (won CIF and ranked fifth in the state), girls swimming (tied for fifth at CIF state finals), boys volleyball (won NCS D1 championship), football (NCS D2), boys' water polo (D1 Nor-Cal semifinal), girls water polo (lost in NCS final open division).

"I'm looking for schools that are way up there in 2, 3, and 4 sports and then I hone in from there," Mark Tennis, the co-publisher and editor of Cal-Hi Sports. "I've done it that way for the past 25 years and see it as a way to honor schools, judging them from an overview standpoint. I look at it at the end of the school year and determine which teams

have been the best."

As a small, suburban school, Campolindo has often been matched up against much bigger schools. "We have often found ourselves punching well above our weight in the play-offs," Meadows said. "I remember once in the girls Division I volleyball state championship, we were matched up against a school with 3,000 kids and their administrators could not get over how we were such a small public school with such a small enrollment. It helps with the parental and community support that we get each year, and it has become a part of our school culture."

The success in such a wide array of sports at Campolindo was not lost on Tennis. "They have a nice combination of success in the traditional sports like football, basketball and baseball," Tennis said. "With similar results in the 'country club' sports like swimming, water polo, golf, and tennis, Campolindo has a nice combination of sports."

# Lamorinda Soccer Club team competes in Texas at MLSNEXT program



Photo provided

Back row: Skyler (De La Salle), Alejandro (San Leandro), Joseph (Miramonte), Liam (Acalanes), Israel (Oakland), Oscar (Oakland), Isaias (Making Waves Academy); middle row: Christian (De La Salle), Fabricio (Washington), Jared (Making Waves Academy), Luc (Campolindo), Juan (Latitude), Miguel (De Anza), Brendan (College Park), Kai (Miramonte), Coach Castillo; front row: Jose (Skyline), Chris (Oakland); not pictured: Ben (Campolindo), Elouan (Berkeley), Ulysses (Making Waves)

Submitted by Richard Narido

Lamorinda Soccer Club's (LMSC) Under 16 Boys MLSNEXT team traveled to Frisco, Texas to compete in the highly competitive league, which is by MLS's acceptance only, where not every club soccer program qualifies. In LMSC's second year being part of the newly created MLSNEXT development program, the U16 boys team qualified for the playoffs which represent the nation's top 32 teams per age group. In days past, LMSC was known for fielding players mostly from the Lamorinda area. However, these days only the best qualify for the MLSNEXT roster for LMSC where LMSC's MLSNEXT program consists of

players from surrounding areas such as Richmond, Oakland, Concord, Berkeley, as well as Lamorinda players.

The U16 roster includes Lamorinda players such as Joseph Chalwin (Midfielder - Miramonte class of 2024), Kai Thomas (Winger - Miramonte class of 2024), Ben Young (Defender - Campolindo class of 2024), Liam Murdin (Defender - Acalanes class of 2024), and Luc Narido (GK - Campolindo class of 2025). Coached by Christian Castillo, a former DC United Academy player (and other international professional teams), he embodies LMSC's philosophy in rostering and playing the best players regardless of age or background and fostering an environment of family in the team.

LMSC took home a win in the first round of the playoffs with a final score of 2-0 against a team that went 16-2-1 and was featured by MLSNEXT as a team to watch in BW Gottschee from New York. Up next in the round, 16 LMSC squared off against an MLS Academy in DC United. Lamorinda entered the second half down 1-0 and in the first 5 minutes of play, one of their players was issued their second yellow card and LMSC was forced to play a man down for the rest of the game. In the 76th minute LMSC scored a tying goal forcing a PK shootout. LMSC ultimately ceded a loss to DC United in the PK shootout 7-8. DC United would eventually win the Championship for the U16 bracket.

Submit stories and story ideas to [storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com)

# Donna de Varona – Lafayette Native, Olympic Gold Medalist, pre-Title IX athlete and Title IX crusader

... continued from Page C1

Many of the high school and college wrestling teams were eliminated because of gender quotas. Louis Suba, Miramonte's wrestling coach, was a wrestler at Indiana University at that time. "There was a lot of resentment among the wrestlers because so many colleges had dropped their programs," Suba said. "I remember there being petitions to rescind Title IX."

In 2004, the first year that women wrestling became an Olympic sport, females wrestling for their high school teams became the fastest growing group of new participants, boosting many high school and college wrestling programs.

"I was 100% positive when the girls started coming out because it really helped to grow the sport and revive the programs," Suba said. "I'm always looking for more girls to come out and join our team."

It's the ancillary benefits of sports for women that de Varona believes is most important in the long run. "It's the feeling of empowerment and to be treated with dignity and respect," de Varona said. "At Ernst and Young I developed a program to help athletes in their lifecycle to move from competitive competition to post-athletic careers. Whenever I was talking about Title IX, we'd make the point that this isn't just about being on the podium, it's about learning all the lessons sports teaches like con-

fidence, teamwork, focus outside of sports, handling victory and defeat, etc. We found that 94% of women in corporate America have had a sports background and 50% competed in college and those women look for women that have had a similar experience because they don't see their job as nine-to-fivers. They're committed to their professions, and they work until they complete the job. Our research was groundbreaking, because no one had looked at the trajectory after the field of play."

To keep the momentum going, de Varona joined with Billy Jean King to establish the Women's Sports Foundation, serving as their first president from 1979 to 1984, eventually becoming the chair and Honorary Trustee for the Foundation. Over the years, the Foundation has raised more than \$30 million to support its programs.

"This is what increased the opportunities after Title IX," de Varona said. "Of course, we couldn't get equality overnight. We had to pump the pipeline and get over a lot of stigmas such as that girls that played weren't feminine or that they wouldn't be interested in sports. What we found was that we had to have our own movement, which was aside from the feminist movement which really thought of us as a mental exercise. Yes, women should have equality, but the feminist movement was mostly focused on other very important things

like equal pay for equal work but those who led the movement really weren't athletes. So, we had to create our own home with the Women's Sports Foundation where we could do research, where we could provide scholarships, where we could advocate for Title IX implementation, where we could honor each other and help rewrite the history books which we've done."

The foundation also started the National Girls and Women in Sport Day. "It enabled us to go to Washington and educate incoming legislators about the role of Title IX and we were also able to introduce our young women to the political process because where else would they be able have that experience of leadership or meeting sponsors," de Varona said. "We also provided a dinner every year where we could meet and greet and know each other and understand our strengths and numbers. I don't know if we would have made it without the foundation and, I'm sorry but I'm not going to brag but we may not have made it without my leadership."

De Varona made it a point to not overlook the achievements of the minority women and their accomplishments. "They don't get the recognition," de Varona said. "Who's heard of Wyoming Tyus or Evelyn Ashford? Here's Wyomingia who won back-to-back 100 meter runs in 1964 and 1968 and then Evelyn Ashford, who won gold medals in the 1984, 1988

and 1992 Olympics and they're lost in history and it's just not right. As far as women are concerned, the women that joined me in the creative years of the Women's Sports Foundation were critical. The press tends to look at only one person. We created an army of people behind this movement, many who never were going to earn a cent by supporting Title IX and the Women's Sports Foundation, which was the only organization that was fighting for girls and women in sport."

This is why de Varona feels it is so important for the current high school and college athletes to learn about the history of Title IX. "My daughter Joanna used to ask me why they don't teach about it in school," de Varona said. "This is part of civil rights. Now they just take it for granted and they don't understand that it could go away. We have to take responsibility to step up and protect the gains that we have made."

So, what would it take for de Varona to say that her mission is done? This is the answer she gave in an interview with Leslie Visser: "We're there when every high school, middle school, and grammar school kid has a sport opportunity. We're there when we understand that sports teach us how to compete in our competitive world. We're there when we understand sports provides fitness opportunities. We're there when we can figure out this changing evolving world on the collegiate

level because the NCAA isn't the only one responsible, every institution is. Then let's get to the parents and have them advocate for not only their kid but every other kid."

Since de Varona retired from competitive swimming in 1965, she has served five terms on the President's council on Physical Fitness and Sports. She helped with the passage of the 1978 Amateur Sports Act which restructured how Olympics are governed in the United States. She was a consultant on legislation that worked to promote and safeguard Title IX. She was named a special advisor to President Clinton's Drug Czar, Barry McCaffrey, helping with the establishment and funding for the United State and World anti-Doping Agencies. She was appointed to the United States Department of State's Empowerment of Girls and Women through the Sports Council by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. She has received the Olympic Order, the highest honor presented by the International Olympic Committee and has received five honorary doctorates. She was inducted into the International Swimming Hall of Fame and the National Women's Hall of Fame.

A graduate of UCLA (1986) with a degree in political science, she and her husband John Pinto have two children, Joanna and John.