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Basketball Programs Look to Replace Graduated Talent

By Michael Sakoda



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DFAL, while fellow seniors, Scott Chen, Sean Smith, and Austin Clarke will be on All-League radar.

Having won four of the last seven DFAL titles, there is a bit of tradition at Campolindo, but Watson wants his guys focused on improving now to prepare them for another deep post-season run.

"Obviously we want to win the league title, but we're concerned with getting better weekly," said Watson. "We have a lot of tough games that we lined up to try and challenge our players early, so hopefully come March we're going to be playoff ready."

Acalanes finished last season 17-13 (5-7 DFAL) and were ousted by eventual champion, Bishop O'Dowd in the semifinals of the NCS playoffs. In the CIF tournament, they were upset 46-60 by Christian Brothers in the first round.

Off to a 0-4 start, the Dons have lost to Montgomery, Redwood, McClymonds and Drake. They will continue to face tough competition in St. Mary's of Stockton and Analy this preseason.

Standouts Buster Souza and Matt Thomas graduated last year, and this year's team returns only one starter, Joey Hewitt.

"It's a very light class," said head coach Dave Goldman simply.

The Dons are looking to some new faces this year, adding the football teams' quarterback Casey Harrington, track star Calvin Sariby, and Boston University committed baseball player Zach Stromberg to the starting lineup.

The team also returns reserves Alex Kinnear, Andrew McKendall, and Ryan Cheng.

"It will take a little time to build chemistry," said Goldman. "We're very, very inexperienced, but we're athletic; we'll defend aggressively, and we're trying to improve to the point where we can be competitive in league, and squeeze into NCS."

Miramonte notched an 18-13 record a year ago (6-6 DFAL), were bounced by Campolindo in the second round of the NCS playoffs, and by eventual Nor-Cal Champion Drake in the semifinals of the CIF tournament.

The Mats lost their two best players to graduation, Drew Anderson and Joey Goodreault.

"The short answer is you don't replace players like Drew and Joey," said head coach Drew McDonald.

Anderson averaged 31.6 points, 18.3 rebounds per game during the team's CIF run, and

Tough preseason competition is getting the Lamorinda schools ready for an even tougher road through the DFAL.

Campolindo went 23-8 last year (11-1 DFAL), won another league title, but were bounced in the semifinals of both the NCS playoffs and the CIF tournament.

This year, the Cougars are off to a 4-1 start, beating Redwood, Escondido and Sacramento. They lost to Montgomery.

The Cougars lost All-League performers Andrew Zolintakis and Justin Dunn to graduation and have lost would-be senior guard Matt O'Reilly to another school.

"They were great players, but the guys who were backing them up last year [are] ready to step into this," said head coach Matt Watson.

Center Chris Hansen looks to be a force in the

Goodreault's ability as a playmaker and leader will be sorely missed. Forward Ray Clark, a leader on the team, also graduated last year.

Miramonte returns starters Jackson Wegener, who earned All-DFAL Honorable Mention last year, and Jake Linares, as well as key reserve Moneer Mujaddidi. Look for juniors Eddie Ionescu and Ryan Anderson, as well as sophomore Charlie Hawking to become factors as the season continues.

"With this group, where they end up is going to be in large part how much they improve and come together as a team," said McDonald. "Hopefully by the time league comes we'll be ready to compete."

At 4-1, the Mats will wrap up the preseason in a few tournaments.



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