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Boys' Soccer Looks to Rebuild in Open DFAL

By Spencer Silva



Acalanes Photos Gint Federas

The other key loss is Michael Samaniego, who will miss the season due to an injury. Samaniego was First Team All-League last season and was expected to be an important veteran presence and defensive force on the pitch.

"We lost 20 players from last year's team. That's unheard of in soccer," said coach Shane Carney of his fresh-faced team. "I believe we can still be good this year, but it's going to take a lot of work."

The team returns just three starters from last year's squad: Seth Kofman, Jeremy Raine and Jacob Buchanan. Of his veterans, Carney intoned, "Their leadership will be important in bringing this team together and pushing the team to succeed."

The team is off to a strong start, only suffering losses to Livermore (5-0) and Dublin High (3-4-1). They also placed third in this year's Winter Soccer Classic defeating Albany last weekend 1-0.

Acalanes (2-3-1, 1-0-1) is also in the process of adapting to new personnel. They graduated Kaj Simonsen, last season's DFAL offensive MVP. Eight of the team's 22 players are underclassmen, and it will be up to seniors Eric Sirott and Pat Ramm, both All-League selections last season, to lead the team into DFAL contention.

Coach Paul Curtis enters his 16th season at the helm of the program and emphasizes how every year it takes time for teams to meld together.

"Unlike other sports," he explained, "in high school soccer, the kids only play together for three months. They play on different teams throughout the year, so it takes some time getting comfortable with each other."

Despite a losing record, coach Curtis has a positive outlook on his team's progress.

"So far the team is learning how to work together," Curtis said, "We're developing the ability to attack consistently and learning how to possess the ball."

Miramonte (1-1-2, 1-1) had a tough 2013-14 season, finishing 4-7-5 (1-6-4 DFAL).

They graduated two of their best players in Kyle Visher and Ruwan Thilakarathne. The team has 11 new players, including three freshman and eight players promoted from last year's junior varsity squad. Reece Roberts and Joseph Wang, both All-League Honorable Mentions, return to the team.

In spite of the new faces, coach Billal Samy believes the team will be competitive throughout the season. "We're dealing with a new team dynamic," Samy explained, "but the returning core of the group will help expedite our collective form. We expect to be competitive."

Miramonte and Campolindo meet for the first time at Campolindo on Dec. 19. Acalanes hosts defending NCS champion Dublin on Dec. 17.



Campolindo



Miramonte

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