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Local Girls' Golf Teams Have High Hopes for Postseason Play

By Karl Buscheck



Emily Attiyeh



Kaydee Tu



Haleigh Goett Photos Gint Federas

With nearly 50 seasons of experience, Tim Scott has seen more Lamorinda high school golf than just about anyone. This fall is Scott's 16th in charge of the Acalanes' girls' team and next spring will be his 30th guiding the boys.

With the DAL tournament set to begin on Oct. 17 at the Delta View Golf course in Pittsburg, Scott's Dons have posted a 2-4 record. The star of Acalanes' lineup is senior Emily Attiyeh.

"The way she's playing this year, she's definitely stepped it up a notch," Scott said. "Her game is just better this year than it's been any other year – just more consistent."

Acalanes No. 1 player, who finished fourth overall at the Poppy Ridge Tournament in Livermore on Sept. 19, figures to advance deep into the NCS playoffs. She's also helped anchor a youthful Dons lineup.

"We've got a young team and

we will lose Emily at the end of this season, but we've got three sophomores that are really improving and serious about their game," Scott said. "We'll be even better next year, as a team because one person does not make a team."

The Dons lost 249-240 to Campolindo on Sept. 28 at Moraga Country Club and fell a day later to Northgate, 201-160, at Boundary Oak in Walnut Creek.

Like the Dons, the Cougars have been playing an unusually

young team this fall, as five freshman have made it into the lineup.

"I jokingly tell them that freshman don't play in varsity matches until the end of the season – if at all," head coach Gary O'Neill said with a chuckle. "And I was playing them right from the beginning."

Despite the influx of young players, Campolindo also has a quartet of senior leaders. Valerie Rockwell, who won all-league honors during her sophomore season, is one of the team's two senior captains, along with Stephanie Alderete.

Paris Thomas and Haleigh Goett are the other two seniors on the team. Goett, who first emerged last fall, posted the team's best score of the season – four-over par – at Boundary Oak on Sept. 22.

"She is a testament to working hard, developing your game and having the results come accordingly," O'Neill said. "It's been fun to watch her."

The group – heavy on first-year players – has compiled a 2-4 league record (2-6 overall) record after beating Acalanes on Sept. 28

in Moraga.

Miramonte also has five freshmen on its team this year. The roster includes 17 players overall, which is the largest in program history, according to co-head coach Bob Riddell.

With the postseason approaching, seniors Tori James and Franny Caronna, and junior Tiffany Shinn have been the Mats' leading players while freshmen Katie Ingrey and Kaydee Tu have also impressed.

After losing to Northgate 207-232 on Sept. 27, Miramonte has a 3-2 record in DAL play and a 5-2 record overall. Both of the Mats' losses have come against Northgate – the conference powerhouse.

With matches against Las Lomas and Acalanes still on the schedule, the Mats are aiming to catch Northgate for the top spot in the Foothill Division of the DAL.

"We hope to finish the season with a strong showing in the league and NCS tournaments and to continue to improve our play," Riddell said.

Campolindo Volleyball Has Big Plans as DAL Play Begins and Playoffs Await

By Karl Buscheck



Sabrina Smith

Photo Gint Federas

Before beginning the Diablo Athletic League season, Campolindo girls' volleyball head coach John Vuong gave his team the biggest challenge possible: a trip to the Durango Fall Classic.

Hosted in Las Vegas on Sept. 16 and 17, the tournament is one of the premier high school volleyball competitions in the nation – featuring 63 programs, including the No. 3 and No. 6 teams in the country.

"That's why I schedule very tough preseason matches," Vuong explained. "The speed of the game and level of the game is such a fast pace that when we get to league, if we maintain the speed of the game and the level of playing, then I like we'll have a good chance (to succeed)."

After advancing to the NCS title match last fall, the Cougars are led by a trio of veteran players. Senior captain Sabrina Smith will play for UCLA next fall, fellow senior captain Janelle Gong

will join the team at the University of Hawaii and junior Cameron Blakely is back in the lineup after an ACL injury wrecked her 2015 season.

"Our goal never changes," Vuong said. "We try to push to get an opportunity to participate in the postseason."

The competition does as well.

"This year, they moved us up to Division II – instead of Division III," Vuong said. "It's all new teams for us in NCS that we've never played in the postseason in the last six or seven years. Our goal never changes: try to get an opportunity to make the postseason."

The Cougars played their first DAL match at home against Las Lomas on Sept. 27, winning 3-0. Two days later, Campolindo dropped Acalanes – also by a score of 3-0 – to improve to 2-0 in league and 9-6 overall.

Following that defeat to the Cougars, Acalanes owns a 1-1 mark in DAL play and an 11-5

mark overall.

"Our goal this year for the season is to absolutely finish as high as we can," head coach Ernie Rodriguez said before warning: "Campo's going to be a tough opponent just like every school is."

"This year's league – it is a tough league," Rodriguez added. "You look at up and down (at the standings)."

With seniors Parker Jones, Alex Matson, Devin Grobeck and Melissa Elliott setting the tone, the Dons began their league schedule by taking care of Miramonte 3-1 in Orinda on Sept. 27. Acalanes will get another look at the Mats on Oct. 13 – that time at their home gym in Lafayette – and then host Campolindo a week later.

Like the Cougars, Miramonte played a rigorous nonleague schedule in order to launch the team into DAL play.

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