

# LAMORINDA SPORTS

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## Campo and Acalanes boys lacrosse top NCS DII bracket

By Karl Buscheck



Josh Baginski

Photos Gint Federas

With Campolindo commanding the top seed in the NCS Division 2 bracket and Acalanes sitting second, the local rivals and newly-minted DAL co-champs could be headed for a postseason title-game showdown. “That is looking so far forward,” Acalanes head coach Brent Ringwood warned, brushing aside the talk of a third meeting with the Cougars. “That’s not even worth envisioning at the moment.”

The clubs split the DAL season series, with the Dons winning the first leg in Moraga, and the Cougars claiming the second in Lafayette in the penultimate game of the league schedule on May 2.

“It would be great,” Ringwood said before stopping to chuckle. “But that wouldn’t be conducive to winning many games if we were thinking that far ahead.”

The Dons and the Cougars aren’t just among the pre-

mier teams in NCS, but in the entire state, ranked No. 36 and 31, respectively, by MaxPreps. “We’re pretty pumped that our league is very well-represented at the top (of the bracket),” Ringwood said. “And we’re looking to make a deep run.”

After a first-round bye, Acalanes started the postseason by taking care of No. 10 University, 10-3, on May 12 at home. They’ll meet the No. 3 seed – Marin Academy – on May 17 in a semifinals showdown.

Owners of an 17-4 record overall (13-1 in DAL), the Dons are making a postseason push while navigating an array of injury problems. With the team at less than 100 percent strength, Ringwood is looking for his senior backline – featuring goalie Nate Welcomer and defenders Josh Baginski and Sean Ortlieb – to frustrate opposing attackers.

“For us, considering how banged up we are, we’re going to

really have to rely on our defense,” Ringwood said. “We’re going to have to make some really talented offensive teams think quite a bit about how they’re going to score on us and we’ve got to find ways to manufacture points. But it’s going to be a grind for sure.”

Campolindo, who followed up their opening-round bye with an 18-6 rout over No. 9 Saint Mary’s of Stockton on May 12 in Moraga, have their sights set on adding to their trophy collection after tying the Dons atop the league.

“I’d say it’s a testament to how hard our boys have been working and putting their minds to a goal,” head coach Mitchel Frey said of his team’s regular-season accomplishments. “Obviously, being co-league champions and then ultimately NCS champions is just part of their journey. And it’s a testament to how hard they’ve worked and continue to work to reach their goals.”

With No. 4 Piedmont awaiting in the semifinals on May 17, the Cougars’ record stands at 17-3 (13-1 in league). Like the neighboring Dons, Campolindo’s cast of established stars have piloted the program throughout the DAL slate and the NCS run. “Our group of seniors have done an excellent job of leading by example as well as by their play on the field,” Frey said. “And it’s just really helped develop a lot chemistry amongst the team.”



Drew Cirelli

## Sisters qualify for Jewish Olympics

By John T. Miller



From left, Samantha and Sydney Bell.

Samantha and Sydney Bell, sisters at Acalanes High, have qualified to compete in the 20th Maccabiah — also known as the Jewish Olympics — this summer in Israel. Samantha, a senior, will join the United States soccer team in the Open division, while Sydney will play tennis in the Junior division.

The sisters will represent Maccabi USA at the games in Jerusalem that run from July 4-18 this summer, with opening ceremonies slated for July 6. Samantha will report on June 25 to train with her team in Jerusalem and Sydney arrives three days later in Haifa. Participants from all over the world will then have a week to travel and tour Israel to view historic sites and experience the Jewish culture.

Samantha, a team captain on the Acalanes soccer team, is also president of the Jewish Club on campus. This fall she will attend the University of Texas at Dallas on an academic scholarship, majoring in Global Business and playing soccer for the Division III team.

Two years ago she qualified and competed in the Maccabi Pan American Games in Chile. Although she was young enough to be on the Junior team, she played in the Open division and helped her team to a gold medal. She looks forward to playing again with some of the same friends she met there.

“Being on that team was a spe-

cial experience,” says Samantha, “but I’m really looking forward to my first visit to Israel and making the connection with being Jewish.”

Sydney, who has been playing tennis since kindergarten, competed as the No. 2 singles player for Acalanes and earned second-team all-league this year -- a great achievement for a sophomore. Her inspiration comes from her great grandmother, who was still playing tennis at the age of 92. She is also active in the Jewish Club at Acalanes.

She traveled to New York for a two-day tryout and was one of six girls to qualify for the Junior team. Sydney also looks forward to visiting Israel, saying, “I’m excited to meet Jewish people from all over the world and see all the important sites.”

The Maccabi World Union is the largest and longest running Jewish sports organization, involving more than 60 countries, 450 clubs, and 400,000 members. Their signature event, the Maccabiah Games, which began in 1932, takes place in Israel every four years. This year’s event will draw about 10,000 athletes.

According to Dakota Marine, a marketing and communications associate for Maccabi USA, the program “develops, promotes and supports international, national and regional athletic-based activities

and facilities to provide Jewish athletes the opportunity to share their heritage and customs in competitive athletic settings.”

Many Olympic gold medalists, world champions and world record holders have competed in the Maccabiah, most notably Mark Spitz in swimming and Kerri Strug in gymnastics.

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