

LAMORINDA SPORTS

Double trouble: Acalanes' Brooke Panfili earns 1st-Team honors in 2 sports

By Karl Buscheck



Brooke Panfili's first love is basketball.

Photos Gint Federas

For veteran coach Victor Silva, it's difficult to name a peer when it comes to Brooke Panfili, the recently graduated as a dual-sport star at Acalanes.

As the head coach of the basketball program and an assistant on the basketball staff – Panfili's two teams – Silva is uniquely qualified to speak on the impressive tenure of the new grad.

"I've been coaching now for 10 years, (and) she might be the most athletic girl I've ever been around," Silva said. "She's fast. She's strong. The coordination. She's a fantastic shooter. She might be the best shooter I've ever seen."

Panfili, who ran the point for the Dons basketball team, secured first-team all-league honors in the Foothill Division of the DAL after averaging 16.7 points per game and adding 4.0 assists, 3.8 rebounds and 3.9 steals.

Panfili followed that up by landing a place on the first-team of the Valley Division softball team this spring.

"She has a drive too," Silva explained. "She doesn't like to lose. She's takes losing pretty hard. I think you could throw her in a wa-

ter polo game – even though she's never played – and she'd get by. I really do. Whatever she's going to do as far as athletics, she's going to succeed just because she's such an athlete."

After the rare two-sport first-time all-league feat, Panfili is headed to Saint Edward's University in Austin, Texas, in the fall on a hoops scholarship.

"Basketball is Brooke's true love," Silva explained. "That's the sport that she loves and so it's just going to be basketball (at Saint Edward's)."

Panfili, who had previously played as an off guard before taking over the point in her senior season, helped pilot the Dons to a 19-11 record (6-4 in DAL) and the No. 3 seed in the NCS D II bracket.

Amid Panfili's many exploits on the court, the memory that most stands out for Silva is when the guard willed the club to a rescue against Redwood in the quarterfinals of NCS.

"The score was tied, it was like two minutes to go in the game and every time the other team came down the court and scored, Brooke would (answer) right back," Silva

recalled. "I mean, it was like she took the whole team on her shoulders that game."

Panfili ended up pouring in 21 points. The Dons won 69-67.

"And she just has that kind of ability to do that, you know, take over a game" Silva added.

Silva believes his ex-charge could once again be a two-sport player at the next level – if she wanted to.

"There's no doubt in my mind that if she wanted to play softball in college, somebody would take her," Silva said. "She's just that good of an athlete."

A three-year varsity player in both sports, Panfili pitched and played second base for the softball team during her freshman, sophomore and senior season. She took off the spring of her junior year so that she could focus on securing her collegiate basketball future.

"She pitched every big game we played in," Silva said. "We made it to NCS and she pitched in that game (against Kennedy)."

During her senior spring, Panfili spun a 1.88 ERA, holding the opposition to a .156 batting average in 37.1 innings.

"She was our go-to pitcher," Silva continued. "She was very talented. Like I said, basketball was her sport, but she was a good pitcher. She was the captain on both teams."

As Silva noted, even though Panfili was never especially vocal on the court or on the diamond, she had a knack for bringing her teams together.

"The amazing thing is at Acalanes, everyone has always got along with Brooke, they've always respected her and she's been a leader in a quiet way," Silva said. "I think you can ask anybody on the team and they'd tell you that. She's someone you can count on."



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