

Published March 4th, 2020

## Campolindo and Acalanes place at NCS Wrestling Championship

By Jon Kingdon



Three Campolindo winners on the podium, from left: Arine Kim, Adrian Bautista and Noah Hamann. Photo provided

From the start of off-season wrestling practices, which usually begin in April, it's the ultimate goal to be able to compete in the North Coast Section tournament, hopefully finishing in the top three and qualifying for the state tournament. The NCS tournament was held Feb. 21-22 at James Logan High School. There were 560 wrestlers from 94 high schools who competed in 1,092 matches in each of the 14 weight classes to determine who would move on to the state tournament. The Girls NCS Tournament was held at Albany High School and for them, the top four moved on to the state tournament.

There were four seniors from Lamorinda that medaled and made it to the podium: the boys Steven Williams (Acalanes-152) who finished in fourth place, Noah Hamann (Campolindo-120) who finished sixth, Adrian Bautista (Campolindo-113) who finished in eighth place, and Arine Kim (Campolindo-126) who finished sixth in the girls tournament.

Finishing fourth for Williams was particularly satisfying as he spent the year battling shoulder and knee injuries but "due to his work ethic and athletic ability, he was able to come into the NCS wrestling his best," said Acalanes assistant coach Blake Hedlund.

After losing his first match to the No. 2 seed in the tournament, Williams won his next three matches, a loss of any of them which would have sent him home. He then won his next match, which guaranteed him at least an eighth-place finish. Unbeknownst to Hedlund, Williams was exposed to something in the stands and had an allergy attack and was taken to the local hospital to be administered an epinephrine treatment.

After Williams match was pushed back, it was a race to get him back to the meet, said Hedlund: "After the shortest hospital emergency room visit ever, Steve's parents drove him back to the tournament and he literally ran from the car into the gym, put on his shoes and singlet, warmed up for three minutes and pinned his man." Williams won his next match, coming up short in his final match for third place, but as Hedlund put it, "This was a story of tremendous perseverance and heart against all odds."

Williams was generous in acknowledging the people who were responsible for his success: "I give credit to all of the coaches that I've had at Acalanes, CYC wrestling and most of all (Campolindo coach) Nikko Triggas who I've known since I was 5 when he wrestled with my older brother. He's been my main coach for the last three years."

Bautista and Hamann both wrestled at lower weight than they did during the season and it obviously was the right decision for both, said Triggas. "Adrian who wrestled at 120-122 all season got down to 115 to wrestle in NCS. He decided about a month ago to drop the weight. After practice he was within striking range of making the weight and he did it healthily and was smart about making the weight cuts. I'm not a proponent of cutting weight but he did it intelligently and I was okay with it. Noah, who came into the tournament unseeded, lost to the No. 1 seed and he did a great job in the consolation bracket to make it on the podium."

Ohia Paris also made NCS for the Cougars at 106 pounds, winning his first match in the consolation round before being eliminated, but was praised by Triggas: "Ohia's only a sophomore and we're really excited about him for next year. He only has to put on some more size."

The girls competed at Albany High School and Campolindo co-head coach Louis Suba was there with Arine Kim and five other Cougar wrestlers, but it was Kim who was the standout. After losing to the No. 1 seeded wrestler, Kim made it through the consolation round, only one win away from making it to the state tournament.

"These were the first Campolindo wrestlers to place since 2014," said Suba. "It was a great way for them to end their Campolindo wrestling careers."

Though there were no wrestlers from Miramonte that were in the NCS tournament, it was more a matter of unfortunate luck and timing that kept three of their wrestlers away. Ryan Edmister, Shannon Lipp and Hannah Ripper all would have competed in the tournament but for injuries each suffered just prior to the

tournament.

Miramonte head coach Jason Rosiak still saw it as a positive year and one to build on for next year: " The season was successful in the fact that we had a 3-2-1 record in league matches and we're ready to rebound next year with a number of returning wrestlers and some new wrestlers as well that are showing a lot of potential. Next year will be the first time in two years that we will have seniors on the roster so we should have a lot of leadership, particularly with Ryan. He was our most improved wrestler due to his maturity, development and effort, ending up the year with a 14-6 record."

The Miramonte girls will be led by Ripper who was 12-0 last season with 12 pins in the first round and Lipp who was 12-3. Yahzee Mendez who was injured early in the season is also pointing toward making it to NCS next year.

Triggas is already looking forward to next year for the Cougars: "We are losing eight seniors this year, which will hurt us a little bit, but our juniors, sophomores and freshmen are really developing well. The key will be for them to stick around all summer and that will be the key to our success."

Isabelle Lurie who was being counted on early in the season suffered a broken collarbone in her first match of the season and Suba is also counting on her return as "she's one of our most dedicated wrestlers."

For Acalanes, James Trainer was being counted on to make it to NCS, suffered a knee injury that cut his season short but the Dons are looking forward to his return next season. "The overall team has been coming along," said Hedlund. "We're hoping to get about a half dozen kids in this tournament next year and we're hoping to get a larger turnout of girls next year."

Worthy of special acknowledgment is Acalanes senior Reid Fellner, whose vision is severely limited, lettered this year, ending the season undefeated with a 1-0 record.

There will be more of a local flavor to next season's schedules. Acalanes will now be back in the same division with Campolindo and Miramonte so there will be dual matches with all three teams to look forward to.



Arine Kim Photo provided



Steven Williams Photo provided

Reach the reporter at: [sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com)

[back](#)

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA