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## Lamorinda Soccer Post-Season Recap

By Brandon Duran



Campolindo Sam Palano #25 Photo Andy Scheck

After a competitive regular season campaign in the Diablo Foothill Athletic League, the Acalanes boys' soccer team along with the Campolindo boys' and girls' teams secured spots in the North Coast Section 2012 Division II Playoffs. Last year, Campolindo and Acalanes faced off in the championship finishing first and second, respectively.

Acalanes finished first in the DFAL with an outstanding 8-1-3 league record, 12-2-8 overall. Both Campolindo teams finished the regular seasons at 6-3-3 and earned #4 seeds.

The Dons were stunned in the first round by visiting #16 St. Mary's College High on February 15. Acalanes fell 0-1 to end their season.

Acalanes head coach Paul Curtis looked past wins and losses and said that he felt his team had accomplished its goals. "Yes, it was a very good season for the boys, they learned a lot, grew a lot and were involved in supporting others who are less fortunate than themselves," he said.

The Campolindo boys hosted #13 El Cerrito in the first round. The Cougars played the Gauchos in December and came away with a 7-3 win. El Cerrito stepped up in the playoffs, but Campo held on to win 3-1.

Early in the first half, Campolindo dominated possession. The Gauchos did make a few solid counter attacks led by striker Mauricio Garcia.

The Cougars' persistent pressure paid off in the 29th minute. A long throw-in from senior Taylor Abbott fell to the feet of senior Sam Palano, who easily tapped it in past the El Cerrito keeper. Following the goal the Cougars got more aggressive offensively. Palano scored again about ten minutes later, making it 2-0 right before halftime.

El Cerrito came out of the break with a more tactical offense and high-volume, precision passing. Still, the Gauchos couldn't break through the staunch Campo back line.

On a counter attack by the Cougars eleven minutes in, Palano took it himself and blasted a shot along the ground from about 15 yards out past the slow reacting keeper. Co-captain Palano secured his first hat-trick of the season and Campo took a 3-0 lead.

With the lead, head coach Shane Carney made mass substitutions, getting his younger players some critical postseason experience. El Cerrito tucked in a ball crossed into the box in the last minute of regulation to make the final score 3-1 Campolindo.

Carney said that he did not plan anything differently for the game. "We didn't game plan around any one player for El Cerrito. We just trusted our system of play and our players to get the job done."

Campolindo moved onto the NCS Quarterfinals, but fell in penalty kicks 2-2 (3-2) to Concord High on Saturday, February 18.

The Campolindo girls (8-4-5 overall) stepped up their game in the playoffs, making it all the way to the semifinals where they lost to eventual champions Bishop O'Dowd, 2-0.



Campolindo Julia Reschke #23 Photo Kevin Nguyen



Acalanes Aidan Maguire #6 Photo Dr. Dave Weiland

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