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Campolindo leads Miramonte and Acalanes to state swimming tournament

By Jon Kingdon



Campolindo swim teams Photo Lydia T. Percin, Esq.

Once again, the swimming programs in Lamorinda were on display at the North Coast Section Swimming Championships which were held at the Concord Community Pool May 8-9. There were over 175 high schools competing to win the NCS championship and also for spots in the state tournament in Clovis, California. The Campolindo boys came in first and the girls came in second. The Miramonte girls came in fourth and their boys came in 23rd and the Acalanes girls finished in ninth place.

Campolindo's head coach Ron Heidary came into the meet with unabashed optimism: "This is the best team, both men and women, we've had in all my years at Campolindo and probably in the history of the school in terms of quality, depth, maturity and character. I've thoroughly enjoyed this year."

Heidary felt one of the team's strengths was its relay teams, and that may have been an understatement. Both the boys and girls teams qualified

for state in the 200-yard freestyle, 200-yard medley and 400-yard relays.

Campolindo also showed great individual depth with five girls and seven boys going to the state tournament: Madeline Smith - 200 yard individual medley; Ashleen O'Brien - 100 yard butterfly; Amber van Meines - 100 yard freestyle; Elizabeth Follmer - 100 yard backstroke; Channing Hanley - 100 yard breaststroke; Sean Percin and Alec Baker - 200 yard freestyle; Ryan Lenahan - 500 yard freestyle; Zach Le-Nguyen and Matteo Lanzara - 100 yard backstroke and Mason Loyet and Luke Vandenberghe - 100 yard breaststroke.

Heidary attributed much of the team's success to his veteran swimmers: "All of the upperclassmen, the seniors in particular, have just been outstanding. They have provided as much leadership as any group we've ever had here. They have been fully invested in this program and it's made a profound difference."

There was more depth for Miramonte on the girls side, led by sophomore Margaret Buckley and junior Margaux McDonald, both of whom will be competing in the state finals in the 200 yard individual medley. Senior Sophia Kosturos qualified for state in the 100 yard butterfly and 100 yard backstroke. Kosturos is entering the state tournament with the fastest qualifying time (52.92) of all the competitors. The girls 200 yard medley and 400 yard freestyle relay teams will also be going to the state tournament.

Though the boys did not have any qualifiers for the state tournament, Heidary came to rely on Campbell Strand: "He has been an outstanding emotional leader and a great teammate in the water."

Joe Natina began his first season at Acalanes trailing Ron Heidary (24th season at Campolindo) and Don Heidary (27th season at Miramonte): "I got the job at the last minute and it took a while to get going. I have relied on our senior leadership led by Alex Fellner, Emily Gebhardt, Kyle Walker and Ava McKay. They could run practice for me. The kids look up to them and they have worked really hard and have had a lot of good swims. We were a little thin on the boys side but we have a good core of young swimmers."

The state finals were held this past Friday and Saturday in Clovis, California. The Campolindo boys finished in 11th place. All three girls teams finished near the top - Miramonte (fourth), Campolindo (seventh) and Acalanes (11th).

The best individual performance was turned in by Sophia Kosturos who won the 100 yard backstroke with a time of 52.92. The girls 200 yard individual medley race had the best Lamorinda representation with Acalanes' Shelby Suppiger (third), Miramonte's Margaux McDonald (fifth) and Campolindo's Madeline Smith (seventh) all earning points for their schools.

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