Baseball Teams Have High Hopes as DFAL Ramps Up

By Karl Buscheck

ll three Lamorinda baseball programs have lofty expectations for 2016. Nowhere is that more true than Acalanes.

"We set the goals before each season and our goal is always to win an NCS," said Dons head coach Justin Santich-Hughes. His about it." team is currently MaxPreps' No. 20 team in the state.

Despite falling to Clayton Valley Charter 8-4 on April 15 in Walers. I think that's where it always nut Creek, Acalanes is an early starts," Santich-Hughes explained. DFAL front-runner, holding a 3-0 record in league and a 13-2 mark ent, (but) they really bought into the regular season has just begun. overall.

"League titles are nice, but winning the last game of the season – if you make the playoffs – is really the ultimate goal," Santich-Hughes said. "So, that's our goal: To win the NCS championship and we don't have any problems talking

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For the reigning DFAL champs, the secret to success is simple.

"We have a lot of good playthe system that we had in place."

they're experienced – as seven starters return from last year's squad. Seniors Jake Berry and Tommy Henderson headline the offense, while senior Grant Young is April 13, the Mats sit at 8-7 overall the team's ace.

"Grant Young on the mound has been amazing. Santich-Hughes He's really anchored the staff and given us a lot of tough innings."

Like the Dons, the Mats also "Not only do they have a lot of tal- have postseason designs, even if

"Our goals are usually the same

The Dons aren't just good - every year," said Miramonte head and 2-1 in DFAL - after drubbing coach Vince Dell'Aquila. "We just want to make the NCS tourna-

> After falling 3-2 at Dublin on tied for fifth place in the standings.

As Miramonte aims to climb said of the lefty. "It's unbelievable. back up the DFAL pecking order, explained senior Max Flower, a the team will be relying on seniors to lead the way. James Vaccaro, who will be pitching at USC next spring, is the team's number one quarterback for the football team III-AA championship bowl game. last fall, is the second starter.

> recently broke his finger, powers the lineup. Meanwhile, Zach Wong wears a number of hats.

"Zach Wong is our shortstop and he pitches," Dell'Aquila said. "And he's our leadoff hitter and he's doing real well."

Campolindo recently got back to the .500 mark - 7-7 overall

Dougherty Valley 9-2 in Moraga on April 12, and then edging out Redwood Christian 3-1 on the road April 14.

As the season rolls on, the Couand 1-3 in DFAL – leaving the team gars will be zeroing in on the same objective as their local rivals.

"Our goal is to win NCS," Cal baseball commit who patrols the outfield for the baseball team and was a star wide receiver for the school's football team that adstarter, and Tim Tague, the starting vanced to the CIF State Division "And the only obstacle we have At the plate, Eric Nyman, who ever faced and will ever face is ourselves. If we play our best baseball, we will have no problem."

> Before the end of the league slate, the Cougars will have a crack at both of their neighbors, as they hit the road to face Miramonte on April 28 and host Acalanes less than a week later on May 3.



Senior Jake Berry is a key part of the Acalanes offensive success so far this spring.





Cal-bound senior Max Flower patrols center field for the Cougars and hits in the middle of their lineup.



USC-bound senior James Vaccaro anchors both the Mats' lineup and pitching rotation.

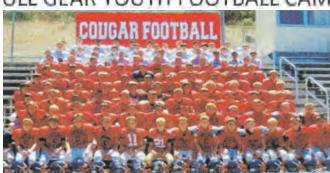
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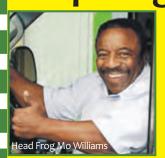


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