

Miramonte Water Polo Marks 50 Years in Lamorinda

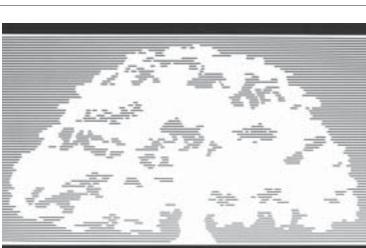
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· LEAGUE CHAMPIONS

ack row. Bill Beckett, Ron Rawson, Pete Schnugg, Jim Block, Earnest Figley.

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andy Warner, Steve Patching, Dave Kruse, Middle rowDDave Olsen, Dan Dupuis, on Svendsen, Steve Banker, Tom Beckett, Front row Dave Dupuis, Randy Williams, . Miller, Rick O'Hare, Bob Markstein

1967, the first season of water polo. Out of this group came six Division 1 players: Pete Schnugg, Steve Patching, Dave Olsen, Jon Svendsen, Randy Williams, Rich O'Hare Photo provided

The Miramonte program, called one of the four or five best in the country over the course of its storied existence, began in 1967 when several members of the swim team asked Bill Brown -- a collegiate football and basketball player at Cal Poly -- to coach the team.

about the sport, Brown was a Miramonte graduates helping in championship teams. quick study and became one the program. of the most highly recognized Miramonte water polo player on have been simply amazing!" every Olympic team since 1980, with the exclusion of 1988. The original 1967 team featured six players who went on to play Division I college water polo. Four of them, including Peter Schnugg ('69), Randy Williams ('70), Jon Svendson ('71), and Rick O'Hare ('71), played together at Cal under legendary coach Pete Cutino. When asked how a small public high school could be so successful over such a long period of time, Brown credited a teaches history at Miramonte. combination of continuity in coaching, parent support, and the coached him as a five-year-old recreational swimming program in the Lamorinda area. "Since the very beginning, back to assist with the program," said Brown. "At first, it was out North Coast Section champion-

of necessity. Since I didn't know much about the sport, I'd talk to former players as they went on coached the Junior National to college and get some pointers and techniques. Many of them ended up coming back to help ers have been named high school coach the high school team."

Currently, assistant coaches Chris Lathrop ('98) Lincoln Hal-Despite knowing nothing ey ('08) and John Nash ('09) are

coaches in the country. There has there from the very start," added volvement, saying, "Even when been at least one Brown-coached Brown. "Their contributions we play in Southern California

ships, his 2008 team was ranked No. 1 in the country, and he also teams in 2012 and 2013.

Nearly 100 Miramonte play-All-Americans, 18 have been named to one or more NCAA All-American teams and 19 have played for one or more NCAA

Lathrop also credited the "The parent support has been team's success with parental in-



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Brown was instrumental in establishing the girls water polo program in 1995. The year before, however, he invited Heather Petri ('96) to practice with the boys junior varsity team. Petri, who competed in four Olympic Games, credits Coach Brown for much of her success.

After Brown's retirement in 2005, the coaching position fell to Lathrop ('96), a high school All-American and former captain of the Cal team. He currently on the Orinda Country Club recreational swim team.

we always had alumni coming best high school coaches in the gram's achievements over the country, Lathrop has won eight past 50 years.

we can count on a full rooting section."

"What's also unique is the special connection with the alumni," added Lathrop. "Just this year we've had five former Olympians address the team. This helps connect the current players with the legacy."

The fact that the team has had only two coaches in 50 years, which is unprecedented for any sports team, has given the program stability and continuity that has contributed to their success.

Brown is still active, running Brown knew Lathrop since he the Lamorinda Water Polo Club, helping to perpetuate interest in the sport with local athletes.

Moulton is currently at work Considered to be one of the on a book chronicling the pro-

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