

# SPORTS

## LAMORINDA'S LOCAL SPORTS NEWS



### Miramonte Falls to Dublin in First NCS Game

By Jack Fernbacher



Chris Hatfield (14)

Photo Jordan Fong

At halftime in the second round of NCS on Friday, Feb. 22, the three-seeded Miramonte men's basketball team led by nine points, but when it was all said and done it was the six-seeded Dublin Gaels who won the game.

The Mats led 27-18 at halftime with their tough perimeter defense. In the second half, turnovers and low-offensive production for the Matadors allowed Dublin to get back in the game and eventually rout the Mats 61-50.

"I came into the game thinking we would win," said Miramonte's senior captain Peter Briskey. "Dublin has a good team, but thought we were better than them. The problem was we had a lead and let up at halftime."

Briskey, who averaged 13.8 points per game in the season, was held to only two points and fouled out in his final game as a Matador. Miramonte's leading scorer of the game was senior shooting guard Zac Akin, who finished the game with 13 points including a pair of 3-pointers.

Miramonte had beaten Dublin twice this season before the NCS game, which was Miramonte's first game in NCS after its bye in the first round.

"It's hard to beat any team three times," said Jerry Montgomery, a long time Miramonte basketball fan and golf coach. "In every sport,

the losing team will be playing its hardest to win."

Dublin's senior K.J. Scott with an unorthodox over-the-head-shot led Dublin in scoring with 21 points including three shots made from beyond the arc. Dublin had to travel to Miramonte for the game, which should have given home court advantage to the Mats

"At our home gym, we had less fans than our opponents did," said Briskey about the fact that Dublin's student section was bigger than Miramonte's student section.

Miramonte was flourishing with the addition of a foreigner from Montenegro named Petar Madarevic during league play. Madarevic, a senior guard, brought tenacious defense and creative passes to every game, but went home before NCS started.

"The main thing Petar brought was his desire to win," said Briskey. "He cared about basketball and understood that winning was the most important. A lot of people lost the willingness to care, and just assumed that they would win without hard work."

Head Coach Dave Brown led the Matadors, who finished the season 20-7 (10-4 DFAL). During the season, the Mats were streaky. The team had a nine-game winning streak in preseason and an eight-game winning streak



Davis Louie (1)

Photo Jordan Fong

at the beginning of league NCS in the second round. No play. one passed the ball and everyone was more concerned

"I thought the season overall went well," said Akin. about his stats than winning "It was disappointing we lost the game."

### Joaquin Moraga Student Goes For the Gold In Karate

Submitted by Thomas Westernoff

The Karate and Fitness Place USA will send an athlete to the World Championships for the second year in a row. Chris Wellbrook, an 8th-grader at Joaquin Moraga Intermediate School, has

qualified for the team that will travel to Osaka, Japan in mid-March. Last year, Miramonte alum Nick Fleischman made trip.

Wellbrook earned the honor by placing in the top

three at the 2007 Amateur Athletic Union National Karate Championships after many hours of hard work and training.

### Other Highlights:

Seven members of The Karate & Fitness Place USA brought back 13 medals from the West Coast Championships held in Yuba City, CA on February 17th. The events were in Kata (Forms), Kumite (sparring) and Kobudo (weapons). Among the winners were: Jessica Wynblatt 3rd place kata, Orion Wynblatt 3rd place kata and kumite, Haze Mach 2nd place kata and kumite, Chris Wellbrook 1st kata, 2nd kobudo, 3rd kumite, John Krawkowski 2nd kata and kumite, Brandon Tokuyama 3rd kata, 2nd kumite, and Jodi Wynblatt 3rd kata.

### Rodents Invade Oregon

By Chris Roberts

The Lamorinda Rodents rugby team participated in the weekend-long PrezFest Rugby Tournament Feb. 16 and 17 hosted by the Beaverton RFC. The tournament was held at the Tualatin Hills Recreation Facility at the Rock Creek Campus of Portland Community College. The fields were terrific and the weather was cool, but dry. It was an excellent venue with terrific organization by the hosting club. In all, six boys' sides and four girls' sides participated in the tournament.

On day one, Lamorinda played West Linn, Oregon. The tries came early and often for the Rodents. From the opening start, Jimmy "White-Shoes" Giles snuck underneath Bo Richter's kick to take possession. From that point on, the scoring came in wave after wave of offense. West Linn played courageously, but had a difficult time keeping the

ball out of Lamo's hands. Final Score: Lamo 105-0.

On day two, Lamorinda played Beaverton, Oregon: The Rodents once again played with the same speed and skill demonstrated the day before. Putting the host side on the back foot from the onset, the Rodents were able to score seven unanswered tries before the break. Beaverton fought back with three tries in the second half; with four more tries for the Rodents. Final Score: Lamo 68-15.

To end day two, Lamorinda played Liberty (Seattle/Tacoma). With only 20 minutes rest, after completion of the Beaverton game, the Rodents agreed to take on a well rested Liberty side. In a tough and physical contest, the Rodents showed their ability to compete and prevail against a team that plays the more punishing style of rugby. In this shorter match, Lamo struck

early and held onto a well-earned win. Final Score: Lamo 20-12.

The PrezFest Tournament organizer had this to say about Lamorinda RFC. "As I noted to your coaches, without exception, every 'Barbarian' family that billeted Lamo players had nothing but great things to say. You have not only a good team on the field, but you have one off it too. They are not only athletes -- but gentlemen. You have earned not only our thanks for participating, but you have earned our respect."

Lamorinda RFC is composed of local high school athletes from Miramonte, Campolindo, Acalanes, San Ramon Valley, Mt Diablo and Antioch. Their winter - spring season continues March 1 against Hayward at Miramonte, and March 8 against San Francisco/Golden Gate on Treasure Island. The full season calendar is available at www.lamorugby.com

### Matadors defeat Dublin in NCS semi-finals

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Katie Batlin (21)

Photo Jordan Fong

Miramonte got ahead early, up 13-10 at the end of the first period relying on the inside play of sophomore center Stephanie Golden who had seven points in the period. Three 3-pointers from Ashlee Burns in the second quarter pushed the lead to 30-20 by halftime. Hercules fought back valiantly behind 19 points from freshman guard Brittany Boyd, but trailing in the fourth quarter with time winding down the Titans were forced to foul Miramonte to stop the clock. Like seasoned veterans, the Matadors made them pay every time by stepping to the line and collecting two points on each trip.

Championships are won and lost at the free-throw line. It was no exception Saturday night at Saint Mary's College, as Miramonte made 19 out of 23 free throw attempts including 10 for 10 in the fourth quarter on their way to a 61-53 win and their third NCS championship in four years. The Mats were led by Batlin's 20 points and flawless 14 of 14 free throw shooting, as well as Burns, who joined in the fun by hitting five 3-pointers in a row and delivering an emotional lift as she laid herself out at midcourt, diving out of bounds for a loose ball in the second half.

Miramonte forward Chelsey Christensen gave her own Herculean effort on the boards, limiting the opponent's second shot opportunities by fighting tooth and nail for rebounding position on every defensive play. Christensen also found a way to bring more than just scrapping in the paint, flying out to the perimeter to block a Hercules 3-point try in the waning moments and sinking a pair of clutch free throws in the final minute.

### Miramonte Women Show Dominance in NCS Quarterfinals

By David Anderson

The shots did not stop falling Friday night in Orinda as the Miramonte Women pounded San Marin 80-37 in the Division III Quarterfinals of the NCS playoffs. The Matadors tallied eleven three pointers over the course of the contest including a perfect six for six from senior point guard Ashlee Burns, who finished with eleven field goals for twenty eight points.

The Matadors (24-3) took immediate control of the game with a 24-7 first quarter lead making quick work of the Mustangs (18-12). San Marin quickly realized the caliber of the top seeded Mats as they fell on the short side of a 19-2 run to start the game.

The Mustangs of San Marin played their best during the second quarter in which they were able to outscore the Matadors by a point. The strength and resilience of the Matadors, however, proved to be too much for the visitors. Miramonte, up by sixteen at halftime, quickly began to increase upon their lead after the break. With help from Burns, who recorded four three point field goals in the third quarter, the Mats continued their dominance, eventually increasing the margin to thirty points by the end of the period.

The theme was much of the same in the fourth quarter with the Matadors adding to their already substantial advantage.

Along with Burns, who totaled twenty eight points, the Mats had two other players reach the double digit mark. Katie Evans finished with fifteen points while Katie Batlin added fifteen more to the forty three point victory.

The Mats took the momentum and resulting confidence from this victory into the NCS semifinal game against Dublin on Wednesday, Feb. 27, where they topped the Gaels, 67-46. They went on to the finals at Saint Mary's College last Saturday, beating Hercules 61-53 to win the NCS title.

## Get Ready for Swim Team!

Join the CAL Women's Swim Team in a clinic that will prepare you for a successful summer season of swimming! The Golden Bears will be hosting a **three week clinic** from April 14th through May 1st at Sun Valley Pool, 1000 Leland Drive, Lafayette. Let athletes at the top of their sport help you fine tune your starts, turns, stroke technique and racing strategy! The Bears are coming off one of their most successful seasons. In 2007, the Bears marched to a third place finish at the NCAA's, breaking 3 American Records along the way. **Take advantage of this unique experience** of having American Record Holders, Olympians, NCAA All-Americans, and some of the finest student-athletes in the country be your coach. Proceeds will aid the training cost of the Golden Bears as they set their hungry eyes on Beijing.

For details please visit  
www.swimsunvalley.com

Swim team registration is **Sunday, March 9th - 12-2pm**  
at Sun Valley Pool (1000 Leland Drive, Lafayette)  
**www.SwimSunValley.com**