

# LAMORINDA SPORTS

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## Campolindo Wins DFAL

Miramonte, Acalanes Should See Post-season Action

By Conrad Bassett



Kellen Ito (#25) blocks Acalanes attack. He is watched by teammates Patrick Wirth (#4) and Adam Mancebo (#14)



Corey Collins (#20) dribbled by Pat Wirth Photo Douh Kohen

Last Tuesday night, the Acalanes Dons boys' basketball team brought their 7-1 DFAL record and five-game win streak into Moraga for a rematch against first place Campolindo. The Dons hot streak did not help them against the Cougars as they lost, 57-40.

The Dons scored first when senior Jay Fowler hit a jumper. Campo answered right back when senior Brian Sanders stole the ball and went the length of the

court for a layup. The lead changed hands several times in the period with Campo clinging to a 13-12 lead after one. The Cougars' senior Pat Wirth provided much of the offense with two three-pointers.

Campo started to pull away in the second quarter. After trading baskets, the Cougars went on a 12-5 run to end the period and take a 30-20 lead into the locker room at the half.

The Dons' senior Corey

Collins hit a three to open the second half to cut the lead to seven, but the Dons got no closer. A tenacious Campo defense led by junior Erik Baker forced the Dons into several turnovers, missed shots and a scoreless spell that lasted almost six minutes in the third and fourth periods. The defensive effort allowed the Cougars to extend the lead to 44-29. Collins hit another three to make it 44-32 but senior Kellen Ito came right back down and

scored on a pass from King and the Cougars never looked back.

The last few minutes of the game turned into a Campolindo free throw clinic with Sanders, Keeble and Wirth each hitting two free throws.

Collins led all scorers with 16 points while Fowler added 11. The Cougars' balanced attack featured King with 14, Wirth with 13 and Ito with 10. Ito and Mancebo each added nine rebounds.

This win, coupled with their 32-22 win over Dougherty Valley last Friday, gave Campolindo an 11-0 DFAL record (21-4 overall) and they clinched their fourth DFAL boys championship in the last five years. The Cougars close the regular season against Alhambra at home on Friday night. The Dons dropped to 7-2 in the DFAL and 14-10 in all games.

The NCS seeding meeting will be held on Sunday, February 21 and the Division III bracket

where the three Lamorinda teams compete will have a minimum of 12 teams. Campo will get a high seed along with Bishop O'Dowd, Analy, and El Cerrito and likely a first round bye and then a home game. Acalanes will also make the field. Miramonte (12-12) blasted Dublin on Friday 77-40 and has played a strong schedule and a win against either Acalanes or Las Lomas in their final two games should get them in, as well.

## Natural Instinct and Hard Work Pay Off

Miramonte Senior Signed with Cal

By Lou Fancher



Jon Sibley Photo provided

A great goalie has a presence about him. Intellect says the sloping shoulders, cobra-length arms and fluid physicality are perfect equipment for water polo. However, it's instinct that makes a person certain that Jon Sibley, all-star leader of Miramonte High School's water polo team, is meant to be in the water.

Head Coach James Lathrop has been watching Sibley play for years. "He's willing to throw himself in front of a ball," he says, singing praise for the valued player. Lathrop notes Sibley's studious approach, his ability to encourage and understand his teammates, his fearlessness. "He's going to find a way to get better, no matter what, no matter where," he predicts.

Swimming for Sleepy Hollow Swim Club as a young boy, Sibley admits he didn't like water polo when he started learning the game. It wasn't until he was positioned as goalie that he developed a feel for the sport. "Back then, all you

needed to be was big," he says, downplaying his ability.

Now, six years later, Sibley is using that reach to place his team at the top of its league and to earn honors: #1 Team All-American, member of 2009's USA Junior National Team, and a Golden Bear. Sibley has signed a letter of intent to attend Cal Berkeley on scholarship. With offers from Pepperdine, UCLA and USC lobbed in his direction, Cal's program blocked the competition. In the end, it was a gut feeling that made the choice obvious for Sibley. "I've been a Bear all my life," he says simply.

While Sibley relied on instinct for making his college choice, his operating system for

playing water polo springs from the opposite direction. "I keep a notebook on different players," he says. Last year, he won a spot on the Junior National Team and traveled to Croatia to compete in the world championships. "He came back from Croatia with a list of drills he saw other teams doing," Coach Lathrop says. And Sibley puts in overtime, studying with Jack Bowen, a well-know Bay area guru to goalies; even going to his kid sister, Kirsten, for her "custom" approach to practice drills. She and their mother work on his hand-eye coordination and rapid response reflexes by shooting bullets—of the Nerf variety—at him.

This season, the Mira-

monte team could have been lightweights. The entire starting line-up, other than Sibley, graduated in 2009, leaving the team in need of a leader. Like any talented coach, Lathrop developed a strategy to not only win games, but to establish Sibley in that role. "We played our defense to maximize our strengths," Lathrop says. Although disinclined to tell others what to do, Sibley became the team's leader and is grateful. With dreams of winning a national championship at Cal, perhaps earning a degree in environmental policy and economics, and playing professionally in Europe after college, Sibley knows that getting the team together is the most important element of winning.

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