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Acalanes and Miramonte Girls Share DFAL Track Title

By Karl Buscheck



The Acalanes and Miramonte girls track teams ended up as the co-champions of the DFAL after the Dons edged the previously-undefeated Mats by 13 points at the league meet on May 13 in Moraga.

By topping the Mats, Acalanes not only earned a share of the title but also got some revenge for a narrow defeat to their rivals during the regular season.

"We were 5-1 and the only meet we lost was to Miramonte and it was just a 10-point differential," said head coach John Crain.

At the DFAL Championships, senior Julia Lyons, who won the 100 meter race and the long jump and who placed second in the 200 meter, set the tone for the talented Dons squad.

"In our girls program we have about 10 athletes who have done extremely well this year in a variety of events," Crain said.

Acalanes sophomore Muppy Gragg won the 300 meter hurdles just ahead of junior Juliet Arnswald of Campolindo, whose Cougars landed in fourth place in the team standings. Gragg also finished first in the high jump.

While the Mats had been favored to win entering the meet, it was impressive that the team still managed to come in second place after their crazy Friday the 13th.

"It was a rough day," admitted head coach Tristan Tool. "One kid showed up really sick and couldn't compete. One of our kids got hit by a car in the parking lot during a warm up run, but wasn't hurt too bad."

Miramonte also had to do without junior Lola Olabode – the team's top point scorer – who broke her ankle just over a week before the league meet.

"Prior to that we were looking a lot better," Tool said, explaining the magnitude of the loss. "[We were] one of, if not the best team, in the history of the school on the girls side."

Olabode competed in the 300 meter hurdles and high jump, ran the 400 meter and was also a member of several relay teams – including the record-breaking Distance Medley relay.

The group, which also consisted of juniors Hannah Fishlow and Rosie Cruz and freshman Cassy Haskell, broke the school record from 1981 and earned the sixth-best ranking in the nation.

At the league meet, Fishlow took first place in the 1,600 meter race, while Haskell was the runner-up in that race and in the 800 meter and the winner of the 3,200.

"They are easily two of the best distance runners the school has ever seen," Tool said of the pair. In the boys competition, Acalanes came

Windy Margerum

Photos Gint Fedaras

in third place in the team standings, Campolindo ranked fourth and the Mats ended up in sixth.

For the Dons, junior Ethan Westemeier was the top point scorer, placing first in the 300 meter hurdles and the high jump and finishing second in the long jump and triple jump.

Senior Jonathan Hughes enjoyed a big night for Campolindo, winning the 400 meter race and coming in second in the 200.

"Jonathan Hughes had probably the strongest performance on the boys' side for us," said head coach Chuck Woolridge.

In the 800 meter, Cougars junior Niki Moore headlined the field, placing ahead of senior Christian Gonzales of Miramonte.

"Niki held off a late charge by Miramonte's top athlete," Woolridge said. "So, Niki's excited about the improvement and we're hoping that he can continue on through the Tri-Valley meet and make it to the NCS Meet of Champions [at Cal on May 27-28] where he'll have an opportunity to race for a [CIF] State meet spot."

Despite his defeat, Tool has high hopes for Gonzales.

"He should be top three at the NCS [Meet of Champions]," Tool said. "And he has a shot at possibly winning the NCS Championship."

Acalanes' Everly Places Second in NCS Singles Tennis Tournament

By Karl Buscheck



Kyle Everly

Photo Gint Fedaras

Acalanes senior Kyle Everly just missed out on claiming the NCS Division I singles tennis title, losing 6-3, 6-3 to Rishab Sardana of James Logan on May 3.

"It's a major accomplishment," Acalanes head coach Stephanie Lawrence said of Everly's runner-up finish. "We're in not only one of the best leagues in California, but also one of the best sections in the country."

In addition to Everly's strong play on the court, Lawrence praised him for being a renaissance man of it too.

"He's been a captain and a leader and Kyle just does so many things between academics and Eagle Scouting and other sports," Lawrence said. "He just does everything really well."

Before advancing to the finals at Round Hill Country Club in Alamo, Everly first had to get past teammate and

fellow senior Ryan Cardiff.

"He had good competition," Lawrence said. "One of his toughest competitions was his own teammate in Ryan Cardiff in the semi[final]."

Along with DFAL singles champ Isaiah Bird, Everly and Cardiff form the Dons' trio of senior stars. While those three are the headliners, Lawrence's squad includes a crop of seven talented seniors.

"We're pretty deep compared to most teams," Lawrence said. "So, we're strong in the doubles. But all these teams have very good top singles players, which is why we look to Kyle, Ryan, and Isaiah, who did win the league, to compete with [the top competition]."

The Dons will need all that depth as they attempt to one up their run to the semifinals of the CIF State tournament last spring.

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