



We're here for you

OAKLAND
(510) 428-3558

SAN FRANCISCO
(415) 353-2808

SAN RAMON
(925) 979-3430

WALNUT CREEK
(925) 979-3430

LAMORINDA SPORTS

Davis Diaz on the way to Vanderbilt or the Major Leagues



Davis Diaz in 2018

Photo Gint Federas

By Jon Kingdon

A few years ago, there was a baseball movie starring Kevin Costner called "For the Love of the Game." It's a title that could also be applied to recent Acalanes graduate Davis Diaz and his relationship to baseball.

Even though Diaz is only 18, it could not be called a short-term relationship. "I started playing T-ball at the age of 3, though my parents had to lie about my age," Diaz said. "I went on to play with a Pleasant Hill team called the Hawks and then with the Lamorinda Travel team and I

grew up with them along with playing at Acalanes."

Though Diaz grew up in Pittsburgh, he started going to school in Walnut Creek and eventually made his way to Acalanes. Growing up for Diaz, it was mostly baseball but "I pretty much played everything with a ball."

It was Diaz's father, Adrian, that imbued in Diaz the love of the game. "My dad would always work out with my brother (Max) and me and he taught me how to play the game of baseball and he probably had the greatest influence on me and was always a huge part of it," Diaz said.

"My Dad would always push me to do the things he was doing even though he was a lot older than me so it forced me to compete and play the best I possibly could."

Acalanes head coach Connors Hornsby graduated from Acalanes in 2012, played for Saint Mary's College, and is the great nephew of Hall of Famer Rogers Hornsby (second highest career batting average of all time) has been watching Diaz play since he was 8 years old. "I played with Davis' brother Max," Hornsby said. "When I came back to Acalanes to coach Davis' sophomore year, I was able to see how Davis had grown as a player and also as a human being. It's been a privilege and honor to have a once in a lifetime player like Davis come through the program."

It was more than just the ability to play the game that allowed Diaz to stand above the other players. "Baseball is a game of adjustments so you're never going to feel the same each day," Diaz said. "I'm still trying to learn as much as I can, working on the small things and different mentalities. I'm constantly thinking with each pitch. All the great players are able to adjust. On defense, the biggest thing is preparation so

once I get on the field, I don't have to think of anything but just focus on winning and helping my team."

It's the intangibles that set the great ones from the merely good ones and Hornsby saw all of that in Diaz: "He's the complete package on and off the field," Hornsby said. "He's a humble kid that goes about his business in the right way. At practice or a game, he busts his butt and does the little things that don't show up on the stat sheet like staying late to help the coaches clean up. It's the little things that he does right that are easy to overlook. He's a quiet kid that leads by example, showing his leadership by showing up every day, getting his work in and being prepared for every pitch in the infield."

Diaz has tried to learn from every player in the major leagues because "everyone has unique abilities." However, there is one player that Diaz aims to emulate – all-star shortstop Francisco Lindor. "I love the excitement and joy he has on his face when he's playing," Diaz said. "He always competes at a high level and you can tell he always wants to win."

The work that Diaz has put in on the field and in the classroom was not overlooked

by the colleges. "I took a lot of visits but Vanderbilt really stuck out to me," Diaz said. "They have a great coaching staff, and I was able to build a great relationship with them. It just felt like home, and I was very comfortable with them, so I committed to go there at the beginning of my junior year."

Davis now has another decision to make. On July 12, Diaz was selected in the 12th round of the Major League Baseball Draft by the Arizona Diamondbacks. Like all high school prospects, Diaz will have to decide whether to go pro or head to Vanderbilt. If he begins college, Diaz will not be eligible to be drafted again until after his junior year.

It was more than just baseball for Diaz at Acalanes. "I loved every minute of high school," Diaz said. "Unfortunately, with the virus, we only had two and a half years in person but I'm very grateful for the relationships and memories and the other times with the students and teachers. I'm just very thankful for everything I went through at Acalanes and all the sacrifices the teachers made for us to help us achieve."

Steven Dyer and Emmanuel Callas named Coach and Player of the Year



Steven Dyer in 2020

Photo Gint Federas

By Jon Kingdon

After taking over a Campolindo basketball team that was 14-14 in 2015-16, coach Steven Dyer has led the Cougars to four consecutive winning seasons with at least 20 wins. It took the coronavirus to break that streak which limited the Cougars to 15 games and an undefeated record this season. In the last three seasons, Dyer's teams have had a combined record of 68 and 13, 30-1 in league play, a 13-1 playoff record along with a state championship, and a co-state championship.

The Bay Area News Group did not overlook the success of this year's team, naming Dyer as its Coach of the Year and senior Emmanuel Callas as its Player of the Year.

"Looking back, it was a challenging year," Dyer said. "We really were just thankful to have a season, so we took things in stride and tried to make the best of it, particularly for the se-

niors." Besides the virus, injuries were a factor with Logan Robeson missing the entire season and Aidan Mahaney being limited to six games.

As usual for a Dyer coached team, defense was an important factor in the team's success, only giving up an average of 45 points per game. "This was the best defensive team that I've had since I've been here," Dyer said. "We did not take anything for granted and came out ready to go in every game. This was a credit to the mentality of our players, particularly Emmanuel and Chase Bennett who were our captains this year. We never had a bad practice, and the team was always ready to play, and I give a lot of the credit to those guys."

Dyer did all he could to challenge his team with a schedule that did have any team with a final record below .500 and finished the season with a

composite winning percentage of 66.5%. According to Dyer, "We knew we had a really good team so when it came out that there would not be any playoffs, I talked with our seniors, and they wanted me to get some of the best non-league opponents that we could and in the end, we proved ourselves against a tough schedule."

Callas' scoring average increased each season from 2.2 to 5.5 to 13.9 to 15.9 as a senior. "Emmanuel has gone through a lot of highs and lows these four years, but he really stuck with it, always wanting to get better," Dyer said. "He worked really hard on his jump shot and definitely deserved all of the accolades he has received. We tell all of our guys to improve every year in the program and he definitely did that."

Classified • Classified • Classified • Classified • Classified • Classified • Classified

Room for Rent

Nice for rent in Moraga.
Clean spacious room with large backyard. Female preferred, non-smoker.
\$1050. Call: 917-749-9273

Furniture Restoration

Antique Furniture Restoration
25 years exp. - 925 765 0479
serving Lamorinda - references avail.
www.Cardonarestoration.com

House Cleaning

www.totalclean.biz
Serving Lamorinda since 1985.
Insured and bonded 376-1004.

Rototilling

Ken's Rototilling
• 4 W/D Tractors
• Hillside Weed Cutting
• Mowing • Discing • Rototilling
• **Brush Removal Abatement**
To Fire Dept Regulations
Free estimates! 925-938-9836
licensed, bonded & insured. CA#667491
www.kensrototilling.com

Tile Setting

Baths, Showers, Floors, Walls,
Counters
Cliff 510-697-1125

Handyman

Rusty Nails Handyman Service
Repair • Restore • Revamp
Call Rusty- (925) 890-1581

Quetzal Handyman AC Service

NO JOB TOO SMALL
Electrical, plumbing,
concrete, driveways & more...
Please call Carlos Toledo
510-689-7490

Construction

Concept Builders
Remodeling, Home Repair &
New Construction
Bonded & Insured. License no. 842563
(925) 283-8122, Cell: (925) 768-4983

Plumbing

WE HOP TO IT!
(925) 377-6600
LeapFrogPlumbing.com

\$10 per 1/2" classified ad height. Email to: classified@lamorindaweekly.com