

LAMORINDA SPORTS

Submit sports stories and story ideas to sportsdesk@lamorindaweekly.com

San Jose Earthquakes II team makes premier appearance at Saint Mary's



Courtesy Saint Mary's College Athletics

By Jon Kingdon

Last Saturday, with a wine and beer fest that went from 2 to 5 p.m. and a soccer game between the San Jose Earthquakes II and the Austin Football Club II, Saint Mary's College was the place to be.

With just two weeks to get the word out that the Earthquakes II and Austin FC II were going to play on the Saint Mary's soccer stadium, on a bright and sunny day, it was a standing room only crowd ranging from infants to senior citizens and all the ages in be-

tween, filling the stands along with several spectators sitting on the grass sidelines and end-zones.

For the record, Austin FC II defeated the Earthquakes II 2-0.

The game was set up to determine whether Saint Mary's field could prove to be a viable facility for the San Jose Earthquakes II to play some or all of their regular season games in the future with the intention of bringing more exposure for the team in the East Bay.

The Earthquakes II are the equivalent to a triple A team in

baseball or a G League team in basketball. With their season starting in April and going through October, as this point, they would be playing 12 to 15 home games, if not more.

"This is the first time we've put on an event like this at Saint Mary's," said Mike Matoso, the Vice President for Intercollegiate Athletics at Saint Mary's. "The Earthquakes approached us and we're using this as a kind of a test game to see if it goes well with the facility and the fan reaction to show if there is an opportunity for them and us to make this a longer commitment."

"The Earthquakes are excited to partner with The Town FC to bring this professional soccer match to Moraga while benefiting local youth soccer programs," said Earthquakes President Jared Shawlee. "As a soccer facility, it's amazing. If they were to add lights for night games, it would help to make games provide a different environment where you get the energy of a night game, but Saint Mary's is still a great place to play in the daytime as well. It has great size for the Earthquakes II team and they're able to set the food and beverage trucks for the fans. It's also great to see the kids' soccer field on the far side of the field. I like the parking setup because you want to be able to park, walk and kind of congregate the people as they are marching to the stadium, so I think it's a perfect setup with a beautiful backdrop."

Moraga Mayor Renata Sos has been wholly supportive of the idea of the Earthquakes II

coming to Saint Mary's. "I think it's great for Moraga and I'm very excited," Sos said. "Moraga is such a sports savvy town with Saint Mary's having these fantastic facilities. My vision is that, whether it's men's or women's soccer or other professional sports, there may be a place for teams to compete here which I think would be good for the college, the town and our community's appetite for athletics, which is boundless, so I think it would be a very good fit."

For Matoso, the benefits of the Earthquakes II coming to Saint Mary's would extend beyond the school. "Something like this could be cool for the community," Matoso said. "We've met with the Earthquakes for the past few months, and they think this is a perfect venue for them."

Tennyson Wilson, the Head of Club Affairs for the Town Football Club has been very involved with bringing Saturday's game to Saint Mary's. "Town FC is a new soccer startup and we've been working with the town of Moraga and the Earthquakes in terms of hosting pro games at the college next year," Wilson said. "We're trying to get a run of the venue to see how it works out and hope to have more of these games as we head into 2024. It's our hope to be the minor league team for the Earthquakes and be the feeder team for them. Right now, we're the connective tissue - working closely with the Earthquakes and the town and trying to bring all of the pieces together. Moraga has been very

supportive about bringing pro soccer to the area and they've been willing to support us in various ways and working to make sure that traffic doesn't impact the residents. We're hoping to help the town continue to grow and also support Saint Mary's in that growth."

Wilson also feels that in the end, lights at the stadium are an important issue. "We definitely would need lights when we stream the games on Apple TV," Wilson said. "As we get deeper into the year, lights would be required."

Matoso echoes that concern: "If this is to be a permanent thing, lights would have to be required. From that standpoint, it would be great for Saint Mary's, Moraga, and the Earthquakes. If we play a game at 3 o'clock on a Friday, we may get 300 people. If we play it at 7 p.m., we'll get 3,000 people for that game."

Saint Mary's head coach Adam Cooper welcomes the opportunity to share the field with the Earthquakes: "I think it'll help in a lot of ways starting with the notoriety, facilities, upgrades, and capital improvements which would also help. It's also a benefit in getting people onto the campus at Saint Mary's. It would also help the town of Moraga with their food and beverage industry. It would be a win-win for everyone in my opinion."

With a full house, a loud and appreciative crowd, perfect weather, and no off-field incidents, it would appear that Saint Mary's and Moraga have passed the first test.

Cheerleader camp at Campolindo sets foundation for the future



Photo Selin Wold

By Jon Kingdon

With so many young women competing in sports, it was only natural for there to be summer sports camps for them to attend.

Still, there are also camps for the "non-traditional" sport of cheerleading like the one at Campolindo though at one point, due to the pandemic, the numbers of high school cheerleaders were precipitously down.

"At one point at Campolindo, there was only a total of six cheerleaders comprised of two sophomores and four freshmen on the varsity," said Selin Wold, one of the heads of the Campolindo camp. "During COVID, we had 12 on the team and then last year, our numbers were up to 26."

This camp began about 10 years ago and Wold, who at one

point was a cheerleader at Campolindo and has been the team's head cheerleader coach the past four years, and Brenda Luster who will also be coaching the cheerleaders this year, took over the camp two years ago. "We have girls on our high school cheer team that went to this camp when they were little," Wold said.

Cheerleading like any other sport is not immune from injuries and doing things safely was a primal concern at the camp. "You can definitely have injuries, but we train very carefully in stages to be well prepared to move on to more difficult stunts," Luster said.

"We worked on a lot of safety drills to start with before moving on to do more complicated things," Wold said. "I also learned that the first thing head football coach Kevin Macy

teaches his football team is how to fall in a way to avoid getting hurt and we teach that to our team, particularly the flyer, the one who's on top to make sure that if they fall, their arms are not flailing which is how they can get hurt."

With the Campolindo varsity cheerleaders at their own camp in Santa Clara with 20 other schools, there were 124 4-year-olds to eighth-graders at the camp coached by the younger cheerleaders at Campolindo. "We like to have our cheerleaders run the camp," Wold said. "We break them up into groups by different grades and ages which empowers them. They learn leadership skills, and they love doing it, so it works out really well."

Brena Favro, an incoming sophomore, was a cheerleader last year and was one of the coaches at the camp. "Growing up, I did not go to a camp like this, but I really wish I had because it is so much fun for the kids," Favro said. "It was an amazing experience working with these kids that will soon be cheerleaders. I taught all the levels and bonding with the kids was amazing. It's a great feeling to have little kids look up to us. They've improved so much, and they go home, and they practice their cheers and that's important."

For a long time, most did not experience cheer until they

got to high school, but they are starting much younger now. The Campolindo camp ranged from kindergartners up to eighth grade. The first group was comprised of kindergartners and first-graders, the second group the third- and fourth-graders and the senior group of fifth- through eighth-graders.

"The youngest group worked on simple moves and then dancing with a lot of re-

peat moves," Wold said. The middle group worked on beginning stunts, more advanced moves in the dance and the older group were trained on tumbling, stunts and dances.

At the end of the session, each of the groups then returned and performed at the halftime of the final session of Coach Macy's summer camp scrimmage much to the delight of family and friends.

TREE SCULPTURE

COMPLETE TREE CARE
Proudly serving the East Bay since 1965!

Fully Insured ❖ Certified Arborists ❖ License #655977
(925) 254-7233 ❖ www.treesculpture.com

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

Structural Repairs

Since 1989
Alameda Engineering
DRAINAGE SYSTEMS
RETAINING WALLS
FOUNDATIONS
UNDERPINNING
LANDSLIDE REPAIRS
510-537-6550
General Engineering Contractors
 Lic. # 562641
alamedaengineering@comcast.net
alameda-engineering.com

Fencing

Custom Quality Fencing
KEN'S
 REDWOOD FENCING
925-938-9836

- Good Neighbor Fence
- Deer Fencing
- Picket/Split Rail
- RV Gates
- Trellis and Arbors
- Retaining Walls
- Insurance/Storm Repairs

licensed, bonded & insured. CA#667491

Handyman

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

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

Plumbing

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

\$21 per 1/2" classified ad height. Email to: classified@lamorindaweekly.com