

La Cañada Prep Athletic Teams Thriving

The La Cañada Preparatory recently fielded teams in boys' flag football, girls' volleyball, and co-ed tennis for a third consecutive year and had their most successful seasons to date.

The girls' volleyball team, a last-place finisher in the Foothill Sports League last year with a 1-12 record, rebounded this year with a 7-4 record and a third-place finish in the Eastern Division. In the playoffs, the Lady Knights knocked off favored Bethany Christian of Sierra Madre to advance to the semi-finals before losing to Duarte's top-seeded Anita Oaks School.

"I'm so proud of these girls," said LCP head volleyball coach, Seda Arustamyan. "This team went from worst in the league to one win away from a championship game. That's some learning curve."

The boys' flag football team amassed a 9-2 record and a second-place finish in the Foothill Sports League's Eastern Division. The Knights won their opening playoff game over Pasadena's Judson International before falling to the one-loss Barnhart School of Arcadia in the semifinals.

"I only had four returning players from last years' team, so my expectations were that this would be a rebuilding year. Boy, was I mistaken," stated LCP football coach, Peter Dangremond. "We finished with a better record and equaled our playoff performance from a year ago. I am very proud of how this team came together."

The LCP varsity tennis team, playing in the Middle School Tennis League, earned its third-consecutive first-place finish and managed a third-consecutive undefeated season. In the season-ending invitational tournament, held at

the Arroyo Seco Racquet Club in Pasadena, LCP number one, Nicholas Shamma, finished in second place while the doubles team of Alan Yoho and Antonello Gonzalez won the first-place trophy.

"Our varsity team has never lost a match," said LCP head tennis coach Jerry Rivera. "We formed this team three years ago, and they're 21-0 all-time. Pretty good start."

One of the contributing factors for this kind of success on the court is that tennis has been incorporated into the physical education program at La Cañada Preparatory along with their younger school, The Learning Castle, since 2000. The schools are located next to ten city tennis courts, and students begin learning to play at the age of four. Jerry Rivera, a formerly nationally ranked player, is also the tennis teacher at both schools.

La Cañada Preparatory opens their boys' and girls' basketball seasons at the end of the month, and it is uncertain how the winter teams will perform this season.

"One never knows what to expect at this level," said LCP athletic director, Scott Albright. "We always hope to have a successful season and qualify for the playoffs, but the most important thing we do is teach the fundamentals of the sport and create an environment in which our athletes can have fun and improve. We know we've been truly successful when our athletes are capable of contributing at the high school level."

The LCP boys open their season at home against Bethany Christian on Jan. 25. The girls open their season at home versus Anita Oaks on Feb. 2. LCP plays all home games at the FIS gymnasium on Cornishon Avenue in La Cañada Flintridge.



The 2009 Knight flag football team includes (front row, from left) Alex Hall, Monte Aladadi, Kyle D'Ambrosio, Ian Desdune, Aldridge Khin, Weston Theriot and Zak Rizkana. Back row: Coach Dangremond, Antonello Gonzalez, Brandon Renick, Andrew Verdicia, Brennan Bilinski, Jack Goyette, Jason Dalcour, Alan Yoho and Coach Whalin.



The LCP tennis team includes (front row, from left) Isabella Arizmendi, Camille Trevor, Rafi Haitayan, Zak Rizkana, Aldridge Khin, Sean Kazangian, Nathan Gi, Joshua Choi and Shyam Patel. Back row: Meghan Lacey, Antonello Gonzalez, Alan Yoho, Alexander Caley, Connor Tandy, Alex Kevakian and Nicholas Shamma.



The 2009 Lady Knight volleyball team includes (front row, from left) Noushig Benlian, Caroline Hendricks, Anna Jesmok, Sarah Yoho, Teagan George, Tala Ismail, Brittani Van Scoy, Ani Pridjian and Lana Sarkisian. Back row: Kayla McNamara, Adelle Higley, Thea Rose Goddard, Lori Pridjian, Katie Warden, Dominika Wilczek, Nina Marie Aghakhani, Erin Barr and Coach Arustamyan.