

Malibu boys soccer looks to rise to the top

By Dick Dornan
Special to The Malibu Times

Despite posting 23 wins and playing an exuberant brand of soccer the last two seasons, the Malibu High boys soccer team has not made it past the first round of the CIF playoffs in either season. This year, it's time to change that.

In its first six games of the 2013-2014 season, the Sharks have sprinted to a 4-1-1 start. MHS has notched wins against Buckley, 7-0, Palisades, 3-1, Brentwood, 8-1, and Webb, 2-0. A tie against Camarillo, 0-0, and a loss to St. John Bosco, 4-0, are the only blemishes thus far.

Under first-year coach Julian Wright, the team has set its sights on making a more promising run in the

CIF playoffs after going 23-10-2 the last two years.

On top of playoff struggles, MHS has also not won a Tri-Valley League title since 2008. But with seven experienced starters returning to the pitch, the Sharks have every opportunity to do so.

Wright, who led Lennox Academy to the CIF Southern Section Division VII title a year ago, left his old school to join a program that has the pieces in place to make a statement.

"Excited really isn't the right word," Wright said. "I was excited at the prospect of possibly getting to coach this group of players before I was officially hired, but that quickly transformed into a clear sense of determination once I knew I would be the new head coach. My job is to cre-



Top row, from left: Jonah Gooden, Tyler Savitsky, Harrison Smart, Ethan Flor, David Ochmanek, Hunter Murrell, Matt Ulansey; Bottom row: Ricky Felipe, Ari Taublieb, Jake Gooden, Cameron Silbar

Shooting and scoring



Dick Dornan / TMT

Justin Holmes averaged 17 points and 13 rebounds per game in the Pacifica Tournament.

Malibu High School senior center Justin Holmes outdid the competition as he averaged 17 points and 13 rebounds per game in the Pacifica Tournament last week.

He earned all-tournament honors as MHS took third place with a 54-47 win against Santa Clara High School. The Sharks are now 6-5 overall.

Super swimmer



Dick Dornan / TMT

Logan Hotchkiss competes at a swimming invitational at East LA college Dec. 20-22.

Malibu High School junior Logan Hotchkiss of the Malibu Seawolves Swim Club competed at the "Southern California Senior Winter Invitational" at East LA College from Dec. 20-22 with a time of 1:43.23 in the 200 freestyle, 4:41.12 in the 500

freestyle and 9:46.90 in the 1000 freestyle.

These times qualified him to swim at the "Speedo Champions Series California/Nevada Winter Sectional" taking place at East LA College from Jan. 16-20.

ate excitement for everyone involved in the program, and to let the style of play speak for itself."

Wright has instituted a philosophy where each player has the chance to maximize his potential on the field. An emphasis on "quality" rather than "quantity" has been made clear to the team, as Wright seeks to erase any "me" attitude in favor of "we."

"We emphasize quality over quantity, meaning how much playing time any player gets is not as important as what that player does with the time they get," Wright said. "Multiple players have contributed to the success of the team so far. We rotate players regularly, placing equal importance on every player on our roster."

Jake and Jonah Gooden, Ethan Flor, Tyler Savitsky, Ari Taublieb, Barron Hilton, Cameron Silbar, Hunter Murrell, Harrison Smart, David Ochmanek, Matt Ulansey and Ricky Felipe represent a senior class determined to finish the season on a higher note than the previous two seasons.

The junior class features an array of talent in goalkeeper Max Watkin, forward James Handal and midfielders Cameron Smoller and Kevin Baum.

"The seniors are providing unparalleled leadership, and the underclassmen have followed their lead," said Wright. "The level of play has improved over the past couple of months, and we are seeing a new mentality emerge from this group which manifests itself as higher work rates, more efficient play,



Photos by Dick Dornan / TMT

Tyler Savitsky dribbles up field against Brentwood.

better team defending, and a very real sense of duty and destiny."

Handal leads the team in goals with four, while Jake Gooden has a team-high five points (three goals and two assists). Watkin has made 20 saves.

The importance of team play and quality production has been evident up and down the roster in which 11 players have scored a goal and 11 players have accounted for an assist.

"I like what I see, but we are far from finished. Our goal is to continually evolve as people, as players, and as a team," Wright said. "Nothing is more important to me than helping these boys reach their goals."

Malibu returns home to play Animo Leadership on Jan. 7, and TVL action heats up when the Sharks take on Oaks Christian on Jan. 10 at 7 p.m. under the lights.

Athletes of the Year Malibu High School, 2013



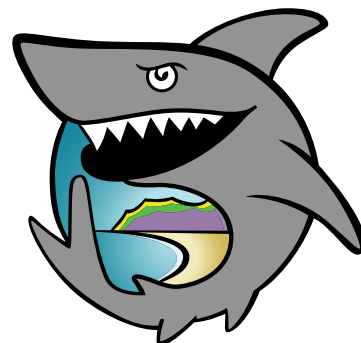
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2013 MHS Athletes of the Year: Front row, from left: Logan Hotchkiss, Gabriel Rapoport, Linda Brown, Britta Mosser, Caroline Pietrzyk; Back row: Adam Fote, Emmet Pierson, Sean Ryan, Chase Lambert. Not pictured: Brennan Cassone

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