

# Stevenson to represent country in USA-Canada showdown



MHS sophomore Alec Stevenson

By Dick Dornan  
Special to The Malibu Times

Come next week, Malibu High School's tough-nosed sophomore linebacker, Alec Stevenson, will take part in a competition few football players on any level get to experience. While there are many off-season all-star games and exhibitions, few competitions pit different nations against one another. That's why Stevenson is excited to represent the United States on Sat., Feb. 8, in the Under-17 U.S. vs. Canada high school football game at the University of Texas at Arlington. The game is part of a competition called the 2014 International Bowl series.

"I think it's a really good oppor-

tunity, and I am really excited that not only will I play on a team with great athletes but I get to represent my country while doing it," Stevenson said. "It's a cool rivalry because we are the two main football countries. It will be fun to see who is better. I can't wait."

USA Football and Football Canada, the sport's national governing bodies in each country, will host five football games featuring top student-athletes from each country at age levels ranging from seventh through 12th grade. Stevenson, 15, joins a select group of athletes in representing the U.S. and participating in one of football's true international competitions.

From Monday through Friday, Stevenson will practice during the week ahead of the game in Dallas. He will also get the chance to scrimmage against the Canadian team in AT&T Stadium, the home of the Dallas Cowboys that is known colloquially as "Jerry World," for Cowboys owner Jerry Jones.

"I've been trying to focus on school but it's been getting tough," Stevenson admitted. "...it hasn't set in yet like how cool that's going to be."

Stevenson was selected to participate in the gridiron showdown after being chosen to take part in USA Football's U.S. National Team program last summer.

The program takes into account both academic and athletic achievements. Stevenson excels in the classroom, maintaining a 3.1 cumulative grade point average. Last semester during football season, he achieved a 3.77 GPA. He has already been collecting assignments from teachers to avoid fall-



Alec Stevenson, #51, makes one of his 132 tackles on the season for Malibu.

Photos by Dick Dornan / TMT

ing behind on schoolwork during his experience in Texas.

On the field, Stevenson was a one-man wrecking crew for a Sharks team that struggled to score points in 2013. The 5-foot-11, 205-pound sophomore averaged 13.2 tackles over 10 games at the linebacker position. That

total led all sophomores in the state of California.

Three games in particular stood out, as the season wore on and Stevenson gained more experience. On Sept. 27, he recorded a school-record 28 tackles against Ribet Academy. Late in the season he showed that game was no fluke,

posting back-to-back games with 23 and 21 tackles against Santa Clara and Fillmore, respectively.

"I was just really fired up and I wanted to do anything to help my team win," he said. "Those teams specifically ran the ball a lot. I was just doing my job. You got to be tough, physical and smart. You have to be able to read plays before they happen."

With two more years at Malibu remaining, Stevenson has the chance to be the best linebacker to ever graduate from the school.

The young player idolizes legendary Chicago Bears linebacker Dick Butkus, and plays the game as Butkus did with great tenacity, aggression and a fearless attitude.

"He was always a good run stopper," Stevenson said. "I pride my game first and foremost being able to stop the run and just being tough in the middle."

Stevenson, whose dream is to play Division One college football, enjoys big collisions, such as sacking the quarterback or meeting a runner at full speed.

"That's better than a touchdown in my opinion. Going man-on-man against a big fullback up the middle. Got to find out who is tougher. It's an awesome feeling," Stevenson said. "I love football. I don't really know how to say it any other way. I just love football."

The U.S.-Canada U-17 game will kick off at 11 a.m. on Sat., Feb. 8. Those interested in watching can view a live stream of the broadcast at internationalbowl.com. Stevenson will be wearing number 42.

# Malibu High sports come down home stretch for playoffs

By Dick Dornan  
Special to The Malibu Times

Hollywood Park Racetrack may have closed, but here in Malibu we have our own exciting races. As league play enters the final three weeks of action, sev-

eral Malibu High School sports teams are jockeying for position to make the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) playoffs.

### Girls Water Polo

In search of its eighth consecutive league title, the Malibu girls water polo team stepped outside of conference play this past weekend to test itself against stronger competition in the Oxnard tournament at Oxnard High School. The Sharks went 2-2 in the tourney; losing to champion Newbury Park and Atascadero in pool play before defeating Burbank and Hueneme in consolation matches.

Now, Malibu (8-7 overall) refocuses its sights on finishing Tri-Valley League (TVL) play with another championship. With a 4-0 record in TVL play, that effort appears to be going swimmingly. That undefeated record includes a 13-6 drubbing on Jan. 17 of Carpinteria, who shared the league title a year ago. Leading 7-5 entering the final period, Malibu exploded on a 6-1 outburst to win going away.

Raine Murray leads the team in scoring with Emma London anchoring down the defense. Goalkeeper Sara Toussieng has made 59 blocks so far on the season.

"My goal is to win league and go far in CIF," Coach Hayden Goldberg said. "I am very proud of my girls. They have worked so hard and it is paying off. We are a great squad and are really close. The seniors have been excellent leaders."

The Sharks play at home on Friday against Villanova Prep at 3:15 p.m.

### Girls Soccer

Under first-year coach Jack Craig, the Sharks have positioned themselves to earn a postseason berth. Through the first five games of TVL action, Malibu is 3-2.

They have defeated Santa Paula (5-0), Carpinteria (3-0) and Grace Brethren (3-1). In the win versus



Malibu's Gianna Chaisson (right) battles an opponent for a loose ball last week.

Dick Dornan / TMT

Grace Brethren, Sasha Sivitsky scored two goals and Jane Sidley chipped in another. Blemishes have come at the hands of league-leader Oak Park, 2-0, and Oaks Christian, 2-0.

Malibu is currently 11-7 overall and plays at Carpinteria on Friday.

"The team is working hard and together as one unit. We are on track to make CIF and we still have a shot at the league title," Craig said. "The senior leadership and junior goalkeeper Seaira Moore have kept the team positive and moving forward. They work hard and never quit. I love coaching them and feel blessed for this group."

### Boys Soccer

The boys are also enjoying a run

of strong play, running neck-and-neck with Santa Paula for first place in the Tri-Valley League. After the first half of league, the Sharks are three points behind Santa Paula in second place, with 10 points.

The foundation of this season's team is a strong defense. After tying Oaks Christian, 1-1, in its league opener, Malibu has won three of four contests, all by shutout: Carpinteria (2-0), Fillmore (5-0) and Oak Park (1-0). The only loss for MHS was a 2-1 setback to Santa Paula last week.

Against Oak Park last Friday night, Malibu (9-4-3, 3-1-1) dominated possession of the ball, limiting the Eagles' offensive attack. With two minutes remaining in the first half, Ari Taublieb

scored on a free kick. Goalie Max Watkin nailed down his eighth shutout of the season.

Malibu hosts Carpinteria this Friday at 6 p.m.

### Girls Basketball

The Lady Sharks basketball team has improved significantly this season from a year ago, currently sporting a 7-10 record overall and 1-4 mark in league play. On Jan. 16 they defeated Santa Clarita Christian, 37-21, behind the strong play of Gianna Chaisson who had 11 rebounds, four steals and five points.

In their next game, they knocked off over Grace Brethren, 34-26, to capture their seventh win of the season. Trailing 17-16 at the half, the Sharks came out and played smothering defense in the third quarter, holding the Lancers to just one point en route to the win.

Senior forward Agaly De Jesus had seven points, nine rebounds and three steals. Sophomore center Kendall Jordan scored seven points and grabbed eight rebounds.

The MHS girls JV basketball team improved its season record to 6-4, the best record for the JV team in many years. Last week they defeated Carpinteria's JV team, 27-22. Tania Moran had 10 points and Maggie Valdman had eight points.

### Boys Basketball

The boys team (8-13, 1-4), competing in a difficult league for basketball, is in the midst of a slump after dropping seven of their last eight games. After pulling out an exciting 61-54 overtime victory against Santa Clara behind Frankie McGovern's 14 points, the Sharks lost back-to-back league games to Bishop Diego (61-52) and Oak Park (50-42).

Jonathan Baldwin scored 15 points versus Bishop Diego and Justin Holmes pumped in 19 against Oak Park.

## MHS upcoming games

### Thurs., Jan. 30

JV girls basketball vs. Bishop Diego, at Bishop Diego, 5:30 p.m.  
Varsity girls basketball vs. Bishop Diego, at Bishop Diego, 7 p.m.

### Fri., Jan. 31

Varsity girls water polo vs. Villanova, at home, 3:15 p.m.  
JV girls soccer vs. Carpinteria, at Carpinteria, 3:15 p.m.  
JV boys soccer vs. Carpinteria, at home, 4 p.m.  
FS boys basketball vs. Oaks Christian, at home, 4 p.m.  
JV girls water polo vs. Villanova, at home, 4:15 p.m.  
Varsity girls soccer vs. Carpinteria, at Carpinteria, 5 p.m.  
JV boys basketball vs. Oaks Christian, at home, 5:30 p.m.  
Varsity boys soccer vs. Carpinteria, at home, 6 p.m.  
Varsity boys basketball vs. Oaks Christian, at home, 7:30 p.m.

### Sat., Feb. 1

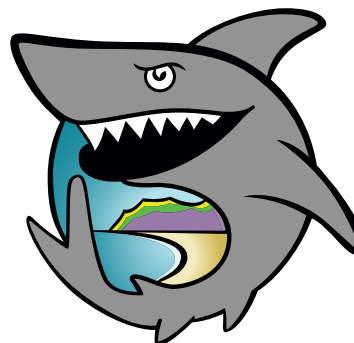
JV girls basketball vs. La Reina, at La Reina, 1 p.m.  
Varsity girls basketball vs. La Reina, at La Reina, 2:30 p.m.

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