

Samohi boys' soccer playing their game

Team is on fire in the playoffs, looking to advance tonight

BY JON HABER | Special to the Daily Press

SANTA MONICA The Santa Monica High School boys' soccer team suffered a 3-1 loss to Coachella Valley last February in the quarterfinals of the CIF Division IV playoffs. The team hasn't seen a marker in the loss column since.

Last year's season-ending defeat motivated the strong core of juniors to bounce back this season as seniors with a vengeance in their journey to a CIF championship.

"When we left Coachella Valley last year, it was definitely a learning experience," head coach Frank Gatell said. "I told the players, remember this feeling, and next year, you need to make it happen."

The players haven't disappointed their coach so far, finishing the '07-'08 regular season 22-0-1 and defeating Bishop Montgomery 3-0 Friday in the first round of the CIF playoffs.

"We scored all three goals in the first half, so we were able to get over our first-round jitters. It took a little bit of getting used to the playoff atmosphere," said Gatell, whose Vikings didn't score until the game's 24th minute. "Then we did what we do best, find the back of the net."

The victory over Bishop Montgomery sets up a second round matchup between Samohi and El Segundo (6-7-2) this afternoon in El Segundo at 3 p.m.

Not only will the Vikings be playing away from Santa Monica, but they will also have to adjust to a tighter field in El Segundo.

"Right now we're practicing a lot of simple two-touch



Photo courtesy

GOOD SHOT: Samohi beat Bishop 3-0 last Friday in CIF playoff.

soccer in confined spaces, making sure we're comfortable with pressure and making sure we play our game," Gatell said. "The Eagles are a team that's going to sit back. They primarily prey on counter-attacks, so we need to possess the ball in the fashion we know how to."

Gatell said outside of his core group of forwards, lead by senior Charlie Paris, who scored two-goals against Bishop Montgomery, he will be looking for a combined team effort to take down the Eagles.

"We'll need solid play from our sweeper Nick Ferro. In the mid-field, we'll need Luis Zavala to make sure he controls the pace and sets the tone for us to play to touch-on-the-ground soccer," he said.

Gatell will also be looking for his defense, lead by senior goalkeeper Alex Kovacs, to make sure El Segundo doesn't have a strong offensive attack. If the Vikings can put playoff distractions aside, the coach is confident his team can continue their winning ways.

"We just need to settle down," Gatell said. "We've played in hostile environments before, so we just need to make sure we play our kind of game."

BOYS BASKETBALL

The No. 11-seeded Samohi boys' basketball team travels takes on No. 5-seeded Chino Hills tonight for its second-round playoff game. The Vikings defeated Ramona 62-46 Friday in their first-round matchup. Tonight's game is set to tip off at 7:30 p.m. at Chino Hills.

Coming off double-digit playoff wins against Century and Monrovia, the Crossroads boys' basketball team is set for its third-round playoff matchup against Price in Los Angeles. The action begins tonight at 7:30 p.m.

GIRL'S PLAYOFF PREVIEW

Gatell has his hands full as he tries to lead his Samohi girls' soccer team in their march toward a CIF banner Wednesday against Poly in Pasadena. The Vikings are coming off a 1-0 win over Cypress Saturday. The game is set to start at 3 p.m.

The No. 3-seeded Samohi girls' basketball team took care of business over the weekend, defeating Redlands East Valley 64-40 in Redlands, extending their season-high win streak to 10 in the process. They'll try to push that number to 11 Wednesday when they take on Blair at 7:30 p.m. in Pasadena.

Following its most lopsided win of the year — a 71-11 blowout against Noli Indian Saturday in San Jacinto — the Crossroads girls' basketball team will look to carry momentum into its second-round playoff matchup against Sacred Heart of Jesus Wednesday in Los Angeles. The game is set to tip off at 7:30 p.m.

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Users of paper bags could be forced to pay a fee for each one

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step further. The proposal in the city — considered to be one of the municipal leaders in the environmental movement — would be to ban all single-use plastic bags, including biodegradable, and mandate retailers to charge a fee on single-use paper bags in order to encourage their customers to switch to reusable. The city of San Francisco has its own municipal composting program to accommodate biodegradable plastic bags.

The paper bags fee was a recommendation by the Task Force on the Environment, Kubani said.

"The best way to address all environmental issues related to single-use bags, both in product of the bag and the distribution of the bag, is to get people to switch to reusable bags," Kubani said. "The most effective way of doing that is a ban and fees."

EPD staff is recommending the proposed ordinance include a hardship exemption for businesses that can demonstrate a significant economic impact to their operations, but Kubani noted that the impact should be proportional to the size of the business since smaller businesses distribute less than the major retailers.

Fred Okhovat, manager of Kings Liquor on Santa Monica Boulevard off Berkeley Street, seemed resistant to City Hall's proposal, saying on Monday that it would impact liquor stores because many use plastic bags to support paper carry-out bags to make them sturdy enough to hold several bottles.

"It's not a very good idea," Okhovat said. "They should do recycling instead because banning is not a very great idea."

Syed Hossain, the manager of Fair Market on Fourth Street off Pacific Street,

said that while he would support a ban, city officials would need to find affordable alternatives for retailers.

"I would support the ban because of the environment," Hossain said on Monday.

Paper on average costs about five times more than its plastic counterpart, which costs anywhere from 1 to 5 cents, as compared to 5 to 10 cents for paper, according to city staff. Biodegradable bags cost an estimated 10 to 21 cents while reusable cloth bags can run anywhere from 99 cents to \$10.

In terms of the approximate annual usage per person, paper, plastic and biodegradable bags are even at about 500 to 600 bags, while reusable cloth bags range from two to four per person a year.

If the council decides to authorize the City Attorney's Office to draft an ordinance and it is subsequently adopted by council later this year, the ban would not go into effect for about six months.

The ban will most likely be opposed by the California Grocers Association (CGA), a statewide trade association, which has been on the other end of the plastic bags issue.

"Our position has always been that we support the recycling of plastic bags," Dave Heylen, a spokesman for the CGA, said.

The CGA was one of the supporters of AB 2449, a state bill — authored by Assemblyman Lloyd Levine — that required certain retailers to establish an in-store recycling program allowing customers to return with their carryout bags. The law went into effect last year.

"That is the most effective way of dealing with this environmental issue," Heylen said.

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