Written by Alex Goff
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The Mid-Atlantic women's all-star program started its new three-year plan with a nicely-taken 33-22 win over the West Friday at the Women's All-Star Championships Tier II in Chula Vista, Calif.

New Head Coach Bob Weir has been adamant that the program focus on player development, and said he hopes to get more players involved and playing more tuneup games in a true all-star season.

This year he ran the players through three camps, and worked hard to instill a team ethos. Overall, it worked, as the Sharks ran out to a comfortable first-half lead and held on to win.

"The second half was a lot like an NBA All-Star game," joked Weir. "A lot of exciting play, but most of it on offense."

Thus the coach hinted strongly he'd like to see more offense.

Good performances came from all over the place, especially, though, the halfback combination of Eli White (of DC Furies and player of the game as scrumhalf), and Sam Pankey (James River) at flyhalf, who is still relatively new to the game but athletic and smart.

Up front, hooker Rachael Primo (NOVA) was outstanding.

"We met to discuss individual goals and we wanted them to make a statement and say 'I will' do such-and-such. Rachel hit all of those; she said 'I will' and she did," said Weir.

The secret weapon for the Sharks may well have been Jackie Melsopp of Severn River. A yoga instructor by day, Melsopp ran the team through a well-received session after their flight across the country, and Weir said it did wonders to reduce jet lag and help the team relax. On recovery day Saturday, Melsopp will be tasked once more to help repair body and mind.

"I am just juiced with the type of athletes we have and what we can do," said Weir, whose team faces the South on Sunday.