

Varsity Girls' Volleyball Consistently Building Chemistry with New Additions



MOOR photo by YIBEI LIU

ASPIRANT ATHLETES The AHS varsity girls' volleyball team diligently trains with a hopeful outlook for the upcoming season.

WESLEY TSAI
Staff Writer

With a start of a new school year comes a few volleyballs flying around the gym. The girls' volleyball team has prepared throughout the end of last year and into the summer to develop a strong foundation for the upcoming season.

"This year, like any other captain, I hope we do well during the season and head to playoffs. We have a new set of girls who definitely know how to bring their A-game. Each player is capable of playing every position well and always knows what they're doing," captain Carol Chen said. "Also, I hope our bond outside of the court definitely translates when we are actually playing. As a four-year member, I've put my heart and soul into this program so I believe the team will do the same."

Ending last year's season with a 2-8 record, the Moors have had a countless amount of practices throughout the summer, ranging from the morning to the afternoon, in preparation for the season ahead of them. "Despite having five seniors who graduated we had six junior

"Each player is capable of playing every position well and always knows what they're doing,"

-Carol Chen

varsity players move up into varsity. We're always helping each other, pushing each other for higher standards for the better of themselves and the team," senior outside hitter Justina Sam said.

The Moors worked on fundamentals throughout the summer to ensure that they will be ready for the season. According to Head Coach Charles Tran, they have been doing a lot of drills that focused on defense and communication, practicing for approximately two hours a day, six days a week for the past few months and bonds have only grown stronger. With goals to make the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) this season, the team has yet to continue practicing to prepare for it.

"The girls all have the desire to work hard but lack the urgency to do so. With practice starting in June, some girls would miss practice due to SAT class and family vacations. It was difficult to build team chemistry, but I believe if the girls feel the urgency and pressure to play hard, [this] group of girls are expected to make the playoffs," Tran said.

Spotlight: Briana Thai

WESLEY TSAI
Staff Writer

For most athletes, winning a league title is everything. Others just want to qualify for California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) playoff. The last time a Moor won a CIF title in diving was fifteen years ago. But for one girl, qualifying for CIF was just the start to her season. In 2014, current sophomore Briana Thai took the title once again for AHS.

1. Standing on the diving board in the final round, how did you feel about your situation or chances?

A: I went into the last round really nervous but confident. I had my best and most consistent dive. There were little doubts in my mind having me to hesitate before my dive, but I blocked the bad thoughts out of my head and focused on [being optimistic.] With a winning score of 542.55, I felt really proud and accomplished that I was able to do this at such a young age.

2. How does it feel to be the representative for Alhambra and win the CIF title as a freshman in high school?

A: Being the first diver to represent MOOR photo by SHANNON KHA

Alhambra in over 15 years feels really good. Winning the CIF title as a freshman was a little shocking. Competing against juniors and seniors was a little intimidating for me. Other divers took the meet really seriously while I had fun.

3. What are your expectations for the following years?

A: I don't necessarily expect to win CIF [in] all 4 years of high school, but I just want to perform my dives as well as I can, and I'll be happy with the results. I would like to attend and dive for Stanford University and I hope to make it into the Olympics.

4. Do you plan on diving for national teams such as the Junior Olympics?

A: Outside of my diving team, I am on the Southern Californian Divers National team, and I am planning on getting top three in U.S. Junior Olympic Nationals in the next two years. I want to get there because the top three divers attend world competitions and I plan on getting there by taking practice more seriously than I already do.



California Bill Limits Excessive Football Contact

SIMEON LAM
Sports Editor

As football-related concussions are on the rise, California Governor Jerry Brown signed AB 2127 on July 21, stating several restrictions as to how frequently middle and high school football teams can utilize full-contact practices. With the support of CIF, the passed law, which will go into effect at the beginning of 2015, aims to control the amount of concussions and other brain injuries.

"It's a step in a right direction," CIF Director Ron Nocetti said in an LA Times article. "The CIF is interested in any issue that promotes the health and safety of our athletes."

AB 2127 states that teams can also only have two full-contact practices per week, 90 minutes a session, during season/postseason and none during the offseason. Full-contact practices include hard tackling drills and scrimmages. Football teams around the state have either praised or condemned the passed law.

Many coaches consider that the pros of this law includes an increase in the security and awareness of concussions, keeping the game of football safer with more precautions. Not only do athletes' bodies wear down less but they also have less contact hits to injure them.

However, other coaches criticize the law, saying that the preparation for big hits in the actual game are because of practice. In a KTVU local news article, a coach from Piedmont Hills High School stated, that "we are trading concussions for neck-injuries."

"I think it's on the individual whether he is dedicated enough to prepare for the season," said wide receiver Steven Ordonez. "But personally I believe that [this law] is keeping players from [reaching their] potential because of our limited hours."

At the end of the day, football still causes the most concussions in high school sports. In 2013, the Institute of Medicine researched that high school football players suffered over ten concussions every 10,000 games and practices. That number doubles the concussion rate of college football. While attempts to make the sport safer could turn out to be disastrous, it could also be beneficial for the sport to last longer. This bill could be a start to ensure safety for future football players.

ANHAYTE GUAJARDO, Staff Writer

MOOR graphics by LESLIE HWANG