

## Girls' Tennis Plays on New Coach's Court, Serves Up Hidden Potential



MOOR photo by STEWART RYDMAN-ESPINOSA

**CRITICAL HIT** Varsity singles player Nay Min-Tin makes a quick play off her Schurr opponent on Oct. 19. This game and other Almont League matches were postponed due to rain.

### VERNON LUONG Staff Writer

Former varsity girls' tennis Head Coach Bill Yee steps down from his position this year to switch roles with former JV Coach Calvin Chow. Chow explains the switch as the decision to take Yee away from the strain of being a varsity coach, as well as an AP U.S. History teacher.

However, despite having a new team under his wing, Chow was able to lead the girls through the preseason and into Almont League games with a 8-7 record. In addition, it was accomplished with only three returning varsity members from last year. Co-Captains Nancy Vong and Gabrielle Hong commend him for keeping the team strong through the transition of coaches.

"The team is really unified and we have a great bond," said Vong.

Chow is also excited for the potential of this year's team. He expects

**"Any player under [Coach Chow's] guidance will improve a lot because he is a good teacher."**

— Nancy Vong

the same discipline as his former JV players, but now the performance levels are higher. The team agrees that his attitude exemplifies just that vision.

As the team still needs to improve most on their mentality during matches, Chow combats this weak-

ness through reaction volley drills. By staging the players just behind the net, Chow is able to improve the girls' focused state by presenting a shorter reaction time frame than if they were farther away from the net. The girls acknowledge the more intensive practice as a needed preparation for facing faster opponents.

"He has [made] us more dedicated. We were not as focused last year," said Hong.

With the rest of the League season left to unfold, the team remains comfortable with their new coach, along with their current record. Chow feels the same way towards his new varsity team.

"Any player under his guidance will improve a lot because he is a good teacher," said Vong.

## Football Seniors Set Stage for Almont League Success

### VINCENT LIN Sports Editor

Although the varsity football team is now on a two-game losing streak, the Moors still have a fighting chance of placing top three in the Almont League. It is up to a handful of seniors steer the relatively young Moors toward victory, with their invaluable in-field experience and mentality of leaders.

At the helm stands senior Chris Salgado, who is eminent as the chief blocker and the lead figure of the team's offensive line. A prospective member since the start, he views his role on the team as much more extensive than simply a lineman. Keeping the young members in place is a responsibility of his position, but it is one that returns support to him.

"I don't feel the pressure at all because I believe in the rest of the players to help me out when I need help," said Salgado.

With the strength of the team lying in the linemen, senior Jacob Carballo has led the offense with 234 rushing yards, as well as provided an asset to the defensive lineup. The

premier runner averages six yards per carry as running back, and has made 51 tackles as defensive line-backer, situating him as a main force of the team. Carballo emphasizes the pride that the position brings, but acknowledges it as a motivator to work harder for the younger players of the team as well.

James Martin is the only returning senior of the starting receivers, with 300 yards and 22 catches from seven games so far. Taking over from last year's Joseph Becerra and Mitchell Crockom, Martin's progress as the go-to receiver is a positive sign for the imminent competition the team will face in the next two weeks.

After their last two rattling losses to Schurr and Montebello, the Moors are now fighting against San Gabriel for their League reputation; their Homecoming game against the Matadors is a chance victory that they cannot afford to lose. The Alhambra community anticipates the full potential of the senior players to guide the young team into qualifying for the California Interscholastic Federation playoffs once again.



MOOR photo by JOYCE TSUI

**LONG SHOT** Linemen Dominic Gonzales and Chris Salgado scramble to clear the path for quarterback Joshua Mendoza to make a pass. The Oct. 22 game against Schurr ended with a loss of 13-44 for the Moors.

## Cross Country Faces High Pressure for League Title

### JIMMY TANG Staff Writer

With one week left in the season, the cross country team is pushing all of its effort towards finishing number one in the Almont League, thus securing a spot in the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) finals. So far, the team has produced consistent results, leading to their second place ranking in League behind Montebello.

"I feel bittersweet because we've worked really hard, yet we're still second," said varsity runner Brian Kwan.

Kwan added that by making minor changes to their daily routine, such as starting practice at an earlier time or having practices on weekends, the team's overall performance would drastically improve because more practice means better skills.

"I'm proud [of our team's performance] because we work hard, and we have good teamwork since we are always pushing each other

to give everything we've got," said Captain Sarah Chavez.

Chavez's goal is for everyone to stay motivated, committed and effortful until the last race because it is the only way they have a chance at winning the coveted first place title. However, Chavez stresses that the team needs to improve their commitment in showing up to practices because not being used to the strenuous running leads to injuries.

"We want to take away the negative connotation that cross country is easy because it only involves running. It takes teamwork, motivation and practice to reach the finish line," said Kwan.

However, the largest factor motivating the team is that Head Coach Steve Morales is retiring from coaching this year in order to spend more time with his children at home. Morales has spent the past fourteen years coaching at AHS and the team is hoping to make his last year a memorable one.

## Varsity Briefs

### JAMES HO Copy Editor

#### Girls' Volleyball Falters on Edge of Schurr Victory

Thunderclouds loomed overhead on Oct. 19 as the varsity girls' volleyball team faced off against Schurr, a leading contender in the Almont League. The dynamic five set game resulted in a loss for AHS who won two out of five sets but could not score the final decisive points.

Initially, the girls jumped into a successful pace and were able to lead the game. The first set went smoothly, and ended with a score of 25-15, which gave the victory to Al-

hambra. The team then moved into the second round with a 6-0 lead where Marisa Baltazar scored six aces within a few minutes.

However, the game saw a change of tempo as Schurr tied with the Moors on three separate occasions, bringing the score to 22-22. The second set ended as a loss as Schurr took the win 22-25.

Sets three and four were equally nerve-racking; miraculous saves and hard-hitting plays kept the teams in constant struggle. Set three went to the Lady Moors with a score of 25-21 but the fourth set resulted in a painfully close score of 24-25.

To break the tie, the victory of

the fifth set went to the first team to reach 15 points. This portion of the game saw the most intense action displayed on that day, the entire audience was on their feet and chanting for their respective team. The Lady Moors played their hardest and the last minute of the game had a tie of 14-14. The decisive point was scored by Schurr, however, and the game went to the Spartans.

After such a close game, the girls felt the need to reevaluate their strengths and weaknesses.

"This game was definitely a kick start for us to work even harder for the rest of the season," said middle hitter Khanhlinh Su.

### SIDNEY AUNG Staff Writer

#### Water Polo Suffers in Second Half of Keppel Game

The varsity water polo team came into the Oct. 20 game against Mark Keppel with confidence and positivity. The second of five Almont League matches, the team's loss was a disappointing experience, as the Aztecs defeated Alhambra 16-7.

An exceptional effort was put forth by the Moors, and though without a victory in hand, the team is thrilled

with the progress they have been making. It is reassuring for coaches Sarah and Nathan Duran to notice the gradual improvements in teamwork and mentality.

"We are definitely growing as a team and learning from past experiences. It's great to see my players develop from time to time," said Head Coach Sarah Duran.

In order to prepare for the upcoming League matches, the team is emphasizing more intensive practices to build the team's endurance. The team was playing incredibly well

during the first half, but as fatigue set in, it became hard to maintain focus.

"The first half of the game was the best water polo we've played in years. But the second half was horrendous, and is a performance we're hoping to never repeat," said Captain Patrick Yin.

The team realized the importance of being patient and sharing the ball more efficiently on offense, after deciding that selfish play was a key factor in their loss. The Moors have one game left to mend this flaw.