

Lady Moors Enter Mex Games 2011



MOOR photo by JOYCE TSUI

FUTURE OLYMPIANS? Bottom row: Angelica Holguin, Karina Meza, Christina Holguin. Top row: Head Coach Armando Gutierrez, Yazmin Melendez, Carolina Banauelos, Andrea Pineda, Krystal Vega, Cynthia Martinez, Samantha Murquecho.

VINCENT LIN Sports Editor

Members of the varsity girls' soccer team thought their time on the field together was over for the year after their first-round California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) loss; but to everyone's surprise, an even bigger opportunity has arisen. With the help of Head Coach Armando Gutierrez, nine AHS players were selected to enter the 2011 Mexican-American Games, a national invitation-only tournament to scout U.S. players for the Mexican national team and the 2012 Olympic Games.

Only 32 teams in the nation qualified for the Mex Games 2011 women's soccer tournament, of which all players must be of Mexican descent. After a few calls, Gutierrez was appointed as coach of this region's 14-18 age-range team, into which he placed players from Alhambra and Schurr. Competition for entry

was huge, as individual players from several cities even submitted videos to Gutierrez just for a chance to try out. The nine AHS qualifiers are named in the above caption.

"CIF is mostly to help get into college teams, but this is at the professional level. It's a rare opportunity;

"It's an opportunity for them to feel and be treated like professionals."

— Armando Gutierrez

we'll be taking full advantage of it," junior qualifier Karina Meza said.

According to Meza, it is a one in a million chance that the possibilities the Mex Games brings are even available to them, and just to be exposed to professional coaches is a huge deal. The tournament will be held on April 20-24 at the Bell Gardens Sports Center, and will host all

32 teams from across the nation.

"My concept of this tournament is that it's an opportunity for them to feel and be treated like professionals, [and] to show their talent. Alhambra has a lot of good teams, but unfortunately, we've never had the opportunity to be seen," said Gutierrez.

The emotional response from the Lady Moors was great, in part because it is simply another chance for these nine women to play together once again — a sentimental thought amidst the flurry of excitement.

"I was really surprised and excited because I was given another occasion to play with my high school teammates, and since it's my last year, it will be even more special," senior Captain Andrea Pineda said.

Regardless of how far into the tournament they play, or who actually gets recruited, it is another experience to build better skills, opportunities and lifetime memories.

Under New Coaches, Softball Crushes Preseason Opponents

JAMES HO Copy Editor

Reminding the Almont League once again that AHS is one of the most dangerous and dominating schools in the region is the softball team. For the past two years, the JV softball team has claimed back to back first place titles in the Almont League after monumental seasons. This year, the team is aiming to carry their expectations all the way to league championships once again as preseason closed before spring break.

"Our coaches are very strict, which is exactly what we need at this point."

— Renee Cruz

With a two year championship streak, the JV team has garnered a reputation among the other schools in league as intense opponents. Their reputation preceded them again as they overshadowed the competition and acquired an impressive 7-0 record in preseason. Going undefeated for an entire preseason duration is a testament to how strong the team is this year and at the same time sets the bar of expectation for the rest of

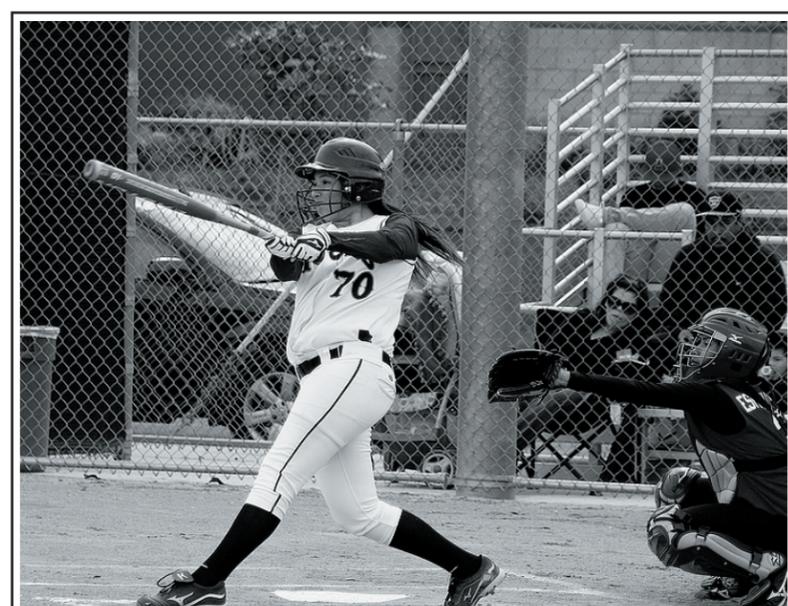
the year.

"By keeping each other up and giving it our all for every game we can have a triple repeat of being Almont League champions," right outfielder Sabreena Trevizo said.

As of now, the other two top contenders for the league title are Schurr and Montebello. Varsity softball defeated both Montebello and Bell Gardens and has a current record of 3-1 in league. The varsity team ended preseason with a 4-6 record and is hoping to place into CIF this year.

Currently, the varsity girls are training under three brand new coaches: Head Coach John Zibala, and Coaches Patrick Zibala and Mike Gutierrez. According to varsity catcher Renee Cruz, the coaches are working with the team on sharpening their agility and footwork.

"Our coaches have [become] a lot better and are very strict, which is exactly what we need at this point in the season," Cruz said.



MOOR photo by KATHRYN CHU

MOORS IN THE CAGE Sophomore Donna Lara takes a swing during the Bell Gardens match on April 7, which ended in a 11-1 win. Varsity softball now holds a 3-1 Almont League record.

Boys' Tennis Tied With Keppel for First Place in League

ANGEYLN CHU Sports Editor

On April 7, the varsity boys' tennis team played their third Almont League game against Schurr, ending in a victorious 88-79 score, placing the Moors first in league with a record of 3-0.

After their first successful league game against the Mark Keppel Aztecs, who they have not beaten in six years, the team has put more effort and determination into practice to maintain their rank in league. According to doubles two player Derek Zhang, they work on hitting, serves, volleys and footwork. In addition, Head Coach Jeff Levie pulled each player out individually to improve on their personal weaknesses and strengths.

Furthermore, the players have also been focusing on improving the doubles teams. According to singles player Brendan Ma, they have been gradually improving on their serves and volleys.

"They did well in their matches against Keppel and Montebello. The Montebello game definitely helped with their confidence," Levie said.

On April 14, the Moors played their fifth league game against the Aztecs. There were many close opportunities for the players to win their matches. In the end, the game ended with a 8-10 score, resulting in a 4-1 league tie for first place against Keppel.

Although the team is currently tied first, there have been past situations where the Moors won the first four league games, but lost the other four, demoting them to second or third place in league. According to Levie, the team needs to stay motivated, focused, and not give up after a down because every point counts. Levie would scare the players at times so that their ego would not get the best of them.

"We've been practicing all year, and we're ready for [the rest of the] season," Captain Raymond He said.

VARSITY/JV BRIEFS

ASHLEY LOMELIN Staff Writer

Preseason Record Gives Swimmers Hope for League

Swimming is a very competitive sport that requires a lot of mental and physical commitment. The varsity swim team has been practicing every day since the end of water polo season stretching from after school until 4:30 p.m. Much of their success during preseason comes from more dedication to practice and a tighter bond throughout the team.

The swimmers expect to do better than in previous years by remaining

consistent with their work ethics. Most of their training includes land drills with running and push-ups, as well as lower body drills with one to two thousand yards of swimming.

The team's performance during preseason was evident of their excellent work ethic, resulting in a 5-1 preseason record. The disappointing loss against Montebello served as a wake-up call for the team to step it up for the rest of the season. The second Almont League meet against Mark Keppel ended in a loss when the Moors failed to match their opponents' speed.

"We still improved individually

team," catcher Alan Rivera said.

This year's team is fortunate enough to have players who are gifted with solid hitting and pitching skills. However, the absence of communication on the field takes away from their strengths and oftentimes leads to their own demise.

"Our overall performance does not truly depict the talent we have on our team, but we still have time to play to our full potential," first-baseman Thomas Richetts said.

This season is especially important for the players mainly due to Head Coach Rolan Ortiz's retirement announcement. After spending

and we also had more intensity and motivation going in as the underdogs. It wasn't that bad even though we came out losing because we gained a lot from it," Captain Jonathan Lee said.

Along with the time in the pool, the team has shared other moments, such as building relationships with each other through fundraisers and spring break practices. Even their losses served as valuable bonding experiences for the team.

"[Our main goal] is to keep raising the bar and never settling for where we're at," sophomore Javier Covarrubias said.

11 years coaching the AHS baseball team, Ortiz chose to make this season his last in order to enjoy being a grandfather and spend more time with his family.

"We want to win the league championship not only for us, but for Coach Ortiz who is retiring after this season because he is a great coach and he deserves to go out with a bang," pitcher Andres Garcia said.

This year's players definitely have the potential to go far in the game, and if they are able to follow through with their goals to improve, then placing first in the Almont League will not come as a surprise.

JIMMY TANG Staff Writer

Golden Opportunity for JV Baseball to Take League

Currently ranked third in the Almont League, the JV boys' baseball team is working hard to capture a first place ranking. With the skills and capabilities to succeed, this season will serve as a rare opportunity for the Moors to gain the prestigious league champ title.

"Even though we are in third place, I think we could come back to win the league championship [because] I have confidence in [the]