

## Tough League Run Acclimates Young Moors

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Sports Editor

Every season of high school sports is a continuation of the last and a preparation for the next, so for members of the varsity football team, their growth as players throughout the year has largely outweighed their finishing scores. Although they placed fifth in the Almont League standing, this season has revealed a glimpse of confidence and expansion for the future of the team.

The Moors led a four-game winning streak early on, but after a loss to Schurr, their loss of momentum landed them in a four-game losing streak by the end of the season. The Nov. 5 Homecoming game against San Gabriel was met with high expectations, but a lack of mental preparation took over to cripple the Moors' blocking and tackling abilities. Alhambra lost 13-28 to the Matadors.

"We have a really young team that got too caught up in the excitement of Homecoming, instead of realizing how important the game was," said senior running back Patrick Bruno.

The loss took Alhambra out of the running for the California Intercholastic Federation playoffs. Their disappointment carried over into their last game against Bell Gardens, which ended in a huge 20-52 loss for



**RUSH TO THROW** Linemen Devin Lara, Myles Luera and Richard Pacheco get ready to block as quarterback Joshua Mendoza initiates a passing play in the Nov. 5 Homecoming game. The Moors suffered a loss of 13-28 to San Gabriel.

MOOR photo by JOYCE TSUI

the Moors. They ultimately finished 1-4 in League and 4-6 overall.

However, returning the next Monday, the team was reinvigorated with great hopes of improvement for next year. Considering their youth, the bar will be raised as the players will be more familiar with each other and their plays. Head Coach Lou Torres expressed his intent in running next season's team with more profundity.

"We spent this year being very ba-

sic because we were learning a new offense and defense. Next year we'll become more complex and do a little more," said Torres.

Only 13 seniors will be leaving the team this year, which has given many of the underclassmen valuable experience as starting players. Sophomore quarterback Joshua Mendoza will probably be the main passer for two more years, and this early start has put him in the spotlight for fu-

ture commendation.

"He's grown tremendously in this season to begin with. As next year goes on, he will have to continue to grow in his abilities, but he has a lot of natural ability," said Torres.

With players moving up and a motivation to return as top league competitors, more elaborate strategies and changes in practice are palpable, as this fall has only been another start for the Moors.

## Winter Preview

### Girls' Basketball Adapts to Challenges of New Team

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The varsity girls' basketball team is in high hopes of repeating their dominant 10-0 Almont League record from last year. However, there are many aspects that are different from last year's varsity squad. With only two returning players on varsity, the team has a lot of prospective players and fresh talent.

There is also an enormous change from last year's team: their coach. Chris Roberts, former basketball coach at Wilson High School will replace Therese Berner as head coach. Chris Roberts is fairly new to the system at AHS, but the team is giving him a warm welcome nonetheless.

The Lady Moors are currently playing against other teams in their preseason, and are working hard towards preparing for the League season. The team is confident in their abilities but hope to make several improvements. Due to the lack of returning players and the arrival of a new coach with a different system, the team is striving to develop their communication amongst each other in order to build up teamwork.

Their main focus this year is defense, and they are concerned about preventing other teams from scoring too many easy points. Last year, the players were strong defensively, and they are hoping to carry over the defensive mindset that was instilled in last year's squad.

"Offense wins games, but defense wins championships," said varsity point guard Lauren Wong.

### Wrestlers Endure Grueling Preseason Practice

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With the fall season at its close, the winter sports teams are now in the spotlight of representing our school athletics. For the wrestling team, this means doing everything they can to maintain their high standards and achievements.

Despite still having a few weeks before the Almont League starts, wrestlers will have gone through hours of intensive training in a strenuous environment by then. In addition to weekday practices, they have a 6 p.m. call-time every Wednesday. Limited hydration and 96-degree heaters put wrestlers among extreme discomfort, causing a loss in weight yet still retaining muscle control. These conditions only push members to remain strong and well-balanced.

The team currently has 13 returning players and is going through an uncertain roster with influxes of sign-ups and back-offs. But that has not stopped Head Coach Mike Williams from giving his members all he can in hopes of another season victory. Even with state and nationally ranked players like Co-Captain Hugo Perez, Williams continues to push them towards performing to their fullest potential.

"Even the best teams do not have the best performances," said Williams.

Perez, along with Co-Captains David Moran and Richard Poun are confident in the team's accomplishments and what they hope to achieve this upcoming season.



**MOOR OFFENSE** Middle blocker Magan Chiang hits the ball with vigor to score against the Mark Keppel Aztecs in their Nov. 2 game. However, the Lady Moors lost all three sets, lowering their league record.

MOOR photo by JOYCE TSUI

## Lady Moors Look Forward After 2-8 Record

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During their last few games, the girls' volleyball players tried their best to meet the goals set at the beginning of the season. Under the guidance of Head Coach Charles Tran, the varsity team finished their last game with a 3-2 win against Schurr, closing the season with two victories.

Coach Tran has returned to the volleyball scene after leaving AHS two years ago, bringing experience from previous years to back up his strategies and teaching methods.

"He is more organized and focused on the fundamentals of volleyball which helps us have a solid foundation for years to come," said Co-Captain Magan Chiang.

Many players had different expectations, going into season with some aiming high and some just hoping to do well. One thing that all the players have in common is that they all want what is best for the team; they

**"We have been known as the underdogs; we wanted to change that image."**

— Magan Chiang

have all shown that with their performances this season.

The team had to overcome obstacles, such as working with a varsity squad, which was comprised of many players moving up from the JV level. However, they put up a fight during every game and made

## Sports Commentary

### High School Athletes Overlook Safety Measures

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For both high school athletes and their coaches, it is impossible to foresee all the dangers that can derive from being in a sport. Most often, the majority of these athletes end their day feeling good about their progress. In other cases, they are accidentally injured, or worse, killed. To prevent these unforeseen tragedies, some necessary precautions should be taken to ensure the safety of the athletes.

Nearly two months ago in Sherman Oaks, 16-year-old Conor Lynch, a Notre Dame High cross country runner, was killed by a hit-and-run driver as he was jogging across a busy street during practice.

Things could have ended differently if a few careful actions were taken, one which could be adult supervision. According to Athletics Director Jerry de Santis, the school's policy toward the athletic department states that coaches should be with athletes at all times. They need to be aware and have some provisions, such as knowing when to cancel practice in extreme weather and educating the athletes on safety precautions specific to their practices.

According to varsity runner Ramona Stadler, Steve Morales, Head Coach of the cross country team, usually gives them orders to run certain distances without him. Even if a coach told the team on which streets they should run on, should a coach be with the runners at all times?

"Morales has been very competent throughout the years with his number one concern of his athletes: safety," said de Santis.

Although Morales has tried his best at keeping watch of his runners, it is still impossible to watch all sixty kids with just one coach. Each sport has captains for a reason: to watch over the teams when the coach cannot be right by their side.

Nonetheless, coaches are there to ensure that the players have the highest level of safety around them, on and off campus. If the coach were not there for any reason, everyone should watch out for each other.

other schools work hard to win.

"We made a statement by not sitting back and letting other schools breeze by because we have been known as the underdogs; we wanted to change that image," said Chiang.

Players were not only able to gain experience from this, but they have also gained knowledge that is crucial in the world outside of school and sports. By working hard in every game, they have learned that rewards are only given when all their effort is put in and determination is kept throughout the season.

"I learned that volleyball is honestly made up of 80% mentality, and 20% skill because confidence in your strengths and love for the game both play big roles in this sport," said passer Amy Luo.