

Fresno or bust: Renegades in Elite Eight

By TOMAS ORTEGA
Sports writer

If you consider yourself a sports fan and you didn't attend the men's basketball playoff win against San Joaquin Delta last Saturday night, then you missed what some would consider a classic.

In the first half, Ohlone was able to play good defense, which would lead up to their total of 17 turnovers for the game.

However their 14 turnovers wouldn't help their cause either.

Their defense also played well to guard Delta's star Michael Nunnally, who came into the game averaging 19 points and 12 rebounds a game. This time around, Ohlone held him to two points in the first half, but he did catch fire in the second half.

"[Our defense] did a great job keeping a body on him and staying in front. We doubled him every time he had the ball and tried to make somebody else beat us," Coach John Peterson said about his defense on Nunnally.

Unfortunately, nobody thought about guarding Delta's Roman Van Allen, who looked as if he would have a big game with his 12 first half points. Van Allen looked like he would put Delta on his shoulders and steal the show.



Photo by Jack Husting

Jermaine Smith, center, and his teammates celebrate their win over San Joaquin Delta. Ohlone now moves on to the Elite Eight in Fresno.

But, once again, Ohlone would step up to another challenge as they iced him in the second half allowing him to score only once.

And then the classic began.

With 30 seconds left in the second half and Ohlone leading San Joaquin Delta 59-58, Ohlone's Allen Hester stepped up to the free

throw line and nailed both of his free throws to extend the lead to 61-58.

On the following possession Delta's leading scorer of the game, Mike Kirby, hits what could have been a game tying three. However, his foot was just over the three-point line, thus making his shot

only worth two points, making it a one-point Ohlone lead.

Ohlone would then inbound the ball to half court, where Delta's Roman Allen immediately fouled Ohlone's Bert Whittington. Whittington drained both free throws with just over nine seconds left to play and put the game nearly out of range.

But Delta would try and answer back as they would bring the ball up court and get it to Mike Kirby, who had succeeded once before in crunch time. But this time Kirby's effort would be just short as his shot would fall short and be swatted away by the Renegades. "Game, set, match," as Ohlone won 63-60 to move on to the Elite-Eight bracket of the playoffs, which will be held in Fresno starting today.

Those final points off Whittington's free throws are what put the pressure on Delta who may have certainly tied the game, or won it had he not scored.

"We do it every day at practice. So I just stepped up to the line and knocked them down," Whittington said after the game about his clutch free throws.

Whittington, along with Allen Hester, both led the Renegades with 12 points and five rebounds each.

Coach Peterson mentioned that they hadn't been shooting free throws all that well. It was their "Achilles heel all season long and for [Whittington and Hester] to step up and make those shots was big."

Ohlone (28-3) will now head down to Fresno to face Antelope Valley, the number three seed in the South bracket, today at 1 p.m.

Coming up in Ohlone Sports:

BASEBALL

Thurs., 3/8/07: vs. Gavilan College, at 2 p.m.

Fri., 3/9/07: vs. San Jose City College, at 2 p.m.

Tues., 3/13/07: at West Valley College (Saratoga), at 2 p.m.

Thurs., 3/15/07: vs. Canada College, at 2 p.m.

Sat., 3/17/07: vs. Monterey Peninsula College, at noon.

BASKETBALL

Thurs., 3/8/07: State Finals (Fresno): vs. Antelope Valley, at 1 p.m.

SOFTBALL

Thurs., 3/8/07: at Chabot College (Hayward), at 3 p.m.

Sat., 3/10- Sun., 3/11/07: March Madness tournament (Fremont)

Tues., 3/13/07: at College of San Mateo, at 3 p.m.

Thurs., 3/15/07: vs. Diablo Valley College, at 3 p.m.

SWIMMING

Fri., 3/9/07: vs. Foothill College, at 2 p.m.

Fri., 3/16- Sat., 3/17/07: Cuesta Invitational (San Luis Obispo), at noon.

A 'mad' weekend coming up for the Lady Renegades

By JEFF WEISINGER
Sports Editor

After they play Chabot College today at Chabot at 3 p.m., there is no doubt that the one thing on the minds of the softball team will be winning the March Madness tournament.

Thus far this season, the softball team has done well. Sophomore pitcher Isabel Ramos has pitched incredibly well for the past couple of weeks. Offensively, freshman catcher Cassandra Ortega has hit very well and defensively shortstop Jessica Soderholm has done well for the Lady Renegades.

But now we come to that part of the season: March Madness. The tournament has come to Fremont this year as Ohlone will be hosting it at the Central Park Softball Complex off of Stevenson Blvd.

The tournament consists of 16 teams divided into four pools. Ohlone will be in Pool B and play all their games on field 4 as they will take on Porterville Saturday at 9 a.m., then play Yuba at 1 p.m., and finish off pool play against Feather River College at 3 p.m.

The teams will be split into a gold (championship) bracket, and a silver (consolation) bracket. The top two teams from each pool will play in

the gold bracket, with the third and fourth place teams from each pool playing in the silver bracket.

The quarterfinal games for the silver bracket will be on Sunday, March 11 beginning at 9 a.m., while the quarterfinals of the gold bracket will be at 11 a.m.

Then both brackets semi-final games will take place at 1 p.m. and the championship games for both brackets will take place at 3 p.m. with the gold bracket final on field 3 and the silver bracket final on field 4.

Tickets to attend the tournament are \$5 for adults and \$3 for children 12 and under and senior citizens.

Difference between NFL and the AFL?

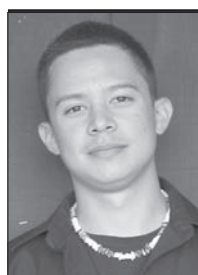
Football is by far becoming one of the most popular sports in America. More people watch the Super Bowl than they do the World Series. Technically, some could call football "America's pastime," if you look at the history of it.

However, when people think football, they only think of the beloved NFL.

Yet, that is not the only pro football league around. Anyone ever hear of the Arena Football League (AFL)?

Also known as the "All-fun league", by its fans, the AFL is the only other pro football league to survive along with the NFL.

Entering its 21st season, the AFL is continuing to see a rise in



First and 10

By JEFF WEISINGER
Sports editor

attendance, ticket sales and TV ratings.

However, the AFL is still compared to the NFL.

Here's a word of advice... the AFL is NOT the NFL, nor is it the NFL's version of minor league football.

Now don't get me wrong, the AFL is still the game of football. Just... more fun.

The NFL, especially nowadays, is becoming too much about the money. Players in the NFL hold out because their contract is too small, or too short. Pretty much, the NFL is slowly killing the game of football, because soon enough all of its players will be complaining about not making enough money. I hate when I can't watch some of my favorite players because their contracts are too small. Some players lag on the field, and some just don't care because they get paid anyway.

Then comes the Arena Football League.

The indoor game is much faster than the NFL, much more confined with much higher scoring and its

players play in the league not for the money, but for the game itself. A team can be down by 21 points with one minute left in the game and still have a chance to win it. It's the one league that proves the famous quote "It ain't over till it's over."

Plus, as much as I like the NFL, I always enjoy watching the Arena Football games.

I, personally, would rather watch my team score five or six touchdowns a game rather than watching my team punt the ball away four or five times a game.

The AFL is the only game where anything can happen, which makes it that much more fun to watch. When you think the game's over, it's only just begun.

Can the AFL's players succeed in the NFL though?

My answer is as simple as a name.

Kurt Warner.

The former Super Bowl MVP played a few years with the Iowa Barnstormers of the AFL before signing with the NFL's St. Louis Rams, and the rest is history.

What about now?

Chicago Bears wide receiver Rashied Davis played with the San Jose Sabercats of the AFL before joining the Bears in 2006.

So, to say that the AFL is nothing close to the NFL is both true, yet unfair. The AFL is not the NFL. It's more fun than the multi-million dollar league.