

Ortega cuts loose as softball takes first

By NICK ZAMBRANO
Sports editor

It was the bottom of the sixth inning when freshman first baseman Cassandra Ortega stepped into the on-deck circle. She cheered as she watched teammate Tiffany Chan connect for a double, but it was now her turn to swing away. She was 3-3 prior to the at-bat with a triple, a double, three runs scored and four RBIs and was just a home run away from the cycle.

Nothing extraordinary, really. But with the score 9-2 in her team's favor, and only a run needed to put rival Chabot away via the eight-run mercy rule, Ortega knew what had to be done.

"Yeah, I did know I was a home run away from the cycle," Ortega said with a slight laugh.

Although she didn't get the home run to complete the cycle, she did manage to push Chan over to third with a single. "I actually found out after my at-bat," said Ortega. "But I don't try to think about hitting like that, I just try to make contact."

The hit would prove costly as Chan scored on a wild pitch to Danielle Cameron to make the final score 10-2 and also sent Chabot back to Hayward.

"I just tried to focus on having a team at-bat," Ortega said. "I was just sitting back and waiting for my pitch; that's my focus for the rest of the season, even though we have four more games."

Ortega opened up the Ohlone floodgates in the first with her two-run single to score Jessica Soderholm and Kassy Winger.

The rest of the Lady Renegades would soon follow her up. Valerie Briones contributed her part on the base paths, collecting three steals and a run scored, while Chan was 2-4 with a double and a triple.

Starting pitcher Isabel Ramos helped her own cause with an RBI double in addition to giving a strong six-inning performance.

The win gave Ohlone a 32-8 overall record, a 17-3 conference record and a share of first place in the Coast Conference with the College of San Mateo, which made the match-up between the two powerhouses on Tuesday even more important.

On Tuesday's battle for first against San Mateo, the Lady Renegades drew first blood in their half of the second inning.

After a two-out walk to Kassy Winger, Danielle Cameron stepped to the plate. During the at-bat, Winger stole second with ease and put herself into position for Cameron to drive her in. Cameron continued her battle with the San Mateo pitcher but struck out swinging on a nasty wild pitch that landed in the dirt. She quickly scooted her way to first safely. It was at that time Winger sprinted around third and beat out the hesitant from San Mateo's first baseman to give Ohlone a 1-0 lead.

San Mateo would quickly respond.

In the third, Ramos hit a rough spot. With two down and a runner on a second due to a double, Ramos was tagged for a shot into right field. One run would come across home plate but the batter was a little greedy and



Photo by Nick Zambrano

Danielle Cameron and Tiffany Chan get strategy help from Coach Donna Runyon.

was thrown out at third, trying to stretch a double into a triple. The threat that could have been even more tragic was averted.

In the seventh inning, Ramos found herself in trouble once again. With the score still knotted up at 1-1, Ramos had runners on second and third with two down, as she held Ohlone's shot at first place in her right hand. It was definitely time for a conference on the mound.

Ohlone head coach Donna Runyon gathered her troops and talked strategy with her star pitcher.

"I said 'you know what, you've picked us up so many times, the defense is going to pick you up this time, so just throw strikes,'" said Runyon. Well, Ramos threw strikes and her defense did indeed pick her up.

Ramos delivered a strike that bounced its way to right field, and

it looked like San Mateo had finally broken the tie.

Enter right fielder Danielle Yee.

Yee and her quick instincts shot a line back to first base to get the hitter before she could reach first, ending the inning and preventing a run to come across the plate. Another crisis had been averted.

In their half inning, Ohlone made their last stand. With Ramos on third and Yee on second, San Mateo opted to intentionally walk Valerie Briones.

The bases were now loaded for Jessica Soderholm. She didn't have much success at the plate but this at-bat she wouldn't even have to swing the bat. Soderholm brought in the winning run when she was hit by a pitch. Ohlone won 2-1 and slipped into first place in the Coast Conference on a HBP.

Ohlone baseball flops to third place

By TOMAS ORTEGA
Staff writer

At the start of the day Tuesday, the Ohlone Men's Baseball team held onto second place in the Coast Conference, ahead of West Valley College by one game.

By day's end, Ohlone gave up that honor and slipped to third after losing 6-1 to College of San Mateo.

Early in the game, the Renegades took a 1-0 lead playing "little ball." Unfortunately, that lead didn't last long, as San Mateo took back the lead in the top of the 3rd, scoring two runs.

In the top of the fourth, with one out, San Mateo hit a groundball to short, but shortstop Derek Heleni's throw ended up bouncing away from the first baseman, allowing the batter to reach second. The next batter flew out to right fielder Jermaine Collins.

Following the fly out, the next batter for San Mateo hit a "Texas leaguer" to shallow right center, where nobody could get a clean glove on the ball. Jarred Berrier tried for a backhanded dive but couldn't come up with the catch. The runner on second scored, giving San Mateo a 3-1 lead over Ohlone.

Ohlone never got the one clutch

hit they needed for the rest of the game.

They did have a few opportunities to score, but their bats seemed to go dead when it mattered most.

Sophomore pitcher Kevin Ricketts took the mound for the Renegades and went five innings. While he did pitch well, he threw too many pitches just to keep himself in the ballgame.

Succeeding him was freshman reliever Jeff Lusk. Lusk pitched the remaining four innings of the game.

With the loss, Ohlone brought their record to 13-5 in conference play and 22-14 overall which, as

mentioned earlier, dropped them to the number three slot in the Coast Conference behind Chabot and West Valley, both in first and second place respectively.

The remainder of all three team's schedules feature six conference games to round out their seasons before the playoffs begin.

Ohlone will face Chabot in Hayward this Saturday at noon and finish the season against West Valley on May 3.

The Renegades are going to be forced to win out their next six games to help their chances to get into the Nor Cal and State Championships coming up in May.

Renegades' upcoming schedules

BASEBALL

Thurs., 4/19/07: vs. San Jose City College, at 2 p.m.

Sat., 4/21/07: at Chabot College, at noon.

Tues., 4/24/07: vs. Southwestern College, at 2 p.m.

Thurs., 4/26/07: at Hartnell

College, at 2 p.m.

Sat., 4/28/07: vs. Gavilan College, at noon.

Tues., 5/1/07: vs. Skyline College, 2 p.m.

Thurs., 5/3/07: vs. West Valley College, 2 p.m.

END OF SEASON

SOFTBALL

Tues., 4/24/07: vs. Foothill College, 3 p.m.

END OF SEASON

SWIMMING

Sat., 4/21/07: Nor Cal Diving in Modesto, at 8 a.m.

Thurs-Sat., 4/26-28/07: Coast Conference Championships at Ohlone, at 10 a.m.

Thurs-Sat., 5/3-5/07: State Championships at Ohlone at 10 a.m.



Let's go Hokies

By JEFF WEISINGER
Sports editor

VA Tech moves on

There is no question that after September 11 the sports world would be called upon to help rebuild a nation. The NFL and Major League Baseball took about a week off in wake of the 9-11 attacks. But when it came time to return, the country returned even stronger than ever.

Now, we are back to that same situation.

Just a couple days after what was the deadliest shooting rampage in modern U.S. history, in which 33 people were killed, Virginia Tech decided to make a couple changes to its spring sports programs in the midst of the recent tragedy.

Most of the spring sports teams will go on as scheduled.

The Virginia Tech baseball team will host the University of Miami this weekend for a three-game series after canceling their game against William & Mary on Wednesday. The softball team cancelled their matchup against East Tennessee State, but will play Maryland at home on Saturday and Sunday. The lacrosse team will play Maryland at home on Saturday. All of these games will be the first sports events played at VA Tech since the tragedy, with the baseball game against Miami being the first game to kick off the recovery in Blacksburg.

The five teams that are scheduled to compete in their respective conference championships (golf, men's and women's track and field and men's and women's tennis) will go on as scheduled.

However, the one event that draws in the crowd will not be continuing this spring.

The Virginia Tech football team will not continue spring practice and will not have the annual spring football game as scheduled for this Saturday.

Head football coach Frank Beamer decided to call off the rest of spring football because of what happened, even though none of his players were hurt.

"There's things more important than football right now," he said after attending a somber convocation. "There's a lot of grieving families here and there's going to be a lot of grieving families here Saturday. I just thought it was the right thing to do."

After Tuesday's congregation, English professor Nikki Giovanni led the crowd to the chant of "Let's go Hokies!" And it got louder and louder.

I can guarantee that the same chant will be yelled at all the games in Blacksburg this weekend. "Let's go Hokies!"