

Softball slides past Chabot in the 8th

By TOMÁS ORTEGA
Sports editor

Even when you're coming off back-to-back no-hitters and a weekend game in which you only allowed one run on a single hit, you can still run into trouble.

Take it from Kelly Colker, the Renegades' softball pitcher who, after throwing the aforementioned gems, came back this past Tuesday to shut down a rival ball club, watch the lead go away in an instant and grind the rest of the game out to pick up the 8-4 road win over Chabot.

Minus an opening 12-pitch at-bat against Chabot's lead-off batter, Colker pretty much had the first few innings under control, recording 5 strikeouts in the first two innings. Trouble didn't hit until the bottom of the 7th.

Ohlone was leading 4-0 when Colker looked to have picked up her 8th strikeout of the windy afternoon; instead, she had her 1-2 pitch called a ball just off the outer half of the plate to the right-handed hitting

Christina Panuco of Chabot.

"I think someone once said 'It's never easy'"

--Head Coach Donna Runyon

Colker's next pitch resulted into a hard, one-hop smash off the left field wall that got the

wheels turning for the home Gladiators. Two batters later, Shampayne Clay hit a two-run home run to left and trailed Ohlone by only a pair. Her two-run blast came after she smoked the previous pitch off the fence, but it was foul.

Colker later mentioned that she made the pitch she wanted to Clay, but was just beat on the particular swing. After the home run, Colker sat down the next two hitters in order.

Her offense gave her no support in the top half of the 7th, going down in order and sending her out to the mound again. Then, nearing 100 pitches for the day, she ran into some more trouble.

Due up were the 7-8-9 batters for Chabot. Colker managed to get the first hitter out on a grounder to Renegade second baseman Kassy Winger. Chabot's next hitter looked to have done the same, except this time Winger booted the grounder and the runner reached safely.

Things then started to spiral out of control. The Gladiator's center fielder, Jessica Stellato, laid down a sacrifice bunt that was fielded by Colker. But Colker threw it over the head of Winger, covering first, which allowed the runner to score from first and moved Stellato to third.

The lead-off hitter then punched a grounder to Winger, who hesitated checking the runner back to third.

She then made the throw to first, but it was too late. Winger later said she, "rushed a little bit," on the check and throw. She also added, "she looked further off than I thought. And, of course, she had a really big smile on her face," referring to the runner on third.



Photo by Tomás Ortega

Ohlone first baseman Cassandra Ortega picks up her third hit to right field in the Renegades' win over Chabot.

A squeeze play followed on which the runner scored and the batter was able to reach first on an overthrow at the plate. That would be all the excitement from the Chabot bench for the afternoon.

In extra innings, Winger made up for her defensive blunders and led off the inning with a hot shot past Chabot's shortstop. She was followed up by two consecutive hits by Cassandra Ortega, who hit the ball hard for the third time to right center, and by Jamie Miller.

Ortega and Winger both scored on Miller's hit. Ohlone picked up two more, but they weren't needed, as Colker went on to shut down Chabot in the bottom half of the inning in order, including her 9th strikeout of the game.

Ohlone's Head Coach Donna Runyon, when asked about the tough last innings after the game, responded, "I think someone said one time 'It's never easy.'"

One may have to take Runyon's word for it. Only because watching this ball club dominate from the scorers table all season, including a stellar undefeated conference record, makes one think otherwise.



Photo by Tomás Ortega

Freshman Kelly Colker threw 129 pitches, including 9 strikeouts, against Chabot Tuesday.

Baseball coming together

By JEROME NEPACENA
Sports editor

The men's baseball team is putting together a solid season this year, and Head Coach Tom Kunis is making sure that the team stays focused. With a 9-3 victory over San Mateo City College Tuesday, the Renegades look to continue a stretch of games in which they've picked up wins over City College of San Francisco, De Anza and Gavilan College.

Tuesday's win came against a team that is currently in first place in the Coast North and featured top-notch defensive performances. Ohlone's sophomore pitcher Shane

Murchison improved to 9-2, but, according to Kunis, several other players were also able to lock down the San Mateo offense.

"Ian Hoff gave us some big outs," Kunis explained. "And Joe Gardner, Kevin Radach and Kurtis Sherer held the potent offense of CSM down from the 7th inning on."

But it wasn't just the defense that was on full display in Tuesday's game.

The offense in the 7th inning blew the game open for Ohlone after a key lead-off single from Matt Langseth. The next two Renegades, David Luna and Justin Lunday, were both walked.

Sophomore Rich McDowell

stepped up and hit a grand slam which, according to Kunis, "easily cleared the left wall." Overall, the Renegades gave a solid performance, improving their record to 18-17 overall.

The Renegades' hard work can be seen through their recent stretch of games, including Tuesday's win.

The team has been able to put together enough wins to rank third in what is widely known as one of the toughest conferences in Northern California.

The Renegades play next against San Jose City College Thursday, where they look to build on their current record and continue to climb the standings.



Hot Corner
By NATE GIL
Sports writer

Jackie honored

As Tuesday came and went, so did Jackie Robinson Day, a day honoring and remembering a man who broke baseball's color barrier and paved the way for the future African-Americans in the sport.

Although Major League Baseball has dedicated an entire day to honor Jackie Robinson, did they really celebrate his legacy in a way that was befitting?

In 2007, Major League Baseball gave players permission to wear Robinson's retired jersey, #42, on Jackie Robinson Day.

Honoring Jackie Robinson in this way is great for unifying baseball. However, no amount of recognition will change the fact that there are still Major League Baseball teams with no African-Americans present on their roster.

This year, the defending National League champions, the Colorado Rockies celebrated without a single African-American player on their roster. This fact seems to negate the progress Robinson made, and what baseball attempts to honor.

Just because the Rockies do not have an African-American on their roster does not imply that they went out of their way to do so. In any sport, the best player plays; it doesn't matter if they're black, white, green, purple or yellow as long as they play the position best. However, having an entire ball club without a single African-American player should turn heads, especially 61 years after Jackie Robinson's initial appearance in baseball.

African Americans only represent 8.4 percent of baseball's athletes, a statistic that is substantially lower than it should be. This does not just affect Major League Baseball. It also might be discouraging to kids in inner cities who dream of playing Major League Baseball.

Yes, the number of African-Americans playing basketball and football is huge, but when kids look at professional basketball and football players, they see the diamond watches and fancy cars that are not linked to Major League Baseball. Major League Baseball is still The Great American Sport and, being that, it holds an unspoken responsibility to promote the importance of diversity, a key value for our country.

Dedicating a day to Jackie Robinson is only the beginning of the many steps Major League Baseball needs to take to improve the purity of the sport. It is imperative that baseball continues #42's legacy by further integrating the sport and celebrating what Jackie Robinson stood for, not just for one day, but 365 days.