



Photo by Alex Glanville

Helping her own cause: Pitcher Jessica Varady connects for a double. The Livermore High alum went 2-3 with a run batted in. Freshmen impress in debut

By NICK ZAMBRANO
Sports editor

After opening the year with eight straight games on the road, the Ohlone softball team found solace when they stepped onto their home diamond last Thursday. They found even more solace when they came away victorious against Foothill College, 8-0.

UP NEXT:

**Thurs. Feb. 25
at Mission
3 p.m.**

Before Foothill, travelled as far as Visalia to get their games in. In that span, the Lady Renegades have gone 4-3-1.

"I am so glad we didn't have to get into a bus to play," Ohlone coach Donna Runyon said jokingly.

With a great balance between sophomores and freshmen, Runyon has the amount of youth and experience to get the results that she

desires. On top of that, there hasn't been a shortage of production from the freshmen.

"Freshmen have to step up and when they get their chance to play, they take advantage," said Runyon.

Against the Owls of Foothill, freshman pitcher Jessica Varady pitched a gem for five innings. In those five innings, Varady gave up only two hits and struck out six. She now possesses a record of 5-2 for the season.

"She (Varady) is developing into a pitcher that will get to the next level," said Runyon. "She has made the adjustment from 40 feet in high school to 43 feet in college and she's done it very quickly."

Without a doubt, Varady's biggest support came from fellow freshman and battery mate, catcher Stefanie Hatley.

Hatley opened the floodgates in the second inning with her RBI double. The California High alum fell a home run short of completing the cycle but flirted with the center

field fence in every at-bat. She finished the game going 3-3 with a triple and two RBI's.

In the second inning, the Lady Renegades cracked the scoreboard for four runs and almost batted around the order. Out of the five hits that Ohlone collected in the second, four of them were for extra bases.

The Lady Renegades ended the game in the fifth inning after sophomore Mariah Jones' two-run double. Immediately after Jones knocked in Hatley and Jamilyn Cruz, the game was called due to the mercy rule. Jones finished with three RBI's.

"It's huge," Runyon said about the production. "I honestly think that I'm pleased not just with score and what we did, but I'm pleased with how we're coming together."

However, the housewarming will be short lived as Ohlone will hit the road again for three games. Before returning home to face Chabot on March 4, Ohlone will make stops at Mission, Solano and De Anza.

Ohlone finishes league perfect

By KEVIN YIN
Staff writer

The Ohlone Lady Renegades celebrated the careers of four sophomores Wednesday night with a win, a conference title, and a perfect season.

The Lady Renegades defeated the DeAnza Dons 55-37 on an emotional "Sophomore Night" at Ohlone.

The game marked the final home appearance for sophomores Jasmine Rubin, Ganeaya Rogers, Ashley Valenzuela and Krysta Lajander. With the win, Ohlone finishes conference play 12-0, and officially claims their second consecutive Coast South Division conference title.

"This is a special group of kids," Ohlone Head Coach Julia Allender said. She added with a wry touch of humor, "I laid some responsibility on them. They didn't take it willingly, but they took it."

Ohlone came into the contest averaging 66.9 points per game, but with 10:34 in the first half the Lady Renegades had managed to build only a 10-3 lead.

Reggie Jones, 3 others named to All-Conference

■ Peterson: "We've exceeded expectations"

By NICK ZAMBRANO
Sports editor

Coming into this season, Ohlone Head Basketball Coach John Peterson had low expectations. He accepted the fact that his team was young and inexperienced and knew the postseason was outside of their reach.

FINAL SCORE

**Chabot: 50
Ohlone: 73**

**Next game:
Sat. Feb. 27,
vs. Shasta/
West Valley
7 p.m.**

Now at the tail end of the year, Peterson and the Renegades (22-4, 11-1) are prepping themselves for a deep playoff push that begins this weekend.

"I think we exceeded them (expectations), I didn't think we'd be very good," Peterson said.

However, Peterson is quick to praise the great chemistry that has come together. To account for that, three Renegades have been selected to the All Coast Conference First Team. Scott Clark, Lavon Gray and Reggie Jones all received honors late last week. Quaran Johnson received honorable mention as well.

Boasting four first-team selections, Peterson was not short with the compliments. When Scott Clark came into discussion, all that was praised was his sacrifice and dedication.

"He sacrificed a lot of his own game because he was 25 points a game in high school and now he's 10 a game. So he's made a lot of sacrifice in order to help the team win," Peterson said.

Johnson's role on the court has been deemed "the commander." His voice carries on the court and he's never afraid to deliver the message that Peterson wants to deliver. Speaking of delivering, Johnson leads Ohlone in assists, averaging almost four per game.

Coming off an MCL injury that forced him to sit out most of last season, Lavon Gray has established Ohlone's post game, collecting 155 rebounds and while average 7.4 rebounds a contest. His unique ability to rebound in traffic has led Peterson to believe he is one of the best rebounders to play at Ohlone.

Jones, on top of being selected to the team, was also named the Coast Conference Most Valuable Player and named to the All-State team. The sophomore standout has averaged 14.2 points, five rebounds and 1.8 blocks per game, this season. These are great numbers for the New Jersey native, who Peterson thought would be a question mark coming into the year.

According to Peterson, Jones came into the season 25 pounds overweight and displayed some rust, having not played in five years.

"We told him either, 'you're going to make something of yourself, or you're not.' Then he chose to buckle down and make some changes," Peterson said about Jones' journey.

Just recently, Jones has verbally committed to CSU Stanislaus.

Due to their impressive record, Ohlone earned the number one seed in the North Regional Playoffs but do not know yet who they will be playing. The add-in game between West Valley and Shasta took place last night, but the results of that game were not available at press time.

Either way tip-off is set for Saturday at 7 p.m. at Epler Gym.



Photo by Alex Glanville

Letting it fly: Jasmine Rubin floats the ball to the hoop. She finished with 19 points.

baseline, hit guard Ashley Valenzuela who was slicing down the lane for a lay in.

With Ohlone now leading 46-30, De Anza Coach Arden Kragalott finally called for time with 9:16 left in the game. It was the cap of a lightning 12-2 assault. De Anza would never again get within single digits of Ohlone.

Rubin rallied from her slow start and finished with 19 points and was key on the Ohlone run that finally seized control of the game.

"I saw a lot of opportunities," Rubin said of her second half burst. "I try to get my teammates the ball, but if anything isn't working, I'm usually the player who picks my team up. I felt like I just needed to take over."

Rogers never got back on track offensively, finishing with just seven points, but still managed to make an impact with eight assists and three steals. Allender praised Rogers' defense and all-around floor game, saying of the sophomore guard. "She's one of those players where the team gets on her back."