

## Renegades stunned in Elite 8 by Saddleback

■ Heavy favorite  
Ohlone loses to eventual state champion

By NICK ZAMBRANO  
Sports editor

Like the saying goes, "all good things must come to an end," and unfortunately that was the story for the Ohlone Renegades. In their "Elite 8" match up on Friday, March 12, the Renegades they were up-ended by the Saddleback College Gauchos, 57-43.

It was Ohlone's second trip to the Elite 8 in the last four years.

The Gauchos simply overpowered the Renegades' slash-and-dash offense with their tremendous size. Their roster boasted five players standing over 6'7", while Ohlone's roster only had two.

Forward Robert Curtis at 6'9", led the Gauchos in scoring with 12 points and five rebounds.

Curtis along with fellow forwards Robert Curtis and Sarunas Jackson provided constant pressure against Ohlone's big man, Reggie Jones.

Jones was held to just 12 points on 3-7 shooting.

"They would double the post with both of them, and obviously we had never seen something like that before," said Ohlone Head Coach John Peterson.

Jones' 12 points led the Renegades in scoring for the game; the 43-point output was also their lowest total on the year.

Unfortunately, from tip-off, the Gauchos had full control and never trailed. The closest Ohlone ever got to tipping the Gauchos off their high horse was a 20-16 deficit with around five minutes left in the first half.

Saddleback saw its production come from outside the three-point line as well as inside the paint.

Combined, Jackson and Curtis gathered 10 rebounds. Ohlone's top rebounder was guard Scott Clark; he finished with seven.

On the outside, Tyler McMan-

man shot 50 percent from beyond the arc. He tied Curtis in scoring with 12 points. Overall, Saddleback finished the game 6-17 from the three-point line.

Ohlone struggled to find their groove all throughout the game. When presented with opportunities to close the gap, Ohlone simply couldn't get their shots to fall.

The Renegades finished the contest shooting 30 percent from the field.

"It was tough to finish, we missed a lot of lay-ups in that game," Peterson said.

At halftime, Saddleback opened the wound even further as they surmounted a 34-21 lead.

Despite the 13-point gap at the end of the first, Peterson believed that the Gauchos' lead could be overcome.

"I told them that it wasn't insurmountable," said Peterson. "That as long as we took care of the ball and put together a series of stops we'd have an opportunity to get back in it."

The Renegades would respond in the second half, however, the Gauchos responded to every basket with one of their own.

Ohlone would get as close as seven points for the remainder of the contest. The frustration was beginning to show as well.

After receiving a rough foul from McManaman, Clark put his anger on display, getting right back in McManaman's face.

Both players were immediately served with technical fouls.

Clark was in the act of shooting from the land of three, but since both he and McManaman received technicals, his shots at the free-throw line were dropped down to two.

That would be the final straw as Saddleback widened the gap over 10 points during the final minutes of the game.

After defeating the Renegades, Saddleback advanced past Citrus in the state semifinals before they finally dropped City College of San Francisco to clinch the state title.



Photo courtesy of Don Jedlovec

**Making it count: Julyssa Perry connects for a single against Porterville. She was 1-3 with an RBI and a stolen base for that game.**

## A weekend of madness for the Lady Renegades

By NICK ZAMBRANO  
Sports editor

The Ohlone College March Madness Softball Tournament lived up to its billing this past weekend, it was madness. After rain showers on Friday dampened the fields of play for Saturday, tournament coordinator and Ohlone Head Coach Donna Runyon was forced to shorten the tournament to a one-day affair on Sunday.

The original tournament was to consist of 16 teams participating in pools of four. The teams in each pool would play each other all day Saturday. According to how they finished in pool play, teams would move on to a single elimination tournament to be held on Sunday. Teams that finished either first or second would have been placed in the Gold Bracket, while the teams that finished third or fourth would be placed in the Silver Bracket.

Ohlone was placed in Pool B with teams from Porterville, Monterey Peninsula and College of the

Siskiyou. If the tournament had gone according to plan, the Lady Renegades would have been in the Gold Bracket with their 2-1 record in pool play.

In their first showdown, Ohlone barely edged out the Lady Pirates of Porterville College, 7-5.

The Lady Renegades gave pitcher Jessica Varady a three-run cushion, and she ran with it until the fourth. Porterville struck for two runs, and it seemed like they were back in it, until Ohlone countered with another three in their half. Despite having only two hits to their name, Ohlone took advantage of the Lady Pirates six errors to put their runs on the scoreboard.

In game two, Ohlone had a lot more breathing room on the scoreboard as they crushed Monterey Peninsula, 6-0. Shelby Tomasello had the highlight of the game with her solo inside-the-park homer in the second inning; she finished the game 2-3. Tomasello's blast sparked a five-run output in the second, with runs batted in provided by Candace Christiansen, Julyssa Perry and Jes-

sica Varady.

The five-run cushion was enough for sophomore hurler Kendall Beerman. Beerman racked up seven strikeouts and held Monterey to just two hits.

In their final game on Sunday, Ohlone squared off with rival College of the Siskiyou. This time around Ohlone did not come out victorious as the Eagles won the tightly-contested battle, 1-0.

Despite the loss to Siskiyou, Runyon was beaming with positivity, "I was pleased, I think that we're still growing."

The Lady Renegades would get a chance for a redemption against the Eagles when they squared off again the following Monday.

This time, Ohlone put up a bigger fight but still was served another loss, this one at 4-1.

The Lady Renegades were given another chance to redeem themselves when it was announced Jordyn Brown was pitching against them, again. Brown gave Ohlone the same show she gave them on

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## Ladies hoops bids farewell to a great season

By KEVIN YIN  
Staff writer

The Ohlone women's basketball team exceeded the expectations of many when they made it to the second round of the state championships, but Head Coach Julia Allender is by no means satisfied.

"We stated it from the beginning," Allender said. "We wanted a state championship. We wanted to get there."

Ohlone finished the season with an 18-8 overall record, including a spotless 12-0 mark in conference play. Despite returning only four players from last year's squad, and having to absorb the loss of three first team All-Coast Conference players, the Lady Renegades managed to defy expectations and earn a berth into the playoffs. Led by guards Ganeaya Rogers and Jasmine Rubin, the Lady Renegades knocked off their first

round opponent, Contra Costa College, in a thrilling 71-67 win. Ohlone was then ousted from the postseason by one of the elite teams in the state, City College of San Francisco, in a hard-fought contest that was still in doubt heading into the final four minutes.

Many coaches would be content with that success, but not Allender. "I know that unless you put it there, unless you're reaching for something that's on a grand scale, you're not going to get anywhere," Allender said.

Next season, Ohlone will have to compensate for the loss of Rogers and Rubin, as well as a third starter in guard Ashley Valenzuela. In addition to being named to the All-Coast Conference team, Rogers and Rubin were named co-MVPs of the Coast Conference.

The cupboard, however, is far from bare. Fellow All-Conference guard Crystal McLaughlin returns for the Lady Renegades,

and Allender anticipates other players stepping up.

"Having [forward Elise] Spain back is gonna be huge for us," the Ohlone coach said. "I think she's going to step nicely into a leadership role. She's hungry now. I expect her to do a lot of good things."

In addition to Spain, Allender expects increased contributions from forward Jayme Leftridge and guard Jazmine Duenas. Allender called Leftridge a "fantastic athlete" while predicting Duenas could be a needed consistent outside shooter.

Ohlone will have a huge X-factor next year in guard Amanda Encelan. Encelan transferred to Ohlone from Chabot, and was forced to sit out the season. Allender said she expects Encelan to surprise people.

"She's quick with the ball. She's a hell of a defender. She makes great decisions with the ball. She's gonna do some damage next year."

This was Allender's rookie season as head coach, and she could only describe her recently finished inaugural campaign as "an adventure."

"I'm sure I made a lot of mistakes," Allender said. "I've learned a lot, I've been able to persevere through a lot. It was a great experience."

Allender said behind the scenes, the story of the season was, "The building of individuals without a lot of leadership into a team." Heading into her second year, the coach's expectations are high. "I expect us to go deeper, and the intensity level to be higher. I plan to get a championship in my second year."

Some may think that a state title is outside of Ohlone's capabilities, but Allender disagrees. Besides, she says: "If you're not shooting for the top, what's the point of getting into college basketball?"