

# Breakout volleyball team unable to advance

By KYLE NORDEEN  
Sports editor

The women's volleyball season ended on a positive note with a 3-0 victory over Chabot, but failing to reach the state playoffs will leave an unfortunate blemish on an otherwise exemplary season.

The team finished 6-4 in conference with an overall record of 16-8 — the team's best record to date.

Freshman outside hitter Jennifer Covey and freshman defensive specialist/libero Lindsey Calabrese were also selected to the All-Conference Team.

"I didn't anticipate us to do as well as we did this year," said head coach Jeremy Penaflor.

"I'm more than pretty happy. We set goals for ourselves based on what we have done over the past couple of years... and we knew that with this particular group, with the sophomores returning and the freshmen that we had coming in, that we would be by far better than any class since I've been here."

Despite playing in a strong conference, the team's schedule out of conference may have

played a major role in keeping them from earning an at-large bid into the state playoffs.

Sixteen teams make it into the state playoff bracket. The 12 conference champions earn automatic bids, while the rest of the teams fight it out for the remaining four slots.

The Coast Conference that the Renegades play in is split into two divisions — North and South — so finishing third in the North Division wasn't enough to earn Ohlone a spot in postseason action.

"Not a strong schedule and I knew that going in," Penaflor said.

"Playoffs were an outside goal. It always is a goal to win games, but I didn't anticipate us to do as well as we did this year... I knew that our best chance to make playoffs would be an automatic [bid] in conference."

And while the season may have just come to an end for most of the team, there is still a lot to do for some of the sophomores interested in taking their game to the next level.

An event that takes place at the state tournament is the Sophomore Showcase — essentially a large tryout to show



Photo by Kyle Nordeen

**Anna Ottavis (left), Melisa Randall (middle) and Joleen Croce (right) will all be attending the Sophomore Showcase at the state tournament.**

four-year universities — both NCAA and NAIA — what some of these women are capable of doing.

The Renegades will have three sophomores participating in the showcase: Anna Ottavis, Joleen Croce and Melisa Randall.

The number of girls at the showcase will be in the hundreds since girls from all over the state will be in attendance, but Ottavis, Croce and

Randall are just approaching it just like any other showing.

"Normal practices pretty much," said Ottavis.

With no particular schools in mind, the girls said they would be anxious to attend and play at any school that showed interest.

"Any school," said Ottavis.

"If they want to offer something, I'll go," Croce said.

These sophomores laid the foundation for the team's

success this season. The more experienced players provided the veteran leadership that Penaflor was looking for and the team synergy they helped develop led to the team really breaking out this season.

"This year was a lot of fun because we had a lot of really good players and everyone worked well together, too," said Croce.

"Everyone just gets along together really well."

"There are no ups and downs," added Ottavis. "It pretty much stayed consistent. Last year there were some rollercoaster moves."

This particular class has also set the bar high for future squads and that impact really can't be appreciated enough because it lays the groundwork for consistent success, especially in a place where the players come and go so quickly.

"I say this every year, but our sophomores this year played a big part of laying that foundation," Penaflor said.

"Good leadership, good experience... I'm very pleased, very happy with how we did this year. It just sets the bar even higher... We just blew it away this year."

## Men's basketball slumping

By KYLE NORDEEN  
Sports editor

The basketball team got off to a quick start winning its first three games of the 2011 season, but a four-game losing streak has put a damper on what was a promising start.

The games have been close contests entering the final minutes of the games, but the team hasn't been able to put it together on offense in order to come out on top.

Having played so many games in such quick succession has prevented the team of valuable practice time to correct and improve their shortcomings.

"Five games in eight days," said head coach John Peterson. "Not enough practice time and [we] played five really good teams."

Two of the five teams the Renegades played — Cabrillo College and Foothill College — are ranked in the top 25 in the state and are both conference opponents. The combined record of the last five opponents Ohlone has played is 22-11, so the team has definitely been going up against some stiff competition.

Physical conditioning can only do so much to help prepare the team for playing that many games in such a short time period. The team normally plays one game every three or four days, so having playing five times as many games in just about double

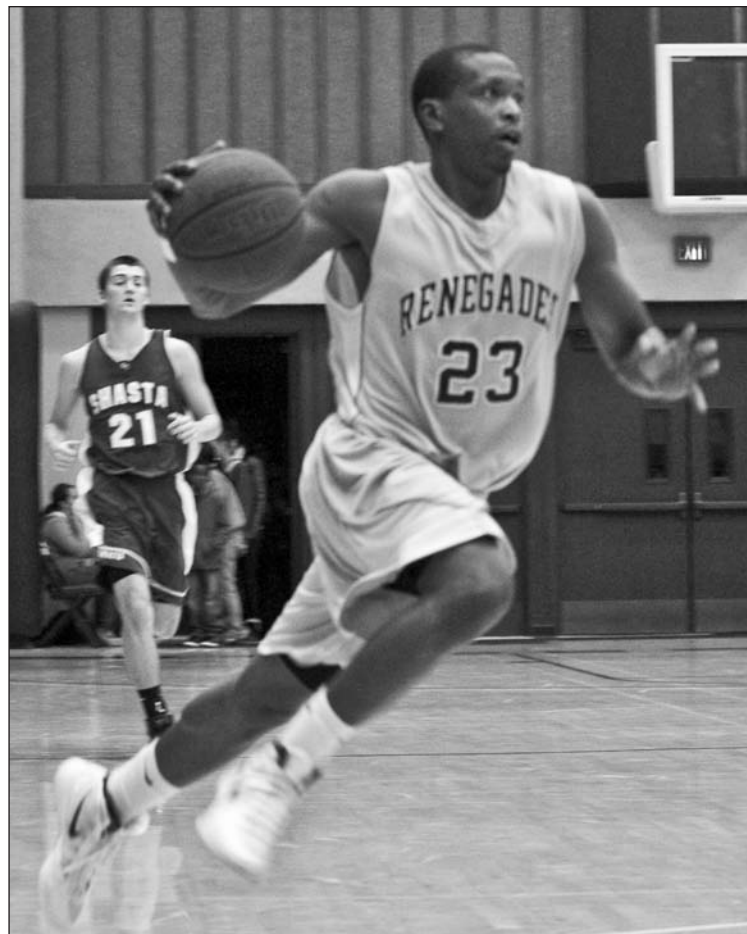


Photo by Kyle Nordeen

**Geoff Hartman drives the lane during Ohlone's early season victory against Shasta, a distant memory given the team's current four-game losing streak.**

the time didn't help the team at all.

"I think fatigue is a little bit of an issue," Peterson said. "And I think injuries are a bit of an issue, but at the end of the day we've lost four in a row and they've all been one possession games with four minutes or less."

Defense has always been

a strong point of Renegades' teams under Peterson, but the offense has taken a little bit of time to catch up this season. Maintaining possession and dictating the tempo of the game is essential to the team's success, but it is something that has proven to be a thorn

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## Women's soccer booted in first round of playoffs

By NAVIN KRISHNAN  
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The Ohlone women's soccer team's season came to an end on Nov. 19 after its first playoff match and first playoff loss to a brutally physical Fresno City College that incised deeper into the playoffs.

For the Renegades, this season will be one to remember.

They accomplished a bittersweet No. 14 seed in the playoffs and were able to leave a stamp on the season that they accomplished as expected but are ready for more.

Ohlone head coach Larry Heslin said he was not pleased with the result of the game, but was pleased with the way his women played.

"We came up just short, but the girls played fantastic," he said.

We were right there. We got into the playoffs against a team that was very physical and dirty. They took out a couple of our key players [due to the dirty play]."

"Every year, we have a goal to win our conference," said Heslin.

What was special about the contest, said Heslin, was "the heart and character that we showed."

That heart and character not only showed as a team

characteristic in the way the carried themselves and won consistently, but also the way the players were able to accumulate individual awards.

"We had three conference players of the year," said Heslin.

Erika Gerards, Ariana Strickland, and Cheyenne Kisthardt all attained the title of conference player of the year.

"To get three girls conference players of the year, that's a huge accomplishment," said Heslin.

Rarely are conference players of the year awarded to a team that played with such unison, according to Heslin, but to essentially sweep the award line is an incomparable accomplishment for a team that, by its record (14-5-2), got very close to making the most of their season.

The very least of the picture the record paints for the season is that, with higher competition, the Renegades prevailed.

"We had a better record, higher division. Division wise, we were better. The girls showed a commitment and accepted each other as teammates," said Heslin.

"...until next year. Hopefully, [the women] will learn

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