Ohlone softball beats San Jose City
By JOHN HUGHES
Staff writer

The Lady Renegades played well in the first leg of the Northern California playoffs, beating San Jose City College May 5 by a score 1-0 and again May 6, defeating them 13-5.

The game got started with Coach Donna Runyon talking to the team about leaders and honkers of geese flying in the “V” formation.

“The lead goose cuts the wind to make it easier for the rest of the formation to fly behind the leader. The other goose honk not to make humans look up, but to encourage the leader to keep flying and lead the formation,” said Runyon. “When the leader is replaced by another goose, the leader will become a honker to encourage the new leader.”

Livermore High School senior Jamie Orr sang the National Anthem. She’ll be attending Ohlone College in the fall semester, playing for the Lady Renegades.

Ohlone starting pitcher Brittany Wright went seven strong innings on Saturday, holding to Lady Jaguars to zero runs and only two hits. Lauren Ermianno provided the big hit in the bottom of the fifth inning, knocking in the only run that they needed to win the game.

“I had it tracked and I knew the only run that they needed was the win,” said Wright. “I was just happy to get that for our team.”

Lady Renegades Brittany Lema-Keosis and Kayley Marden practice bat swings before the Northern California playoffs.

Ohlone softball, baseball teams work to catch fire for playoffs
By JOHN HUGHES and THOMAS PHY
Staff writers

State championships are on the line as both the Ohlone Baseball and Softball teams prepare for the 2012 California Community College Athletic Association Tournament.

Winning is all about catching fire at the right time in competitive sports and both teams have done just that as they head into the playoffs.

“The baseball team has won 10 of its final 11 games as it marched to a first-place finish in the Coast-Pacific Conference with a 28-10 overall record and third place ranking in Northern California.

The softball team has found similar success at the end of its 2012 regular season campaign as it won eight of its last nine games and finished second in the Coast-North Division with a 29-11 overall record.

That success will mean next to nothing, however, as records are wiped clean as the teams enter the tournament.

Each team had nearly two weeks off between their grueling regular season finale and the first game of the regional playoffs.

That time off gives the players and coaches a chance to get their minds and bodies prepared for the most important time of the year, but also poses the risk of losing the coveted momentum each team has built up at the end of their seasons.

Ohlone softball pitcher Megan Tyler.

BASEBALL: ROUTINE

“We’re staying in the same routine, throwing bullpens and coach has us playing inter-squads,” said coach Dylan Morrow.

Head Coach Julian Russell hopes those inter-squad games will keep his team fresh as it goes into the playoffs.

“We had regular practice Monday-Wednesday-Friday and then Tuesday-Thursday. We had some inter-squad type stuff. It’s always good to see live pitching and have the pitchers throw to live hitters,” said Russell.

There was nearly a lightning hearted feel around the park as the baseball team took the field for practice last Friday prior to the start of their Regional Playoff on Saturday.

“These guys are excited. A week of practice isn’t the most fun, but it’s good for the guys to rest a little bit and then you can really feel the excitement building up,” said Coach Russell.

At the same time, the team was well aware of the importance of the best of three weekend series they were going into.

“If you lose that first game then obviously the pressures on a little bit because if you lose again, you’re done,” said Russell. “It’s really important to get that first win and take your chances into Sunday.”

SOFTBALL: FOCUSED

The softball team has taken a similar approach to dealing with their time off between games.

“We’re just trying to keep our strength up and stay focused for the playoffs,” said Ohlone Softball outfielder Megan Tyler.