Got Me Feeling Some Type of Way with
LOUIS LAVENTURE

Dodging the issue

I was blown away when basketball player Jason Collins came out as a gay man, becoming the first openly gay athlete in the four major sports. At least, I thought that was the case.

Then one day I got home real late and caught an episode of Keith Olbermann’s new show on ESPN. Olbermann detailed the life and career of Berkeley High School alum and Oakland native Glenn Burke, the first openly gay athlete in the four major sports.

Yes, you read that correctly: Nearly 40 years ago, Burke defied all social stigmas and let the world know he was homosexual and proud of it.

“They can’t ever say now that a gay man can’t play in the majors, because I’m a gay man and I made it,” Burke said.

Burke only played four seasons in Major League Baseball, with many feeling that he was denied employment opportunities because of his sexual orientation.

By 1978, Burke felt that “everybody knew.” The Los Angeles Dodgers even offered him a bonus if he married a woman, shortly before the team traded him to his hometown Oakland Athletics.

On a side note, Burke also is credited with inventing the high-five. In 1977, Burke was playing with the Dodgers and on deck when Dusty Baker hit a home run. As Baker rounded the bases and made his way toward the dugout, Burke had his hand raised and Baker, not knowing what to do, slapped it.

Burke was out of professional sports by the age of 27, later claiming, “Prejudice just won out.” He died in Oakland in May 1995 of complications due to the AIDS virus.

So now, when I see all of the hoopla surrounding Collins, I am forced to think about a Bay Area icon who was Collins before Collins. The first openly gay professional athlete and he invented the high-five – let’s give Burke his rightful place in history. Sorry, Collins.

Ohlone off to blazing start: 13-2 overall, 2-1 in conference play
LOUIS LAVENTURE
Editor-in-chief

First-year Ohlone College baseball coach Michael Curran is doing something right in Fremont these days, because he has the baseball team off to one of its best starts ever.

The Renegades are now 13-2 overall and 2-1 in conference play following a late-inning rally over Mission College on Tuesday.

The season is approaching the halfway mark, and hard work seems to be the key to success for the 2014 baseball team.

“I just love to be out here hitting,” Jacob DiThomas said. “It’s all about getting better.”

The Renegades found themselves down 4-1 in the top of the eighth inning against Mission when the bats woke up, exploding for four runs in the inning and taking the lead for good, 5-4.

Outfielder Jacob Lopez had a day, going two for four at the plate and driving in three of Ohlone’s five runs. Lopez had two doubles, one of which came in the top of the eighth inning, scoring Josh Egan and Josh Roman en route to a Renegade triumph.

Mission College is now 8-6 overall and 1-2 in conference play with their next game coming at 2 p.m. on Friday against Chabot College. Ohlone catcher Egan talked about what a late comeback win can do for the team, following a walkoff victory in Fremont last month.

“These type of wins are really huge; it shows that we can win close games,” Egan said. “It feels really good to get a win late. It’s exciting.”

Three of the Renegades’ last five games have been decided by one run, lending some credibility to the fact that they can win close games.

Next up for Ohlone is another road test at 2 p.m. today when the Renegades travel to Salinas to take on Hartnell College, which is 6-9 overall and 1-2 in conference competition.