

# Mustangs

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first round might have seemed like a daunting task. The Mustangs spotted the Highlanders a 5-0 lead before climbing back into the game. Chavira and Demarco had RBI singles and they were both driven by Jelmini to close the gap to 5-4 in the fifth inning. But the Highlanders scored once more to make it 6-4 before the Mustangs came up with a three-run rally in the seventh to win it 7-6. In the seventh inning, the Mustangs loaded the bases, and Whitehill walked to force in a run to make it 6-5. Morrow followed that with a sacrifice fly to tie it at 6-6. With two outs, Cayton's bad hop infield single scored the eventual winning run and the Mustangs held on to win a thriller.

In the second round of the playoffs, Mira Costa faced Foothill (21-7), another team on a roll after having won nine out of its last 11 games--and a team that last time went to the CIF finals was in 2006. The Knights used the bunt to parlay it into three runs in the first inning when the Mustangs couldn't field the slow rollers. With the Mustangs trailing 3-0, they came up with a rally in the bottom of the first inning when they had runners in scoring position. But the rally was cut short with strikeouts of Jelmini and Whitehill. Foothill came up with another run in the

third inning on an RBI single. The Mustangs scored their only run of the day in the bottom of the third on a double by Whitehill that scored Jelmini who had walked. Foothill pitchers limited the Mustangs to just three hits on the day while overpowering them by striking out 13 batters.

It was a successful year filled with ups and downs and lots of emotions that ran the gamut from the sadness and tears of losing former Mustang Henry Pearson in a tragic accident and praying for the recovery of former Mustang Jon Wilhite who was riding in the same car with Pearson... to the pure joy of a three-run, last-inning rally against Upland in the playoffs. Though the Mustangs lost in the second round, Neily can still force a smile these days because Mira Costa should be one of the South Bay's top teams with 14 players returning next year.



# Angels

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credit--they seem to have adjusted to Arredondo and were laying off some of the wicked pitches that they swung at last season. Which resulted in a control problem for Arredondo. Which has resulted in Jose being jettisoned to the minors to work out his problems on his own time.

Lefty Darren Oliver has been his mostly reliable self, but is used mainly as a situational lefty and doesn't usually pitch as often as the other bullpen guys.

That leaves us with Jason Bulger and mop-up guy Justin Speier, who can't be counted on to be effective at all. And Fuentes, the left-handed closer who seems to be putting up some decent stats, still makes us Halo honks hanker for the return of one Frankie Rodriguez, who we said "adios" to last winter. Sorry, my bad!

Look at that. Nearly done with the column and haven't even mentioned the bad and the good. Well, how about second baseman Howie Kendrick, who may have spent too much time making TV commercials and not enough time in the batting cage. As I opined last week, wouldn't current Dodger second sacker Orlando Hudson look sharp in Angel red next spring?

Kendrick, like Arredondo, was recently sent down to Salt Lake City to hopefully figure out what the hell he is doing impersonating a major league ballplayer so far this season.

On the good side, how bout Torii Hunter, who catapulted three home runs over the outfield wall against the minor league Padres last Saturday night? And was hitting .319 and leading the team with 51 RBIs after a three-game weekend sweep over those same minor league Padres.

More on the Halos down the road. It's still early, right?

satisfaction to Dodger fans hanging out with obviously nothing better to do.


But the facts are the facts, and so far this year, the Mike Scioscia-led folks from Anaheim by way of L.A. have been a big disappointment. They currently trail the Texas Rangers by a handful of games.

Sure, conventional wisdom is that Texas will fold during the course of the hot, miserable Dallas summer. And well they might. But if we are going to have to bank on another team collapsing, that's pretty weak, don't ya think?

So on to some of the ugly, the bad, and the good. The bullpen guys can't seem to hold a lead, and Scioscia and his coaching lieutenants leaning silently on the dugout rail gotta think that it is Groundhog's Day. After a recent gag job in Detroit, a probably agitated Coach Mike said: "If you look at the arms down there, the potential is there to do what we need. We're just not getting enough guys throwing the ball well in order to establish roles in front of Brian (Fuentes)."

Yup, Scot Shields and his astronomical ERA may finally have burned out his arm and his legs, as he has opted to undergo season-ending knee surgery. Righty Jose Arredondo, who had a great '08, hadn't been nearly as effective as he was last year, which was to be expected. After all, give the hitters some

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