

Mustangs' Baseball Season Ends a Rally Short

By Gregg McMullin

All year long, the Mira Costa High School baseball season has relied on good pitching and timely hitting to win 20-games. At times the defense has had mental lapses that have cost them, and the opposition has capitalized. The Mustangs played an arduous schedule to prepare them for the Bay League and then had to play a wild card game to enter the postseason playoffs. Throughout the season Mira Costa has counted on rally after rally to win games. But in their second round CIF Southern Section Division II playoff game against Foothill (Santa Ana), the Mustangs' defense could not execute and the team came up a rally short in losing 4-1.

Mira Costa was coming off its biggest win of the season in the first round of the playoffs with a dramatic four-run rally in the seventh inning in a come-from-behind win over highly touted Upland. So the Mustangs were feeling confident going into the game against Foothill (20-7) even though the Knights were ranked 12th in the state. To beat them, the Mustangs would have to play solid defense and figure out the Knights' ace Colin Welmon early on.

Mira Costa sent right-handed Brent Weber to the mound and the hard-throwing senior had difficulties from the start. He walked the leadoff hitter to start the game and then with the Knight's playing sacrifice, the Mustangs couldn't get an out on two consecutive bunts. After loading the bases, Foothill continued its rally with a walk, a sacrifice fly ball and a single for a 3-0 first inning lead. "We've worked on bunt defenses all year long and it's been one of our Achilles Heel and it got us again today," Mustang coach Mile Neily said.

In the bottom half of the first inning, the Mustangs looked like they would answer with their own version of a rally. Leadoff hitter Austin Chavira started with a double to left-centerfield and Kyle Demarco followed that with a sharp line drive just out of the reach of the second baseman for a single. Chavira held up at third base because he couldn't tell whether the ball was catch-able or not and couldn't get the right jump. "He made the right decision not to go because had the second baseman caught the ball, it was an easy double play," Neily said.

Still with runners in scoring position with no outs and the heart of the Mustangs' lineup coming up, a rally was certainly in the mix. But Jake Jelmini and Lucas Whitehill both struck out and Jackson Morrow flied deep to

right field to end the threat. "We had the right guys coming up, but their pitcher showed a lot of poise," said Neily.

After the first inning, the Mustangs' Weber settled down the rest of the way by scattering four hits and walking three while striking out seven, but the damage had been done in the first inning. The Knights scored once again in the third inning on an RBI single from Christian Maietta to increase their lead to 4-0. The Mustangs answered in the bottom of the inning when Jelmini walked and Whitehill drilled a double that scored Jelmini from first base for the Mustangs' only run of the day.

The Mustangs never really mounted a threat after that against Foothill's Welmon the rest of the way. He struck out 11 Mustangs, walked three and hit two batters. In fact, the Mustangs had just three base runners the rest of the way. Austin Chavira was hit by a pitch and Dean Shigemura got aboard on a walk and was also hit by a pitch. The Mustangs went quietly in the seventh inning when Chavira lined out to center field, Demarco lined out to right field and Jelmini popped up to the shortstop.

The Mustangs had their chances but couldn't capitalize against a good pitcher and a good team behind him. Though the loss was a stinging reminder that their season was over, afterwards Weber said it would be something for the juniors on the team to build on for next season. "There are a lot of talented juniors coming back next year and I have faith in them that they'll keep playing and go deeper into the playoffs," he said.

The Mustangs ended their season with a 20-12 record and played 26 games against teams that went to the playoffs and were a collective 15-11 against them. "It was a good year for us and there is a great core group of players coming back and they should do very well next year," Weber added.

Mustang News and Notes

The Mira Costa boys' volleyball team was eliminated 3-0 in the semifinals of the CIF Southern Section Division I playoffs by Mater Dei. Even though the Mustangs weren't able to defend their section title, they will be invited to play in the inaugural Southern California Volleyball regionals this week. The first round was played Tuesday night and the semifinals were played Thursday night. The finals are slated for 7:30 p.m. on Saturday night at Capistrano Valley High School in Mission Viejo. "We're definitely going to take advantage of our second chance in the regionals," said senior Ian Satterfield.

Recipes



STRAWBERRY SHERBET

Buttermilk gives this sherbet tanginess and complements the fresh sweet strawberries. If you prefer a sweeter result, add a touch more sugar.

Servings: 8 servings, 1/2 cup each
 Total Time: 2 hours 50 minutes (including chilling time)
 Ease of Preparation: Easy
 Health: Low Sodium, Diabetes Appropriate, Healthy Weight, Low Calorie, Low Sat Fat, Heart Healthy

Ingredients:

- Strawberry Sherbet
- 2 cups chopped fresh or frozen (not thawed) strawberries (about 10 ounces), divided
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 1/2 cups nonfat or low-fat buttermilk
- 1/2 cup half-and-half
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Pinch of salt

Steps:

1: Combine 1 cup berries and sugar in a small bowl and let sit, stirring occasionally until the sugar has begun to dissolve, about 10 minutes. Transfer the berry mixture to a food processor or blender and process until smooth.

2: Meanwhile, combine buttermilk, half-and-half, lemon juice, vanilla and salt in a medium bowl. Press the strawberry mixture through a fine-mesh sieve into the bowl. Stir, cover and chill for at least 2 hours or up to 1 day.

3: Whisk the sherbet mixture and pour into the canister of an ice cream maker. Freeze according to manufacturer's directions. During the last 5 minutes of freezing, add the remaining 1 cup chopped berries. If necessary, place the sherbet in the freezer to firm up before serving. (If the sherbet becomes very hard in the freezer, soften it in the refrigerator for about 30 minutes before scooping.)

Nutrition: (Per serving)

- Calories – 112
- Carbohydrates – 21
- Fat – 2
- Saturated Fat – 1
- Monounsaturated Fat – 1
- Protein – 4
- Cholesterol – 7
- Dietary Fiber – 1
- Potassium – 86
- Sodium – 94
- Nutrition Bonus - Vitamin C (40 daily value).

Prepare through Step 2 up to 1 day ahead. Freeze sherbet in an airtight container for up to 4 days. | Equipment: Ice cream maker. Content provided by EatinWell, Hilary Meyer. Courtesy of Arcamax.com •

QUINOA & SMOKED TOFU SALAD

We took the tangy fresh flavors of tabbouleh and paired them with smoky tofu and quinoa to create a main-dish salad that's perfect served on a bed of greens. This salad is jam-packed with heart-healthy ingredients—whole grains (quinoa), legumes (soy-based tofu) and plenty of vegetables.

Servings: 6 servings, about 1 1/3 cups each
 Total Time: 35 minutes
 Ease of Preparation: Easy
 Health: Diabetes Appropriate, Heart Healthy, Healthy Weight, Low Sat Fat, Low Cholesterol, Low Calorie, Low Sodium

Ingredients:

- Quinoa & Smoked Tofu Salad
- 2 cups water
- 3/4 teaspoon salt, divided
- 1 cup quinoa, rinsed well
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 small cloves garlic, minced
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 1 6- or 8-ounce package baked smoked tofu, diced
- 1 small yellow bell pepper, diced
- 1 cup grape tomatoes, halved
- 1 cup diced cucumber
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh parsley
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh mint



Steps:

1: Bring water and 1/2 teaspoon salt to a boil in a medium saucepan. Add quinoa and return to a boil. Reduce to a simmer, cover and cook until the water has been absorbed, 15 to 20 minutes. Spread the quinoa on a baking sheet to cool for 10 minutes.

2: Meanwhile, whisk lemon juice, oil, garlic, the remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt and pepper in a large bowl. Add the cooled quinoa, tofu, bell pepper, tomatoes, cucumber, parsley and mint; toss well to combine.

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