**WATER POLO WINS CIF CHAMPIONSHIP**

Junior star Spencer Rogers raises his arm in triumph after scoring a goal in the CIF semifinals matchup against La Serna, which Poly won 11-9.

By CALEB LEE  
Editor-in-chief

The Poly boys water polo team was down, but not out. Trailing 9-6 after three periods of play against Glendale High School, the Panthers roared back with six goals in the fourth, eventually winning the heated CIF finals match by a score of 12-10.

"Going into the fourth, we had to keep fighting and we knew that we couldn't give up," commented Spencer Rogers, who scored four goals in the match. "We were in better shape than they were, which allowed us to really push the counter attack in the fourth. We did a great job of getting the ball down early and putting pressure on them right away, and we found a way to break through their defense."

Early defensive miscues by the Panthers allowed the Glendale Nitros to take an early 3-1 lead in the first quarter. Though they had multiple promising opportunities, the Poly outside shooters could not find a way to score in the first period, with multiple shots clanging off the crossbars of the goal. Rogers dealt with being double-taxed most of the night and failed to score until midway through the second period. But the other Panther players kept Poly in the game before halftime, with goals from seniors Chris McWilliams and Kelly McGee and junior Dennis Grover scoring to even the game at five going into the break. Junior goalie Josh Ball had multiple saves in the period and finished the game with nine stops in goal.

The Nitros dominated the third quarter, pushing on the offensive end and containing Rogers on the defensive end. However, the Panthers regained the momentum, taking a 10-9 lead on a goal by McWilliams.

From there Poly never looked back, playing at an up-tempo and efficient pace. Rogers scored three goals in the final period, including a spectacular behind-the-back two-meter flip shot, to lead the Panthers to the CIF championship.

The Panthers had defeated non-league rival La Serna 11-9 in the semifinals after losing to the school twice in the regular season. After reaching the finals the past two years, the water polo team finally earned the title in its third try.

**Voting concludes junior election**

By EDA YU  
Assistant news editor

In line with the festivities of a spirited election year, each junior English class nominated one student to run as its candidate for ‘president,’ backed by their own personal ‘party,’ or the members of their respective classes. Each junior English class formed a campaign team for the presidential nominees: Charlie Patterson, Caroline Harvey, John F. Cotti, Caroline Harvey, Anisha Cook, Zach Bern and Josh Ball.

In culmination of the lengthy political process, Charlie Patterson came in first in the balloting.

Candidates addressed a variety of current issues, intermittently giving public speeches on Arden Lawn and Erdman Court to broadcast and popularize their respective platforms.

The election ultimately culminated with a regulated debate during an assembly four days before the actual presidential election. In the debate, which was moderated Bradley Whitford, co-star of the Emmy Award winning political drama *The West Wing*, nominees were asked questions regarding specific aspects of their platforms. Nominees were expected to underscore the most important part of their policies while demonstrating their public speaking abilities and their confidence on stage.

The larger student body was then encouraged to vote on the national election day for the candidate whom they felt had most efficiently addressed and argued the relevant, contemporary political issues. Teachers encouraged the student body to vote by platform, rather than by personal affiliation with candidates, in order to make the election as fair and realistic as possible.

**NEWS**

Rebecca Eaton named 2012 Distinguished Alumna of the Year. See page 2.

Poly hosts students from Nirayama High School. See page 2.

**LIFE**

Artist of the Issue: David Rodgers See page 5.

The Life section gets in the spirit of Thanksgiving. See page 6.

**OPINION**


Student Spar: two staff writers evaluate the future of America. See page 10.

**SPORTS**

Cross country finishes season at Mt. SAC. See page 11.

The Paw Print staff votes for the sportsman/sportswoman of the season. See page 12.
Rebecca Eaton ’65 chosen as the 2012 Distinguished Alumna of the Year

By LILLIAN MECUM
Editor-in-chief

Rebecca Eaton ’65 was recently selected by the Poly Alumni Association as the 2012 Distinguished Alumna of the Year. Eaton is the executive producer of PBS’s Masterpiece series, a position she has held since 1994.

Under her leadership, the series expanded to include film adaptations of classic literature such as Jane Austen’s Persuasion. During her time at Masterpiece, Eaton’s work has been recognized with many honors including: 31 Primetime Emmy Awards, 15 Peabody Awards, a Golden Globe and two Academy Award nominations. Eaton was also named as one of Time Magazine’s “100 Most Influential People in the World.”

Eaton embodies Poly’s philosophy of service to others, as she serves on the New York branch of the British Academy of Film and Television, aids sustainable community garden initiatives in Rwanda and supports Young Women’s Leadership Network in New York City.

Eaton visited the Upper School campus on October 26 to visit with students in the Writing elective and an AP English Literature class. She accepted the Distinguished Alumna Award later in the evening at an honorary dinner.

In an interview with the author of this article, Eaton explained that theater had always played a major role in her life. “My father taught Shakespeare camp, and my mother was an actress,” she said. “We would spend summers in Maine and go into New York City to watch Broadway shows.”

Eaton recalled poring over books, dramas and movie magazines during her adolescence. She sang in the choir at Pasadena’s All Saints Episcopal Church every Sunday after which she and her father would watch Sunday matinees at the local movie theater. Eaton loved school and identified with the smart, hard-working girls in her class. As Eaton transitioned into high school, she learned how to write and speak publicly. “I think the most valuable lesson I learned at Poly was how to read, literally and critically. It’s how I make a living now.”

She was an active participant in school life, as the president of the Girls Service League and a member of the Girls basketball team. Her favorite subjects were English and French, partly because her teachers left lasting impressions on her as a freshman. Eaton recalled that her French professor was a “brilliant, demanding and rather temperamental woman whom I had nightmares about for years.” Eaton was similarly fascinated by her freshman English teacher, who returned with Eaton to visit campus.

Eaton reflected, “She had just graduated from Vassar, this was her first job. She said she was terrified, but she was confident, she loved talking about books and literature. I just caught fire with that. Just the pleasure of the life of the mind in something that I had been doing anyway for fun. To think that you could actually decipher books and talk about them and give structure to them was incredibly formative for me.”

After graduating from Poly, Eaton attended Vassar College, where she landed an internship with BBC as a senior. The executive producer position at Poly was how Eaton currently working.

Eaton said that the biggest risk she’s taken during her time at PBS was overseeing Masterpiece’s 2008 rebranding. “It was a complete make over,” Eaton said. “We dropped the word ‘theater’ from our original logo, we changed the hosts and the show was divided into three sections. We were very worried about this, before we even knew it would work. If I had known what I know now, that rebranding is a very risky thing for an icon to undertake, I probably wouldn’t have done it. But it turned out brilliant.”

Looking forward, Eaton says that she is most excited for viewers to see the third season of Downton Abbey, which will air beginning January 6, 2013. Eaton hopes to teach someday and work with young women in leadership roles.

Poly hosts Across Colors Conference

Poly hosted the thirteenth biennial Across Colors Conference this past weekend as a part of the Independent School Alliance program. Over two hundred independent school students and adults attended the event.

The Independent School Alliance is a group of forty-six private independent elementary and secondary schools from around the country promoting diversity and cultural awareness within their communities.

The Across Colors Conference is an opportunity for the students, parents, faculty, administrators and trustees of the Alliance’s member schools to explore issues of diversity. This year’s conference focused on personal identity and culture.

The day began with a keynote address from Mohsin Mohamed Bibik, a poet, musician and writer whose writing centers on the problems of today’s society. A well-known voice in the diversity community, he presented his Twelve Steps to Appreciating Diversity through the creative outlet of Spoken Word.

Students and adults then split off into two different groups to attend workshops unique to their respective roles in an independent school community. Parents and faculty attended workshops that covered a wide range of topics.

Through interactive activities, group discussion and personal reflection in writing, students learned how to promote diversity within their school communities. Peer facilitators who had participated in a training program facilitated by former Co-Chair of the Student Diversity Leadership Conference Liz Hernandez led the separate workshops.

Students and adults reconvened for the next activity, participating in a group activity called Fish Bowl, where both groups had the opportunity to share with the other what they had learned during the day. Afterwards, adults and students brainstormed ideas on how to realistically create positive change within themselves, their peer groups and their schools.

Poly student and senior peer facilitator Olivia Treister commented, “The Across Colors Conference was an amazing experience. I had the chance to meet a lot of new people from a variety of different backgrounds and discuss topics that I would not have otherwise had the opportunity to talk about.”

- Rachel Hoang

Nirayama High School students visit the Upper School

Students from Nirayama High School in Japan socialized with Poly students as a part of an event hosted by the Global Initiatives Program.

By NATHAN LEE
Assistant news editor

For the fourth consecutive year, the Upper School hosted students from Nirayama High School in Japan, with the event sponsored by Poly’s Global Initiatives Program. Poly students had the opportunity to share their diverse culture as well as learn something new from the Japanese students.

“The purpose [of the visit] was to renew our budding friendship, to re-present this very popular event to more of our students, and of course to allow for interaction between students from the two schools,” Poly’s GIP head Rick Caragher said. “Poly’s GIP head Rick Caragher. “I have thought about creating a more formalized event since 1985. It’s time.”

In addition to seeing it, Poly also had the opportunity to experience the Japanese culture themselves, participating in workshops set up in classrooms after the dinner. In one workshop, Poly kids learned what a typical day would consist of in a Japanese school, and had the chance to ask questions about the environment of their education.

And in another classroom, the Japanese students taught them how to make paper cranes, crafting the classic origami pieces themselves. In a third workshop, Poly kids learned their Japanese names using the Japanese alphabet and phonetic translation. The Nirayama students also had the chance to experience Poly’s unique atmosphere. On Wednesday, they sat in classes in different grades and subjects, participating in an understandably different learning environment. Some of the Japanese students shared their unique atmosphere. Some of the Japanese students shared their Japanese name in Japanese. One of them even handed me a card that had his blood type in addition to other information.”

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“I had a great time with [the Nirayama students] and especially with the Japanese carpenter, who taught me how to make a traditional Japanese name in Japanese. One of them even handed me a card that had his blood type in addition to other information.”

“Getting to talk to people my age in a different country was a cool and different experience and I had a lot of fun.”
In celebration of the completion of the new Poly Building (which houses science, math and the library) and its opening to Upper School campus, Dr. John Grotzinger was invited to speak about the Curiosity mission to Mars.

Grotzinger, the Mars Science Laboratory (MSL) project scientist, presented the launch, landing and discoveries of the Curiosity rover on November 11 at Caltech to an audience of 800 Poly students, faculty, families and alumni. Following the presentation, Director of the Upper School Science Department Jill Bush and Poly senior Ryan Schiller led a question and answer session.

NASA launched the MSL mission on August 6, 2012, and the rover will help solve several long-standing Mars mysteries, including the role of water in the planet's history. Photo and dust sample analysis performed by Curiosity will also further the understanding of Martian's life and geologic evolution processes.

The Curiosity rover was launched on-board an Atlas 541 rocket at Cape Canaveral, Florida. After an eight-month-long cruise, Curiosity landed safely in Gale Crater on Mars. JPL scientists produced a short film on the unusually complex entry, descent and landing (EDL) process.

Curiosity landed on the surface of the new Poly Building (which was protected by an aeroshell). Then, a 108-pound parachute designed to slow the rover down to 42 miles per hour. Once the parachute released, the rockets fired again and the rover was guided to a safe speed for landing. A sky crane detached the rover from the descent stage shell and lowered it to the ground. As the rover touched down, the rockets fired again and travelled a safe distance away to crash.

Following his talk, Grotzinger then turned the presentation over to Matt Heverly, the lead driver of Curiosity who also helped design the rover.

The fact that Mars' gravity is only 3/8 as strong as Earth's gravity makes his task more challenging. Engineers built a nearly identical copy of Curiosity, known as Scarecrow, which weighs as much as Curiosity would on Mars. By experimenting with Scarecrow, Heverly was able to assess how Curiosity would move across the Martian surface. Most drive tests are performed on the JPL Mars Yard, a simulated Martian landscape used to test different robotic prototypes. Heverly explained that communicating with Curiosity by sending it a list of commands twice each Martian sol. Heverly explained that communicating with Curiosity in real time would be impossible due to the time delay. Therefore, adjusting his work schedule to the Martian time is crucial.

Curiosity has travelled 492 meters at the time of this writing, still ten kilometers away from the base of Mount Sharp. It is slowly trekking closer each day to its ultimate destination: the peak of the five-kilometer-high mountain. Along the way, the rover will analyze soil samples. According to Grotzinger's hypothesis, the layers of rock will follow a timeline of Mars' geologic history. Grotzinger describes rocks as "miniature time capsules" that can provide insight into the geologic evolution of the planet.

Grotzinger noted that the greatest challenge the MSL team faced while building Curiosity was the rigorous testing to control Rover's finer movements. Curiosity's original launch date was 2009. However, since the mission was delayed, the project was delayed until 2011, when Mars' orbit realigned with Earth.

"The delay was emotionally devastating for us," Grotzinger reflected. "But we came back absolutely determined to do it better than ever. Looking back, this is actually the most complicated mission with the least problems ever launched, so I guess we got it right in the end."

"The MSL mission involved the Massachusetts Institute of Technology for 18 years, NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in California and began working at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in 2004. His first Mars-related project was the opportunity rover mission. Through this project, Grotzinger and his team discovered evidence for water on Mars.

In 2005, Grotzinger was named the Department of Geology at Caltech. His current research involves analyzing the environmental context of early processes on Mars. However, he is on a one-year hiatus from teaching in order to focus his efforts on the MSL mission. "I think that Curiosity gives people hope," Grotzinger said. "For me, Curiosity is a symbol of what happens when a lot of people put their minds together and do something creative. It’s amazing how Curiosity touches people who aren’t even interested in science. The whole world is invested in this project. It’s just awe-inspiring.”

Students celebrate Dia de los Muertos

The Global Initiatives Program hosted a trip to Olvera Street for Upper School students

By NOAH KIM

On Friday, November 2, a large group of Poly students visited Olvera Street in Downtown Los Angeles. The Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) celebration is a Mexican holiday which honors the dead to celebrate the lives of loved ones who have passed away.

"Olvera Street became part of Los Angeles history in 1937, and is one of the city’s oldest historical sites. Designated a California State Historical Landmark in 1953, it is a rich locus of Hispanic culture and attempts to replicate a romantic vision of Old Mexico. The annual Dia de los Muertos celebration is one of its most extravagant and widely publicized events."

Poly students took the Gold Line to Union Station with tickets provided by the GIP before making their way over to Olvera Street. After hearing a brief presentation on the history of Dia de los Muertos and Olvera Street itself, students were given the opportunity to get out of the greater LA community, not just by traveling abroad but by showing what’s available right here in Los Angeles, one of the most cosmopolitan cities in the world," said Melgona. "I feel like we sometimes forget that we’re a part of the greater LA community and that there are lots of people around us celebrating their distinct and unique cultures. This is a good opportunity to get out of that Poly bubble."

"The GIP wanted to expose students to international community, not just by traveling abroad but by showing what’s available right here in Los Angeles," said Melgona. "I feel like we sometimes forget that we’re a part of the greater LA community and that there are lots of people around us celebrating their distinct and unique cultures. This is a good opportunity to get out of that Poly bubble."

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Fall Play Review: *Widows*

By MEGAN TCHENG
Staff writer

This year’s fall play, an intense and undeniably emotional production of *Widows*, an adaptation of Ariel Dorfman’s 1983 novel, exposed the pain and suffering of a group of peasant women living in an unnamed, wartorn village. Directed by performing arts department chair Cynthia Crass, the play was performed on four straight nights to near-full capacity crowds.

The play begins when a faceless corpse is discovered in a nearby river. Sofia Fuentes (Rita Grosbard) and the rest of the grieving women, who are bereft of their village men, who all “disappeared without a trace,” each claim to recognize the body as that of one of their own missing husbands, fathers or sons. A passionate dispute ensues between the local army captain (played by senior Isaac Calvin) and the town’s captain (played by senior Caleb Lee) along with many others, left the theatre feeling utterly numb—but don’t get me wrong. Such a sensation of chilling disbelief served as the mark of a truly powerful, talent-driven performance. More than a success, *Widows* is a remarkably eye-opening and thought-provoking production.

Following the play’s final scene (which ended void of the traditional “clowning curtain call”) along with many others, the staging was simple, yet effective, with the audience seated surrounding the performers on three sides on the Garland stage, allowing the audience to witness the action alongside the characters. A long piece of cloth wound across the stage to serve as the river and was moved by the actors to change scenes.

The strongly worded script provided for an animated plot, which drew the audience’s attention to the corruption of military power, as well as the unjust treatment of the village women. The actors themselves portrayed the conflicting emotions and inner-struggles of their characters with commendable confidence and maturity. Together, these elements created work to make a strikingly poignant and entirely unique viewing experience.

While the movie itself feels small and confined to one place with dysfunctional parents and social interactions after a mid-life crisis.

The film is already garnering a lot of recognition because of Bradley Cooper’s unprecedented ‘makeover’ in an acting feat that seemed as surprising as it was impressive. Cooper’s ability to break out of his typical role as the tough, silent, silent character was truly shocking. Cooper is both funny and dramatic, and his performance in *Silver Linings Playbook* is undoubtedly one of the most memorable of the year.

*Silver Linings Playbook* is not a romantic comedy, though it is funny at some times and romantic at others. The movie also explores Pat’s dysfunctional relationship with his father, played by Robert De Niro, and how her husband dies, and she reciprocates by asking whether he is sane enough to be back in society. Their witty battles and playful stabs at each other escalate until they become close enough that their respective parents see the other as a bad influence.

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By ERIN LEE
Assistant life editor

As a prominent member of Jazz Ensemble, senior David Rodgers has impressed everyone with his extraordinary piano skills and natural musicality. Since beginning at age four, Rodgers has expanded his repertoire from classical to jazz, giving him more opportunities to play with other people in jazz combos and chamber music.

“I love the awesome feeling of connecting with people when I play with them,” Rodgers admitted. “When you play with other people and you listen, there’s this collective energy that’s really inspiring. It’s also just a lot of fun to be around people who share your passion for music.”

His musical career began at a young age, when he would tap along to pieces.

“Music had always had a soothing effect on me as a baby so [my mother] decided to enroll me in piano lessons when I reached the right age, and I just ended up loving it so much that I continued,” he said.

Since learning his very first piece, “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star,” Rodgers has constantly tried to improve, learning from anyone and everyone he can.

Rodgers’ passion for music is reflected in his commitment, as he balances practice time with school and everything else going on in his life. His dedication has paid off, resulting in wins in statewide competitions, including the 2009 Glendale Piano Competition, CAPMT Sonata and Romantic competitions, and 2011 YMF Composition Competition. He has also played live on the radio and was awarded individual honors for solos in the 2011 and 2012 Workman Jazz festivals. The Pasadena Conservatory of Music also nominated him for Pasadena’s 2012 Golden Crown Award in Music this past summer.

Rodgers participates in small jazz combos in the ensemble, the perfect environment for more challenging pieces and unlimited creativity.

When asked about how he controls his nerves, he replied, “At this point, I don’t really get that nervous anymore, but one of the most exciting performances I’ve had was when I collaborated with AJ Singh and Joe Bohlinger on a rap song in the Poly Arts Community assembly. There was just a terrific amount of energy which made it a lot of fun.”

Rodgers also has applied his innate musical talent to other instruments, including alto saxophone, which he still plays occasionally for fun, and a quick run with cello. Another aspect of his musical perspective comes from composing something he looks to pursue in college. His work ranges from big band pieces for Jazz Ensemble, experimental jazz/fusion, piano trios, concertos, and rap backtracks.

As a classically trained pianist, Rodgers admires the versatility of pianists like Chick Corea, Herbie Hancock and Keith Jarrett, all of whom have been successful in multiple genres of music. Among his other musical inspirations are mainstream rap groups, including The Roots, Atmosphere, and De jazzes, and guitarists Eric Clapton and Carlos Santana. He commented, “I’ve always loved the sound of the guitar—learning how to play is definitely on my bucket list.”

When asked what his favorite genre of music is, Rodgers explained, “Classical and Jazz definitely have their own unique qualities that make them the best.” When I work on a classical piece, I put so much time and work into it, and the payoff is just tremendous on an individual level. For jazz combos, we put a lot of work into it, but it’s more about producing a collective product than anything else.”

Ultimately, Rodgers appreciates the process of making music and the commitment and focus required as much as the feeling of accomplishment and connection music can provide. “It’s important to remember that being successful takes patience and hard work and you’ll probably have to make sacrifices along the way. That being said, it can be one of the most rewarding things in the world. If I had to sum it up in three words, it’d be dedication, passion and humility.”

Teacher Profile:
Grace Hamilton

By NATALIA SANCHEZ-NIGOLIAN
Assistant life editor

Her blonde hair fell just above her shoulders, her chin tilted at a slight angle suggesting mild contemplation, and her blue eyes pierced through the lens of her rectangular-shaped glasses. She appeared perfectly at home amongst the stacks of binders and blue folders stuffed with students’ writings. We sat at a table in the center of the room, surrounded by window seats and a cozy couch tossed with pillows. She smiled as she expressed her gratitude for this lovely room, a spa-like den lawn.

The Writer’s Center was established approximately six years ago, and Ms. Hamilton is devoted to her mission to guide young writers, improve their skills, and expand the literary diversity of Poly. This space allows her to channel her thoughts and execute this mission, further developing with both dedication, talent and creativity.

Ms. Hamilton encourages students to be courageous in their writing. Her warmth and sincerity inspires students to express themselves honestly, tapping into the painful and deep emotions and experiences that are often the most powerful. Senior Joe Bohlinger is one such student who has been greatly impacted by Ms. Hamilton’s guidance and care. “Ms. Hamilton is my mentor,” he explained. “Without her I would have never found writing as my real love and passion. In all honesty she is the reason I was able not only to discover my passion for writing but she also gave me the tools to pursue it.”

While teaching English, creative writing and running the Writer’s Center may seem overwhelming, Ms. Hamilton is motivated by a fervent passion for her profession. Ms. Hamilton seeks to initiate interest and appreciation of literature, as well as help her students find their voice in their writing. One of the most popular teachers for company and advice, Ms. Hamilton receives regular visits from students seeking guidance.

Having grown up in Southern Indiana, her past days were filled with bold and impulsive decisions, risks that led her to grow as a writer and as a person. Although dear in her heart, a small and conservative hometown led her to grow as a writer and as a person. Although her students today.

After graduating from UC Berkeley, Hamilton explored as a freelance writer until an opportunity presented itself to her in the form of a newspaper advertisement. After being interviewed and given a job, Ms. Hamilton left California for the bustling city of Tokyo, where there were exciting years of cultural and intellectual experiences to come.

She discovered her love for teaching amidst a class of 40 diligent Japanese students, who bowed and addressed her as their sensei. Ms. Hamilton then ventured to France, where she taught adults for nearly a year. While delving into new cultures and experiences, Ms. Hamilton furthered her passion for teaching, undoubtedly leaving a lasting impression on her students today.

Now at Poly, Ms. Hamilton appreciates the tight-knit community that the school provides. Her positive outlook on life is realistic and refreshing. Ms. Hamilton’s love for the environment has motivated her to challenge herself physically while immersing herself in nature, as she trains to tackle the Pacific Coast Trail, which stretches from Mexico to Canada.

A proud mother of two children and a mentor to so many more, Ms. Hamilton’s life has been filled with rewarding accomplishments, and she continues to inspire us with her zeal and desire to live life to its fullest.
Thanksgiving at Poly

The holiday season has officially begun. Christmas songs are making their yearly debut on the radio and the bipolar weather has finally decided to stick to one season: winter. People everywhere are starting to get into the spirit of giving, drinking hot chocolate and spending some time with their families. Thanksgiving, the gateway to the holidays, is almost upon us. To help get the Poly community into the spirit of Thanksgiving, the Life section presents a page dedicated to Thanksgiving traditions unique to Poly students, some easy dessert recipes and a few other articles to get us thinking about the holidays.

Egg Rolls and Golf Balls

The day before Thanksgiving, my family drives eight hours to Napa Valley to visit some family friends. The next day we have a traditional Thanksgiving meal. My favorite dish is the mashed potatoes, but one unusual Thanksgiving staple is homemade egg rolls. I love waking up every year to the sound of the egg rolls sizzling as they hit the hot oil. The next day while the Moms are at the spa, the rest of us grab some clubs and some Thanksgiving leftovers and head to the golf course. It’s a known fact that the Griffins are the best golf players out of the group, so we’re usually split up and put on a team with one of the least coordinated golfers. We goof around and tease each other mercilessly. Needless to say, there’s a lot of smack-talk. When we get back to the house, we carefully calculate the scores and determine the winner. Their names get engraved onto the much coveted (really crafty-looking) plaque.

Although I don’t like to admit it, my brother, Croix, and my uncle, Aubyn, have been a pretty successful team over the past couple years. Finally, we end the visit by going Christmas tree shopping, as we all look forward to the upcoming holiday season.

-Aria Griffin

Turkey and Sushi

You could say that my Thanksgiving dinner is a little unorthodox. It’s more of a potluck than a traditional sit-down meal. Various members of the family are assigned with what to cook and bring for dinner. It’s certain that we’ll have various rice dishes such as fried rice, sweet sticky rice and savoury sticky rice. Some have beef, chickens or pork mixed in them. In addition, we have sushi and a few other meat dishes. In my Thanksgiving dinner, turkey is never the main course, and its interesting to see the blend of American and Asian cuisine.

After a delicious meal, the night usually ends with my family singing karaoke and watching a pre-recorded Lakers game. After almost a year of being apart, this particular family reunion is one of my favorite nights of the year. Thanksgiving is a time where we can appreciate how lucky we are to have a loving family and share a delicious meal.

-Jared Lim

Paw Print Thanksgiving at a Glance

The Paw Print staff joins hands to say grace as they prepare themselves for a filling Thanksgiving feast.

Baked Pears

If you’re looking to make something a bit more sophisticated but equally as easy as baking a pie, baked pears are a delicious, healthy and elegant option.

Ingredients:
- 4 ripe pears
- 1/4 cup of honey
- 2 cups of organic apple juice
- 2 teaspoons of brown sugar
- optional: 4 cinnamon sticks

Directions:
- Preheat the oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit. Cut a thin slice off the bottom of each pear so that it will stand upright. Put the pears in a baking dish or a pie pan. Whisk the apple juice, honey and brown sugar and pour it over the pears.
- Add the optional ingredients. Roast the pears for 45 minutes to 1 hour or until they are wrinkled and tender. Pour the mixture from the bottom of the pan over the pears every 15 minutes while baking. Carefully take them out and serve them hot! You can also add a side of vanilla ice cream. Enjoy!

Easy as Pie

What better way of thanking your mother for a delicious Thanksgiving meal than by baking her a homemade pumpkin pie? It’s simple, easy and can be enjoyed by your entire family.

Ingredients:
- 1 piece of pie dough (I recommend Trader Joes)
- 8 ounces of softened cream cheese
- 2 cups of mashed canned pumpkin
- 1 cup of sugar
- 1 egg and 2 egg yolks
- 1 cup of half and half
- 1/4 cup of melted butter
- 1 teaspoon of vanilla extract
- 1/2 teaspoon of ground cinnamon

Directions:
- Preheat the oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Carefully take out one piece of pie dough and place it into the pie pan. Make sure to get all air bubbles out from in between the dough and the pan by patting them down. Cut off the excess dough. You can shape the edges of the dough into a pretty pattern by pinching it with your fingers. Then put the pan into the freezer.
- Beat the cream cheese and the mashed pumpkin together until they are evenly mixed. Add everything else and beat until everything is incorporated.
- After approximately 20 minutes, take the pan out of the freezer. Evenly spread pie weights or dried beans on the dough, and bake it for 10 minutes.
- Pour the filling into the pie crust and bake for another 50 minutes. Enjoy!
Sometimes the beauty inherent in any ordinary object isn't apparent until someone with the right combination of creative vision and scientific knowledge comes to show us, to shine some light in the darkness that is our narrow imagination. Initially drawing viewers in through a balance of uniqueness and visual splendor, photographer Caleb Charland challenges observers to push past their usual understanding of the visible world.

Many of the motivation behind Charland’s work can be traced to his curiosity in the divide between science, knowledge and reality. “For me, wonder is a state of mind somewhere between knowledge and uncertainty,” his personal statement reads. “It is the basis of my practice and results in images that are simultaneously familiar yet strange. Each piece begins as a question of visual possibilities and develops in tandem with the natural laws of the world. Serendipitously, this process often yields unexpected results measurable only through photographic processes. The human presence and artifacts of the process provide a clue to the creation of the photograph while adding to the mysterious nature of the image. My hope is that this work affirms that even within the well tested laws of science there are, and must always be, pathways to reinterpretation and discovery.”

Like any scientific endeavor, Charland’s photographs are the result of experimentation, patience and timing. Shown above, his “Lamp powered by 300 live apples” is visual proof of his dedication and fortitude. The set up for the photo alone took seven hours, and to mention the four-hour exposure time is to reach light to effectively contrast the lamp stand with the foliage in the background (Charland spent much of those four hours wagering away hungry deer that frequented the apple orchard). 

Charland spent two hours in that canoe with the simple yet profound goal of paddling to the moon. Seeing the calmness and mystery of such a simple idea captured by a single photo makes one wish there were he there with Charland, gliding to the moon.

INTERVIEW WITH CHARLAND

Tell me about your background; how did you come to be the artist you are today?

I took my first photography course as a sophomore in high school. The teacher then allowed me to use the darkroom during study halls for even 10 minutes. The first artists I was shown that really changed my idea about what photos could be or she were Mike and Doug Starn. My older brother showed me their work when he was studying painting at the University of Maine and I was a sophomore in high school. I think that work got me curious about materiality.

When and what was your first camera you remember?

When I was eight to eight years old I remember owning a camera. I revisited possibility with the device. At the time my only experiences of photography were family snapshots and magazine images. Maybe it was a reason to go out and explore the environment and to take something of that experience away with me. I don’t think many of my first pictures exist, unless they’re buried in my parents’ basement somewhere. In reality they were nothing more than snapshots taken by a kid with very little visual language. It was intriguing though, and each snap of the shutter was a wish. For Christmas I got a Vivitar 35mm point and shoot camera. That night I tried making my first constructed image, and it totally failed. We had several holiday figurines around the house as decoration. There was also a landscape painting of a snowy riverbank with a covered bridge. I wanted to put the figure in the painting and spent time working it out. Naively I used the on-camera flash and was maybe a foot away from the set up. Focus and exposure were several years away from my vocabulary. I remember getting the film back—it was totally blown out. Now I embrace failure. It’s always tough to accept your efforts produce no fruit, but it’s never wasted time. Now I begin an idea knowing it may take several attempts to get it right. After all most of the things I try to create use photography to see what is possible in the material world.

What are the major influence(s) behind your photography?

Photography feels quite scientific when you take your first darkroom course. You’re in a laboratory, there’s glassware and beakers all about and you’re swishing silver salts to be chemically processed. There’s such an order of operations to it and many variables to control. As I get older and travel out more I begin constructing events to occur before the camera. This desire to build came from experiences I had as a kid. This is an excerpt from my artist talk that describes the connection for me:

“There’s one day I return to with this work, it was the summer of 1989 somewhere on the edge of July and August. Since before my memories begins my dad spent his vacations pounding nails and sawing boards, making his mark. His life was work and our house his medium. He seemed so alive atop a ladder with an armload of 2x4s. On this particular day we got up early, we always did when there was lumber to cut. I remember the smell of sawdust at daybreak, watching the particles scatter in air like a golden summer snow. I was nearly nine at the time and learning there was something magic in those materials. Snapping the chalk line to spell electric line核实s, mishandling summer dew-punk from a nail. I also remember watching copper piping engulfed in a propane halls emit lime green mottles in all directions. These moments burrow into my consciousness as visual echoes of the sounds revealed to me then on steel, dust, and flame. If each picture is a puzzle, the pieces formed that summer day.”

So much of my work, my experiences as a kid, and science, are about trial and error. They all depend on perseverance too; the desire to stick with an idea you believe in until you make it work.

In a sentence, how would you describe your work?

Seventh grade science, mixed with a sculptural approach to arranging objects and events before the camera. Describe your creative process a bit; how do you go from an idea in your head to a work of art?

I make my images one picture at a time, so the set-ups are specific to the idea. Usually before I even set my camera there is a lot of prep work. Often the camera and the photo are a record of the event or the construction, it is by no means an afterthought though. A recent example is “Breakfast with Sparkles in Metronome (Where the Lesser Broads).” In this image you see a metronome with a broken zigzag of light before it. I spent much time figuring out the best way to attach a sparkler to the swing arm. I initially wired the sparkler to the lead weight that adjusts the beats per minute. However the heat from the sparkler began melting the weight. As with most things in life there was a much simpler and better way. On my second shoot for this image about a month later, I was able to slip the sparkler into the base of the arm and it worked much better. After all the prep work the actual shooting seemed somewhat anticlimactic. After framing the object and getting the lighting right, I shot four sheets each requiring around 30 seconds for the sparkler to extinguish.

Do you have a favorite piece of art or project that stands out in your mind?

“Light Sphere with My Right Arm and Cigarette Lighter from 2009.”

I made this second semester of graduate school. For so long I had been setting up objects and mechanisms to create an event before the camera. For this image I made myself into the mechanism. I stood before the camera striking a lighter 50 times from my hip to straight over my head. I made my arm into a compass. After the 50 strikes I turned my body slightly and made 50 more strike from hip to overhead. After I had turned in a full circle I sent the flash to the lab and was stunned that it worked out the first try. Also I was amazed to see the silhouette within the sphere of light. Often times the process yields unforeseeable moments of wonder.

What are your plans for the future?

The next picture.

For more of Caleb Charland photography, visitcalebcharland.com

Curious, natural and wondrous beauty: Caleb Charland photography

By CALEB LEE
Editor-in-chief

‘‘Lamp powered by 300 live apples’’ 2012

‘My hand with Glow in the Dark Paint’’ 2010

‘‘Attempting to Paddle Straight to the Moon’’ 2010

‘‘Light Sphere with My Right Arm and Cigarette Lighter from 2009.’’

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Curious, natural and wondrous beauty: Caleb Charland photography
California needs an electoral reboot

By HENRY BROOKS
Assistant opinion editor

On November 6th, almost 40 percent of California voters cast their Presidential ballots for Mitt Romney. However, on December 17th, when the Electoral College convenes to select the next President, zero of California’s fifty-five Electoral College votes will go to Governor Romney. That fact is troubling to California Republicans, who might as well have slept in late on Election Day; but it should also trouble Democrats, whose votes were so thoroughly taken for granted by the national Democratic Party that the President hardly bothered to campaign here, other than for a few visits focused on fundraising. Californians of all stripes—both Republicans who want their votes counted, and Democrats who want their voices heard—should favor abolishing the winner-take-all system and support the shift to a system where California’s electoral votes are allocated either by congressional district or based on proportion of the overall popular vote.

The Golden State (more aptly nicknamed “The Blue State,” since the Democrats have a supermajority in both the State Senate and Assembly) has voted for the Democratic candidate for President in each of the past seven elections. The problem is that California, with fifty-five electoral votes, has a disproportionate influence on the race for President, trumping the nearest state, Texas (34 votes), by more than 21 votes (New York has 31 votes, and Florida has 27). With that, many electoral votes being assigned to California on a winner-takes-all basis, anyone who thinks that it is a fair race to the White House is deluding himself.

Without question, the debate of California’s winner-take-all electoral system delves deep into party politics and is unlikely to change anytime. But political affiliations aside, could it be that the winner-take-all electoral system in California is destructive to democracy in the United States? The answer, as it turns out, might be “yes.”

The obvious argument against a “winner-take-all” system is the one put forth by the Republicans: even if (and this is a giganteous “if”) Californians voted 49.5% Republican and 50.5% Democrat, all fifty-five electoral votes would go to the Democratic candidate. Unlike as this scenario may be, it reveals the larger problem that California’s current election format poses: the disenfranchisement of an entire group of California voters. In this case, the disenfranchised minority are Republican voters, and their disenfranchisement comes in the form of losing the validity of their vote.

Right now, the scenario just described is occurring in California. Large population centers—Orange County, San Diego and San Bernardino, to name a few—that lean heavily towards Republicans are denied representation in presidential elections because of a technicality in California law. Proponents of the current election format argue that the vast majority of California leans democratic and so, even with proportional representation, the amount of votes for the minority party would be negligible. Election results from only weeks ago show otherwise. A full four million votes were cast for Mitt Romney in the recent election. Four million out of ten million. Under the current system, almost half of Californians who voted essentially had their vote thrown away.

And then there’s the other half of the equation: Democrats. Liberals in California, not surprisingly, are thrilled with California’s winner-take-all format when it comes to presidential elections. What Democrats ignore is the lost political currency or influence in Washington, DC, from placing all of one’s eggs in a single basket. As it is now, the national Democratic Party all but assumes automatic victory in California and therefore arguably ignores the most populous (37.7 million) state and largest economy (13.3% of GDP) in the union in matters of campaign-

If California were to decide to allocate electors proportionally, she would not be the first. The states of Maine and Nebraska have already voted to implement the idea and, in those states, the system has achieved precisely the goal that it was intended to accomplish: candidates pay attention to these states, and, moreover, people who vote in those states get a say in the outcome of the national election. Although they may have taken a step in the right direction, the only drawback to these two states allocating electors proportionally is that they are relatively small. California, on the other hand, is a state whose population is approaching the forty million mark and is diverse in every imaginable sense—racially, socially, economically, religiously, ethnically. Proportional representation is a feasible alternative where, on the one hand, the Republican minority regains its voice in the presidential election, and, simultaneously, California becomes a battleground state in national politics. It means more attention from Washington lawmakers and more power on the national scale.

The question then is why California is as stubborn as a donkey when it comes to changing its Electoral College vote allocation. In a state that is stitched with change, it should occur to someone of either political persuasion to campaign for the type of election reform that the state is dying for. Perhaps under the “Proposition” system, initiating the change could be relatively easy: step one, write a law requiring the type of election reform that the state desires, step two, gather the two-hundred thousand signatures required to amend the California Constitution; three, present the bill to a review board in Sacramento; and four, put the bill to a popular vote.

Right now, the way California elects the president is a lose-lose. Less people whose votes matter and less attention from politicians who want to govern the entire country. Once California decides to make the switch to proportional representation, things might be better for all of us. And a better California is something that both parties can agree on.
Globalization and America’s faulty approach

By JP OLINSKI
Sports editor and opinion contributor

Globalization is a scary concept. Jobs move to foreign countries. Borders fade away and we as Americans rely on people halfway around the world for essential products such as gas for our cars and steel for our buildings. There are a lot of reasons to resist globalization: resistance protects American jobs, resistance ensures stability in wartime, and resistance provides a safety net should relations with a trade partner deteriorate.

However, in resisting globalization, we are resisting progress. We are resisting improved quality of life around the world. We are resisting increased innovation and advancement and we are resisting economic interdependency and the peace that comes with it.

In a globalized world, consumers can choose products from a world marketplace, rather than a domestic one. Essentially, they have a wider of variety products to choose from, so companies are forced to provide a better, cheaper product in order to compete. Consumers benefit immensely from globalization because they have access to a greater variety of products and at cheaper prices.

The risk, however, is that the company able to provide the better, cheaper product is not American, causing the American company to go out of business.

As a result, the American government protects American businesses by placing high taxes on foreign products that would otherwise dominate the market.

While protecting American business is noble, it eliminates the impetus for mediocre businesses to improve. If the United States accepted globalization and stopped sheltering inferior businesses, American citizens would have access to cheaper products giving them a higher quality of life. In addition, the struggling American businesses would be motivated to improve their product and become more efficient, so that they could compete in the world market.

Many countries lack the resources and infrastructure to satisfy all of their citizens’ needs. However, if they can find an economic niche—a product they can produce efficiently enough that other countries will buy it from them—they can use trade to satisfy all of their citizens’ needs.

Countries that have found economic niches have greater stability and have seen rapid growth in their middle class. In other words, economic niches promote progress and stability in otherwise struggling countries. Economic niches also create interdependency. A country that only produces one product cannot function without trading with other countries. As a result, countries that trade with each other rarely go to war with each other because it would cause a collapse in both of their economies.

This is where America’s aversion to globalization comes from. Many Americans are unwilling to rely on other countries for essential goods. As a result, we produce many things for ourselves that other countries can produce at a lower cost. While the fear of dependency is valid, our reaction to it is not. We can trade with other countries, support their economies and promote peace without putting ourselves at risk.

We do not actually need to produce our own products to stay safe; we only need to retain the ability to produce our own products. This allows us to trade with other countries while providing us with a safety net should relations with a trading partner deteriorate.

The world is going to continue globalizing, America needs to decide whether it wants to be a part of the globalized world or not.
Student Spar: The Future of America

Are we going in the right direction?

DAVID RODGERS
Opinion editor

It’s easy to label Barack Obama’s first term in office as a political failure. As a conservative myself, I know all the little tricks political pundits pull when analyzing Obama’s first four years. He didn’t keep 100% of his promises. He increased spending dramatically. He insured trillions of dollars in debt. But to unload these criticisms on Obama without even a hint at the context in which he took office would be foolish and misguided. The fact is that he assumed a state of economic turmoil. He took office in the wake of one of the worst economic collapses in the history of our nation, and to say that

the issues he inherited are his fault is like saying a firefighter is an arsonist for trying to do his job. Of course, this isn’t to alleviate any of the responsibilities the president faces in dealing with these serious issues. In fact, it’s because Barack Obama assumed these responsibilities fully that I believe America is headed for a brighter future.

Coming into the November election, what America needed was a good leader. Not a smart politician, not a nice guy, but a good leader. The campaigning from both parties had separated our nation, right from left, conservative from liberal, friend from friend, brother from sister. What America needed was a new leader who had the chance to bring us back to that indivisible nation.

In his acceptance speech on the night of November 6th, President Obama noted the importance of national unity, articulating that “we rise or fall together as one nation and as one people” while emphasizing his intentions to engage in bipartisan negotiations as soon as the opportunity presents itself. It makes sense he would want to build this vital unity since he understands his job as president of the United States is first and foremost unifying our nation.

Now my conservative critics may well be wondering how unity will fix anything. Unity doesn’t alleviate debt. Unity doesn’t create jobs. But in fact, as Abraham Lincoln once articulated, “a house divided against itself cannot stand.” If we make any true progress over the next four years, it will require earnest cooperation from both conservatives and liberals. Thus it comes as no surprise that Obama placed such a huge emphasis on unifying our nation. To dump numbers or statistics or historical trivia on a nation hurting economically and politically simply does not make sense at the moment.

And it’s not like Obama didn’t actually improve our country in the past four years. Yes, he used a tremendous amount of money to alleviate the fiscal death grip America had been in. But it’s not as if he spent money in order to waste it like opponents of his economic policy seem to believe. Each cent added to our national deficit was a cent used to push America back on track. Each dollar taken out of taxpayers’ pockets was a dollar used to stitch up the financial wounds suffered under President Bush. Consider that if Obama had let the country try to repair itself and had not used government resources to supplement the improvement, America would be far less stable, far less safe, far less sound than it is today.

Ultimately, it’s important to understand that nobody’s perfect. There will never be one politician who fixes all the problems for everyone. It’s simply not possible to expect that our president—one man—can appease all the anxieties of a nation of over 300 million. As a conservative, I certainly had—and still have—my issues with Obama but am able to look past those and trust that he won’t let a “47%” stand in his way of progress.

Our president is one who will look at people as people, not as “binders.” Our president is able to articulate his plan for the future when asked about it and is able to make sure that his budget plan adds up mathematically.

Four years ago, when Barack Obama shocked the world and made history, there was a lot of anticipation and fear. People didn’t know what to expect out of America’s first biracial president. People didn’t necessarily trust the country in the hands of a Switzerland-born black man. Many were wary of the “Yes We Can” and the “Hope” and the “Change.” But despite all these anxieties, Barack Obama proved to America that he deserved another term. He has another 4 years to work with, another 4 years to unite the country, and another 4 years to improve this nation. There’s no reason to think that he won’t continue on the path that he set off on 4 years ago as he restores America to its deserved position of prosperity.
Caughron and Gancedo qualify for CIF State Finals, rest of team finishes season at Mt. Sac

By JP OLINSKI
Sports editor

The boys and girls cross country teams finished 10th and 13th respectively in the CIF-SS Division V Championship Finals. While both teams missed a potential trip to the state meet in Fresno by finishing outside of the top seven, many positives came from the race; early-morning race at Mount San Antonio College.

Senior Michael Caughron raced past two runners in the last 100 meters of the rain course as dozens of Poly students cheered him on from the packed stands of Mt. SAC Stadium. Caughron finished fourth with a time of 15:01, beating Flintridge Prep rival Aaron Sagimoto and earning an individual trip to the state competition next weekend.

Sophomore Will Hubisch and Manny Medrano, junior Lev Asimov and senior Jon Rohliger rounded out the Panthers’ top five, each finishing under 17 minutes. Senior Tim Goodwin also ran a 17:32 after dealing with a high fever for most of the week.


Despite not reaching the state meet in Fresno, both teams ended successful seasons, which included a second place finish in Prep League for the boys and a fourth place finish for the girls. Both teams look to be strong next year as the boys return four of their top seven runners, and the girls return three of their top five, including the state-bound Gancedo. First, though, Gancedo and Caughron look to cap off their outstanding seasons with strong times in Fresno.

Fencing continues success at high school events

By RYAN KIDMAN
Staff writer

After a further increase in student participation, the fencing team has formally divided into three separate levels: JV Beginner/Intermediate, JV Advanced and Varsity. While the JV team members have played a round-robin style of the pack to ensure the win or lose tournaments, some varsity fencers have turned in successful performances.

The Poly fencing team has had a successful season, with several top individual finishes throughout the season as well as outstanding team results. At the Mixed High School Team Challenge, in which co-ed teams of three fencers competed in a round-robin style of the pack; at most tournaments, some varsity fencers have turned in successful performances.

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Surpassing expectations, tennis reaches second round

By OLIVIA TREISTER
Assistant sports editor

Poly’s girls tennis team finished third in the Prep League and defeated West Ranch in a wild-card match of the playoffs.

“Our season went great, and we got third in league, an improvement from 4th in league last year,” commented junior Sarah Johnson. “I am proud of our CIF run, even though we only played two matches. We were a young team that didn’t have much experience in playoff situations, so it was hard. Our win against West Ranch was a good enough ending for us. We were all proud that we won our wild card match and actually made it into the CIF draw. We beat West Ranch 9-9 and won in games (78-66). It was an intense match but it made the victory sweeter. Playing El Dorado was tough because we knew they were a highly ranked team, but we went out there and gave it our all.”

The girls credited their success to the team’s leadership, including new captains and a new coaching staff. Boris and Sheryl Bakalov were brought in to help the girls tennis program when long time tennis coach Howie Faer retired over the summer. When asked about Boris and Sheryl, Johnson said, “[They] switched up our strategies and focused more on mental toughness help us improve as a whole.”

The captains, Aria Griffin and Elissa Boghosian, also helped lead the team as they “always kept us motivated and ready for whatever came next,” as Johnson describes her teammates. Sophomore Julia Wohl commented, “Aria and Elissa were our captains and they lead the team through easy matches and kept us focused during the hard ones.”

When asked about the highlight of the season, Wohl explained, “The highlight of my season was our wild card match for CIF, where we tied 9-9 in overall matches, but ended up winning by 16 games. We all came together as a team and fought our hardest, and it really showed.”

Non-league loss prevents football from advancing

By HUNTER WORLAND
Assistant sports editor

After a quick start in non-league play, the varsity football team finished Prep League in third place, failing to qualify for CIF playoffs. The Panthers completed the season with a league record of 2-2 and an overall record of 6-3.

Humbled by a 49-0 loss to reigning Prep League champion, Rancho Hondo, in the final game of the season, the Panthers still had a shot at attaining an at-large bid for CIF playoffs. However, after considering the Panthers’ strength of schedule, overall record of the Prep League, CIF decided against giving Poly the at-large playoff spot, partially due to Poly’s 50-49 nail-biting loss to Bellarmine-Jefferson, who earned the spot instead.

Their hopes for qualifying for CIF dangled on a string in the previous week in a matchup against Chadwick. Holding the home field advantage, the Panthers recovered their offensive stride from previous losses and trounced the Chadwick Dolphins in a 42-20 blowout.

The battle for the Prep League began against Flintridge Prep Rebels, after Poly began the year 4-1. The Panthers defeated the rebels their passing potential in the rivalry match, registering three passing touchdowns. However, the Panther defense could not fend off the Rebels’ running game, and lost 46-33.

Coach McGrail noted, “The Prep game was a hard-fought, physical game. Our offense and special teams consistently matched each Prep score, which kept us in the game in the fourth quarter. In the end, we think we wore down, and our lack of depth and size was exposed.”

Despite falling short of qualification, the squad nevertheless reflects on the year end, I think we wore down, and our lack of energy. Senior quarterback and captain Nolan Mulligan attributed their successes to the team morale fostered so well by his teammates and coaches.

Volleyball reaches semis for third straight year

By CHARLIE RAMIREZ
Assistant sports editor

Greatly exceeding pre-season expectations, the varsity girls volleyball team surprised many in the CIF Playoffs, by reaching the semifinals against Prep League rival Chadwick. In a tough away-game atmosphere, Poly fell to the Dolphins in the 3-1, marking the end of an amazing season.

Despite the loss, the girls finished in the top four of their division after being moved up to CIF Division 2A, with a final record of 15-9. After finishing the season with a strong four-game winning streak to earn a spot in playoffs, Poly beat cross-town opponent Maronatha in the first round, winning in four sets. Two days later, the team easily defeated visiting La Quinta to set up a semifinal match against Burroughs. In front of a lively and energetic crowd, the Panthers came out strong and took the first game 25-18 en route to another four set win.

“Poly held their ground in set one against Chadwick, but after a series of errors they lost 25-22. From there on, the Panthers could not keep up with the Dolphins, losing the next two sets 25-19 and 25-8.” Although we did not make it to the finals, this year was a true success,” commented senior Hannah Kaufman.

“With many new members and moving up a division, we defied the odds and I loved every minute with my teammates. The seniors will be greatly missed, but I’m excited to see how we will do next year.”

La Quinta set up a quarterfinals match against Burroughs. In front of a lively and energetic crowd, the Panthers came out strong and took the first game 25-18 en route to another four set win.

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Michael Chen

After picking up a foil for the first time the summer before freshman year, fencer Michael Chen has worked hard to improve his skills and strategy. His dedication certainly paid off when he earned his “E” ranking when he finished third out of 48 competitors at the Gryphon Fencing Club E and Under Mixed Foil tournament. Chen, fellow senior varsity captain Electa Lang and junior Maddy Mendell also took first at the recent Gryphon High School Team Challenge event.

For the past four years, Chen went to numerous tournaments, and though he may not have placed as high as he would have liked, he gained the experience necessary for him to succeed this year. As one of the varsity team captains for the fall and winter seasons, Chen has also personally mentored individual fencers who, like him four years ago, have never picked up a foil before joining Poly Fencing.

Senior novice team captain Ben Smith commented, “Michael is such an important asset to the team, both as a leader and a friend. He always tries to help each one of our teammates reach their full potentials and he has grown tremendously since he started as a freshman. We are so lucky to have him!”

- Caleb Lee