

PROGRESS with every pitch

"As a team we are all dedicated, talented, and connected. That's what makes us better." -samantha jimenez-10

IN YOUR HEAD

Sun in her eyes, junior Ashley Camacho catches the ball at a home game. "It's a mental sport," Camacho said. "Throughout the game, you're just trying to stay focused and not get nervous. Some people think softball isn't that competitive just because we're girls, but they're completely wrong. If you don't learn the game the right way, it can be extremely difficult." Camacho plays right field.



samantha licon

what's your favorite? OFFENSE vs DEFENSE?

"Offense. It's really fun to play, but at the same time, it's just as fun as defense."
-freedom davis-10

"Defense. It wins the game. A lot of the game is played defensively."
-valerie orozco-12



by eliana jaimé

"When we win a game, it feels like time stops and my team and I are the only people in the world. Nothing can bring us down." -nikki mctague-12

It was the perfect day for a softball game. Not too cold, not too hot, and a little cloudy. One foot on home plate and wearing her catcher's gear, junior Brittney Hernandez is ready. An El Paso High player has just hit a double. Then, she steals third. Although the Mustangs have a comfortable lead, Hernandez is determined not to let the Tigers score. As the next batter goes up, Hernandez can see what's coming and she's not happy. Her team is about to be in for a good laugh.

"Their runner was teasing me from third base," she said. "She was taking a huge lead off base. I was getting frustrated. I think she was expecting me to throw the ball to get her out, but in the heat of the moment, I ended up charging at her and tackling her to the ground. Our whole team broke out laughing, even our coach. I guess it kinda turned into a football game."

Although there were light-hearted moments, there were also serious issues. Several injuries rocked the team. Players, including senior Valerie Orozco, learned to pick up the slack, and at the same time learn a few things.

"Somebody was always injured," Orozco said. "Knowing they were out made us want to work harder. It can be tough having a small team because there were barely enough girls to fill every position. We constantly had to remind ourselves not to be content with our skill level. We always made it a point to push forward."

Pushing forward meant more practice.

"I spent hours doing drills on my own," catcher Vanessa Burnett said. "My dad was the one who got me into softball. For a while, I did it because I thought it would make him happy, but eventually, something clicked that I wasn't just doing it for him anymore. I look back at every game and practice and realized that this is all for me, too. Knowing that, I didn't mind practicing on my own. It has and will continue to pay off."



TOUGH OUT

Senior Jasmine Ruiz slides into home plate just as an Andress player tags her out. "We needed to get more points on the board," Ruiz said. "Before I got to home I slid into third, but Coach [Thorson] told me to get back up and keep running. I really thought I'd be able to make it. I just had to leave it all on the field and learn from my mistakes for the next games." (photo by eliana jaimé)

BACK TOGETHER

Fast pitches come to sophomore Jadeen Rivera as she bats at the annual Alumni game. "It was a really close game," Rivera said. "Just because they're alumni doesn't mean they aren't any better or worse than us. They were once in our shoes, so we got to learn a few things from them as the game went on." The current team slipped by with the win 15-11.

HANDFUL OF DISCOMFORT

In pain after a powerful line drive, junior Brianna Yañez gets her thumb checked by her coach Lenny Thorson and trainer Paul Abrell. "They thought it could possibly be broken," Yañez said. "I was really hoping that it wasn't because we were short on players that game. By the next game, I got to get back on the field. Gripping the ball was a little uncomfortable for me at first." Yañez recovered in about three days.



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SWING FOR SUCCESS

Powerful hits sends a ball into junior Brittney Hernandez's direction. "As much as I love playing outfield, I love batting a little more," Hernandez said. "Hitting a ball to the outfield is the best feeling ever. Dwelling on your mistakes is the worst thing you can do, especially during a game. It's worth the effort to just keep going." Hernandez prefers home games because it motivates her more.

POWER HOUSE

In the lead, sophomore Samantha Jimenez pitches to an Irvin batter. "Our batting was really good that day," Jimenez said. "That really gave us the edge to get so far ahead in the game, but we still couldn't let our guard down. We ended up winning 8-1." Jimenez was one of the team captains.