2017 Daily Independent FALL SPORTS GUIDE

INSIDE:
• Full schedules of local teams
• Pictures of season preparation
• Interviews with coaches
• Special feature on the Hi-Lo League

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Team logos courtesy of their respective teams.
All schedules are subject to change.
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Twenty-two. For the Burroughs High School football team, that number is roughly half of its varsity team. In 2017, that is the number of seniors that will suit up and play under the lights Friday nights.

On one hand, the proliferation of experience on the team is helpful; chemistry is the least of the Burros’ worries. Having been through the wringer together, the class knows what’s in store and what it needs to keep up with the big boys on the other side of the line of scrimmage.

Or, as defensive end/punter Tyler Gaska put it, iron sharpens iron.

But that number also raises eyebrows as to what the future for Burros football would store. Who would be the next to step into heavy shoes left behind by this cohort?

Nevertheless, each Burro senior is focused on the present. With the season starting this week against Palmdale, there was not a single player around who was not hyped for the start of the 2017 season. Memories from last year’s nail-biting victory over the Falcons still resonated among the seniors.

“Jack (Sherritt) and I laid on the field for 30 minutes after the game,” said lineman Wyatt Soto.

And it’s a feeling that can best be topped, in Soto’s eyes, by way of a resounding victory.

“I want the feeling of destroying Palmdale,” he said.

Sitting down with the Burro seniors in a town-hall style interview, they expressed their feelings about certain games in their junior year – a few of which they still harbor strong feelings toward – and looked toward a more dominating performance in their curtain call.

What’s in store

When asked which games they were looking forward to the most, half of the seniors picked Oak Hills, a team that has seen repeated success in the Mojave River League. This year may resonate stronger than previous, as the Burros fell by a wide margin – 61-7 – in their game last year.

“They always destroy us, all the time,” said quarterback Austin Griffin, “and it’s gonna be Homecoming, so that game is going to mean a lot.”

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The other popular game was Rancho Verde ("We should have beaten them last year," quipped wideout/cornerback Bryce Moore), and Paraclete, which featured a gnarly injury at Antelope Valley College last season.

“They took out two of our big players,” Soto said. "(Defensive end Jonathan) Villa is still not even cleared yet. It’s kind of a big rivalry. They’re state champions. It’s personal. One of my best friends, her dad is a coach, so there’s kind of a rivalry there too."

But perhaps it was because it’s only August, there were few – if any – seniors who had any feelings regarding the close of a chapter in their books.

“It’ll hit midway through the season,” Gaska said.

Some players, like Tristen Foisy, are going to focus on academics first in college. Soto plans to attend Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, where he can make his mark on the rodeo team while considering football as well.

But each player agreed that what he will miss the most on the field is each other.

“I’m gonna miss when you’re walking down, and you hear the cleats clacking on the ground before the game and the crowd chants,” said defensive tackle Anthony Patrick.

“We’re different from everyone else (at school),” Soto said. “We’re the football team. There are only 35, 36 guys on this team, there are 400 people at school.”

What does this mean? It’s more than just 20-some odd number of seniors playing a sport. There’s a more family aspect to that.

“The scariest thing to think about is just leaving everybody,” Mather said. “We’ve been playing together for 11, 12 years (with the) same coaches and same players our whole lives, and we’re all going our separate ways. It’s a good thing, but at the same time, it’s different.”

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2017 Burroughs Football Schedule

Aug. 25 vs. Palmdale, 7 p.m.
Sept. 1 @ Tehachapi, 7:30 p.m.
Sept. 8 vs. Rancho Verde, 7 p.m.
Sept. 15 vs. Paraclete, 7 p.m.
Sept. 22 @ Barstow, 7 p.m.
Oct. 6 @ Hesperia, 7 p.m.
Oct. 13 @ Apple Valley, 7 p.m.
Oct. 20 vs. Oak Hills, 7 p.m.
Oct. 27 @ Serrano, 7 p.m.
Nov. 3 vs. Sultana, 7 p.m.

League games
All home games at Burroughs Stadium
• General admission: $8
• High Schooler with ASB card, K-8 with parent or school ID, seniors 60+: $3
• Age 4 and below get in free

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2017 FALL SPORTS GUIDE
Burroughs Girls Volleyball
Head Coach: Kristin Bobadilla (2nd season) • 2016 record: 8-14 (2-8 MRL) • Home court: Burroughs Barn

You can chalk it up as a learning experience for Burroughs girls volleyball head coach Kristin Bobadilla in her first season last year. The Lady Burros had a tough campaign, seemingly unable to find their comfort zone at times through the transition.

But after the education, Bobadilla is now ready to begin anew. On the cusp of her second year, she's shown the acclimation that comes with experience. It helps that the transition process is almost complete.

“Team chemistry is stronger this year, and I think that it will just continue to get better,” Bobadilla said. “The incoming freshman team is learning a lot of good chemistry from the upperclassmen, and I think that it will help us continue to grow better.”

It was necessary, given the new wave of adversity that came over the summer: a temporary displacement. With various construction projects happening at and around Burroughs

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6
High School, the team has had to find places to condition. Two weeks before the start of the season, the Lady Burros were splitting time at Kerr McGee Center, McCue Center, Castle X, and the Sports and Recreation Center aboard NAWS China Lake.

“It’s been a struggle,” Bobadilla said. “It’s been really cattywampus, and I know the parents have frustrations. But we’re near the tail end of it. Hopefully once we’re back in our gym, everything kinda goes away, and we’re going to be glad to be home.”

The negative outcomes have been in terms of organization. Since they are at the mercy of various locations, changes of plans have been plentiful.

“There are girls who work, and girls who get confused with the facilities, because we’re having to make last-minute changes,” Bobadilla said. “So, there’s confusion. We’ve had to start practice late, we’ve had to start practice early. We’ve been missing girls – just all over the place. We’ve had to be really flexible with our players and the program and make sure we’re providing quality practices given the resources.”

But it has not burdened the Lady Burros. Bobadilla continues to keep her team on track, using a different coaching style this year.

“I, as a coach, am trying to remove myself from the role of a player,” she said. “I want the girls to get all the touches. I don’t want to enter balls, because that’s taking away a touch that a player could have. I’m trying to let the girls toss, downball, initiate the play. I’m still obviously coaching, but I’m trying to let them get those extra touches. … If every single one of them gets two more touches on the day, it’s a lot of balls.”

“I really enjoyed playing Sultana last year. We compete well with them, they’re on our playing field, and I feel like that match could go either way ... but the girls are really talking about Serrano.”

HEAD COACH KRISTIN BOBADILLA ON TEAM’S MOST ANTICIPATED GAME

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**2017 Burroughs Volleyball Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Opponent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 24</td>
<td>vs. Barstow</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug. 28</td>
<td>@ Granite Hills</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 5</td>
<td>vs. Highland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 7</td>
<td>@ California City</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 8-9</td>
<td>Highland Tourney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 12</td>
<td>@ Tehachapi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 15-16</td>
<td>Cal City Tourney</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 18</td>
<td>vs. Oak Hills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 20</td>
<td>@ Apple Valley</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 25</td>
<td>vs. Serrano</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 27</td>
<td>@ Sultana</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 2</td>
<td>@ Hesperia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 4</td>
<td>@ Oak Hills</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 11</td>
<td>vs. Apple Valley</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 16</td>
<td>@ Serrano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 18</td>
<td>vs. Sultana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 23</td>
<td>vs. Hesperia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**League Matches**

- All home matches at Burroughs Barn
- General admission – $5
- High School Student with ASB card – $2
- K-8 with parent or school ID – $3
- Seniors 60+ – $3
- Children 4 and below are free
Superficially, it looks simple for the Burroughs girls tennis team. Just stick to its guns, and everything will fall into place.

A season ago, the Lady Burros only had two losses—both to perennial powerhouse Serrano—while making their way through the Mojave River League.

However, the landscape has changed. And no, it's not by way of the new tennis nets adorning the Burroughs tennis courts. With the Lady Burros' primary No. 2 and 3 singles players, and a strong doubles contingent graduating, the team will rely on a new cast of top players to stay on top of the MRL leaderboard.

Head coach Kenold Prince said that the complete look and feel of the team is yet to be determined. Once the matches are underway, and the Lady Burros get into the groove of things, everything will fall into place.

That's true consistency.

"We got a lot of girls coming out, that's a good thing," Prince said. "My top six players look solid, but they still need to play a lot of games before the season starts. After the first game, I'll have an idea of where the team stands."

Another interesting note: the Lady Burros will host this year's MRL Finals. Would that be home-field advantage for the Burros?

"There is some advantage, we don't have to travel, but Serrano's girls can play anywhere, that doesn't bother them," Prince said. "If it's windy, then it's a big advantage. But we still have to play, perform and do our best."
“Our goal is to be first or second. They know that, and they want that. Hopefully they can make it happen.”

HEAD COACH KENOLD PRINCE ON TEAM GOALS

2017 Burroughs Girls Tennis Schedule

Aug. 29 @ Barstow, 3:15 p.m.
Aug. 31 vs. Knight, 3:15 p.m.
Sept. 5 @ Tehachapi, 3:15 p.m.
Sept. 7 @ Bishop, 3:15 p.m.
Sept. 9 Quartz Hill Tourney
Sept. 15 @ Palmdale, 3:15 p.m.
Sept. 21 @ Oak Hills, 3:15 p.m.
Sept. 26 vs. Apple Valley, 3:15 p.m.
Sept. 28 @ Serrano, 3:15 p.m.
Oct. 3 vs. Sultana, 3:15 p.m.
Oct. 5 vs. Hesperia, 3:15 p.m.
Oct. 6 @ Quartz Hill, 3:15 p.m.
Oct. 10 vs. Oak Hills, 3:15 p.m.
Oct. 12 @ Apple Valley, 3:15 p.m.
Oct. 17 vs. Serrano, 3:15 p.m.
Oct. 19 @ Sultana, 3:15 p.m.
Oct. 24 @ Hesperia, 3:15 p.m.
Oct. 26 MRL Finals (at Burroughs)

League Matches
All home matches at BHS Courts
Admission is free.
Speed, quality, togetherness – if those were commodities, now would be the time to buy in on the Burroughs boys cross country team.

Head coach Anthony Barnes has seen many years at Burroughs, and the 2017 season is one that he is excited for.

It could be considered cautious excitement – anything can happen, of course – but the Burros are on track to challenge the Mojave River League for a top spot.

Or perhaps even further.

“You see a lot of new young faces,” Barnes said. “We have what looks like will be 22 boys on the team, two seniors, a couple of sophomores, and what will most likely be 15 freshmen.

That’s the beauty of it all,” Barnes said. “I have two seniors and two freshmen, and they are a pack. And they will be, in almost every race, probably within five seconds of each other. From one to two, we were 30 seconds. Then from two through six, we were 10 seconds apart. They’re training that way.

Looking at the season, the Burros will host a dual meet with Tehachapi early in the season. Contrary to last year’s Mojave River League cluster meet that surrounded Gateway Elementary and Upjohn Park, this event will happen at the Burros’ former-and-

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“I don’t think it’s really good or necessary to put the pressure on them now; they’re gonna put enough pressure on themselves. I already know that they want to make (CIF), so I want them talking about it more than me.”

HEAD COACH ANTHONY BARNES ON HIS FRESHMEN AND SOPHOMORES

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in one weekend, how will they manage the trip?

“It’s easy,” Barnes said with a laugh. “It’s all worked into the itinerary.”

The Burros will fly into Orlando Friday morning (Oct. 6), then participate in the meet that evening. There will be a Saturday morning practice, followed by time to enjoy the three parks. The Burros will return to Ridgecrest Monday, Oct. 9.

With an exciting season ahead, the Burros are chomping at the bit for the season’s opener.

“They have the bug already,” Barnes said. “They know the McFarland story, the history of the people in the program.”

And, as the freshmen can attest, the Burros’ performance this year will be a nod to the Murray/Monroe junior high program.

“All I want to do is get the community what it’s capable of and provide the environment,” Barnes said. “More than anything, the people who are going to be responsible for that, I’m benefiting.”
LADY CRUSADERS PUSH ALONG IN NEW TERRITORY

The Immanuel Christian Lady Crusaders volleyball team has been successful as of late, and with a new class of players, head coach Todd Hopkins is resting assured that the 2017 season will be no different. It does help that even his newcomers have had experience on the court. “We’ve been practicing since the day we could practice, which has been good,” Hopkins said. “We have a lot of new players to the team this year. We have a lot of new freshmen and a new transfer as well. With that, the girls have played before at the junior high level, so it’s getting them up to speed with varsity rotations.

“It’s a lot quicker, a lot faster, and the expectations are higher. It was kind of slow in the beginning, but over the last couple of weeks, it has picked up. The girls are getting it now, and we’re starting to hit our stride right in time.”

The Lady Crusaders will be participating in their first season as part of the CIF Central Section, a move that their league, the Hi-Lo League, made earlier this summer. While the change of pace does aim to make things more competitive for ICS over the long run,
“We’re going to play more games than I think I’ve ever played, which is good. We’re gonna play in three tournaments and 33 games – we’re getting close to the max of what we could play.”

The Lady Crusaders started almost immediately, participating in a Bakersfield tournament from Aug. 18-19. There, they saw teams such as Bakersfield West, Shafter, and Foothill, the latter of which they will face in a home-and-away series during the season.

Until the first league match, however, Hopkins is keeping his focus on versatility. With a limited number of players, the norm for Immanuel Christian, he wants to be able to play any girl anywhere.

“No matter what happens on the court, if somebody gets hurt, I could put somebody else in that spot and not skip a beat, because everybody’s played in that spot,” he said. “This whole preseason, up until the Trona Tournament, that’s going to be our goal.”

ICS HEAD COACH TODD HOPKINS ON WHAT IT TAKES TO WIN LEAGUE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11
the immediate benefit is the amount of games it will be able to play.

Hopkins is no stranger to the idea of “strength of schedule.” One of this mantra is to play as tough as possible to be ready for Hi-Lo League play. Sensing opportunity, he contacted ICS athletic director Bill Folden, urging as many games to be scheduled as possible.

“We’ve packed our schedule for a full season this year,” Hopkins said.

“For us to win league this year, we have to continue to be fundamentally sound. We have to do the little things right. ... I’ve really been stressing and emphasizing us coming together.”

ICS HEAD COACH TODD HOPKINS ON WHAT IT TAKES TO WIN LEAGUE
Good Luck To All Athletes For A Healthy And Rewarding Season
There are a lot of new things brewing for the IWV Burros youth football team. First, there's a new league. The Burros moved on from the High Desert Youth Football and Cheer, an organization composed of mostly Victor Valley teams, and will head west to the Valley Youth Football League primarily based in Bakersfield.

Then, there's the new home. Instead of playing their games at Leroy Jackson Park, IWV is listed as hosting its contests at Sherman E. Burroughs Stadium, on the high school campus.

And alongside the four football head coaches – Anthony Milton (freshman), Joe Dugan (sophomore), Mike Stafford (junior varsity) and Darrell Eddins (varsity) – the squad of youngsters going in are geared for the new challenge.

Take the varsity team, for example. The improvement came almost immediately at the start of the season: an increase in numbers has brought renewed attention to the program.

“It started real slow,” Eddins said. “We started getting players like every other day. My goal was to have 21 players on this team. I started with nine. By our first practice, we had 14. Now, we have 22. It's coming along really, really well. They're picking my system up. I'm very happy. I got a lot of talent and a lot of speed.”

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A reason for the increase, Eddins conjectured, was the increase of the weight limit for older players. Now, instead of turning down a player – in this case, a potential lineman – the Burros can stock up on stocky players.

That helps the play style, for sure.

With Eddins back at the helm, the Burros' play style is more in line with Burroughs High School, where the head coach recently served as a special teams coordinator. There, he put in “the mushroom” – a kick-return play so damaging, that he already has rooms at Ridgecrest Regional Hospital booked for the opponents.

Well, not really. But what is true is the Burros’ ability to grasp the playbook.

“I put my offense in in one day without showing them a drawing. They’re getting better. … I let every skill player touch the ball in the inside run game, that includes both tight ends. That way, everyone’s happy. It’s like a basketball team: I’m playing point guard, and I want to make sure everyone touches the ball. Once I get through all of that, then I get to my core: my tailbacks. It’s a tailback-driven offense.”

After that, it’s all repetition. Each practice has been less on the paperwork and more on the grunt work.

We’re practicing in an area where we don’t have a locker room. You don’t have the luxury high schools have to have a team room where you can sit down and draw up on the board, so you have to have a game plan. And I have a game plan every practice. I get out here, I look at what my talent is, and when I run my offense, I want to concentrate on just this series of plays.”

“Our goal is to get better every day, they don’t need to make leaps and bounds. We need to make gradual steps together. If you make gradual steps together, that means everyone is at the same level.”

IWV BURROS VARSITY COACH DARRELL EDDINS ON TEAM’S PROGRESS

2017 IWV BURROS FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

Sept. 2 @ Bishop
Sept. 9 vs. Cal City
Sept. 16 vs. Panthers
Sept. 23 @ Kern
Sept. 30 @ Boron (1 p.m., 3 p.m., 5 p.m., 7 p.m.)
Oct. 7 vs. Mustangs
Oct. 14
• vs. Rams (Sophomore & JV – in Arvin)
• @ Arvin (Varsity, 7 p.m.)
Oct. 21
• vs. Arvin (Varsity bye)

All home games at Burroughs Stadium
Times (unless otherwise noted):
Freshman 9 a.m., Sophomore 11 a.m.
JV 1 p.m., Varsity 3 p.m.
IWV Soccer Club
Two years ago, there was hope. One year ago, there was progress. And now, things are coming to form.

The IWV Soccer Club will move to the Golden Valley Soccer League – a Cal South-sanctioned league – out of Bakersfield this year as the program looks to improve its competitiveness. It is the first time the club has participated in a tournament season of any sort.

The numbers have spoken for themselves. This year, IWVSC had to put a cap on its roster sizes due to the influx of applications. That does not necessarily mean cuts. Rather, the teams are traveling with the maximum amount of players, while the others still get their soccer knowledge as advertised.

In essence, here is how the 2017 fall season will work:

• IWVSC will have U-10, U-12, U-14 and U-18 travel teams. There will be U-6 and U-8 squads, but they are non-travel and will play intrasquad scrimmages instead.

• Each age group will play eight games during the regular season. The playoffs will happen before Thanksgiving.

“We have been encouraged by the overall numbers this year and are glad to see the continued growth of the club in both players and coaches,” said club president Kelly Blake. “Currently we have 16 coaches out working with the players and they have been the most dedicated group to continuing their coaching education that we have had, which is great for the coaches, but also directly benefits the players.”

By being in the Cal South league, IWVSC will set itself up to be able to participate in the spring season.
There is not a single sophomore on the Cerro Coso women’s volleyball team.
Don’t confuse that with lack of experience.
The Lady Coyotes go into the 2017 season with fresh faces, many of whom have logged many hours on the court. Zooming in on the experienced players, a few of them come from Burroughs High School just down the hill.

“I think that they know the system, because playing so long for Burroughs under Coach (Michele) Lazaro, they know the system that we play because it’s similar,” said Coso head coach Kim Young. “That has translated really well for us. We don’t have to go over the ABC’s of offensive systems and defensive systems. The girls have been pretty familiar with it. We have some girls familiar with the system who weren’t at Burroughs – such as Im-

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Outside hitters Tinoi Martin and Elise Winters, who are the Lady Coyote captains this season, are two of the players who have come in with a keen sense of what to expect in Cerro Coso's second season in the Central Valley Conference. Martin will bring raw talent and a penchant for hard attacks that echo in the gym.

"My mindset when I go up to hit is that I want this to hit the floor," she said. "I don't want anyone to be able to dig this ball. I think that helps. Obviously, we lift weights after practice, and that helps too, but that's my mindset."

Winters mentioned that a positive coaching staff helped her make her decision to attend Cerro Coso.

"It's been a lot better," she said. "It makes me want to work harder and achieve more."

Dresden Stucky and Macey Balas round out the Burroughs volleyball standouts from Hawaii, Journey Williams and Kiana Thompson.

"Every year we send out hundreds – close to thousands – of emails," Young said. "We get a lot of interest from Hawaii. For five years, we've had a lot of interest from girls who live in Hawaii, but we haven't got them to get here. But these two girls decided to come."

"I think they're interested in playing. I think they're interested in the opportunity we have to offer them: continue with their school and hope they can go on to a university and transfer to play volleyball."

And for a couple of players – Burroughs graduates Brianna Moore and Sidney Pollock – they will trade in a basketball for a volleyball this fall.

This myriad of experience propels the team into the 2017 season, where expectations are simple: versatility is key.

"We're going to fight to see wins and more well-rounded players," Young said. "We've talked about it a lot at practice."

Added Winters: "I feel like our team is getting a lot closer. We're being a lot more positive with each other, so it makes us want to work together better. Our games are going really good. Like in our six-on-six games, you can definitely tell we're going to be a good team this year."

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manuel Christian – and I have some girls who have only played a little bit."

HEAD COACH KIM YOUNG ON THE LADY COYOTES' STRENGTH

I think this year, we're going to take a lot of those (conference games). We have the potential. I don't know what the other team is going to bring, but I know what we have is a lot better right now."

Cerro Coso Women's Volleyball Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 23</td>
<td>@ L.A. Harbor College</td>
<td>5 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug. 26</td>
<td>@ Mesa College</td>
<td>3 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug. 26</td>
<td>vs. Grossmont College</td>
<td>6 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug. 30</td>
<td>@ Antelope Valley College</td>
<td>6 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 1</td>
<td>@ Victor Valley College</td>
<td>1 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 1</td>
<td>vs. Mt. San Jacinto College</td>
<td>3 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 6</td>
<td>@ Santa Ana College</td>
<td>4 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 6</td>
<td>vs. Orange Coast</td>
<td>6 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 8</td>
<td>@ SBVC</td>
<td>10:30 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 8</td>
<td>vs. West L.A. College</td>
<td>1 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 13</td>
<td>@ College of the Sequoias</td>
<td>5 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 15</td>
<td>vs. Merced College</td>
<td>5 p.m.</td>
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<td>Sept. 22</td>
<td>@ Columbia College</td>
<td>5 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 27</td>
<td>vs. Porterville College</td>
<td>5 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 29</td>
<td>@ Taft College</td>
<td>5 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 4</td>
<td>vs. Fresno City College</td>
<td>5 p.m.</td>
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<td>Oct. 6</td>
<td>vs. West Hills College</td>
<td>5 p.m.</td>
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<td>Oct. 11</td>
<td>@ Reedley College</td>
<td>5 p.m.</td>
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<td>Oct. 13</td>
<td>vs. College of the Sequoias</td>
<td>5 p.m.</td>
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<td>Oct. 18</td>
<td>vs. Merced College</td>
<td>5 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 25</td>
<td>vs. Columbia College</td>
<td>5 p.m.</td>
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<td>Oct. 27</td>
<td>@ Porterville College</td>
<td>5 p.m.</td>
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<td>Oct. 30</td>
<td>vs. Taft College</td>
<td>5 p.m.</td>
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<td>Nov. 3</td>
<td>@ Fresno City College</td>
<td>5 p.m.</td>
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<td>Nov. 8</td>
<td>vs. West Hills College</td>
<td>5 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 10</td>
<td>@ Reedley College</td>
<td>5 p.m.</td>
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League games
All home games at McCue Center
IN SECOND YEAR BACK, LADY COYOTES AIM FOR COMPLETED SEASON

Making history. At this point, that’s what it’s all about for the Cerro Coso women’s soccer team as it begins its third season overall, second under the helm of head coach Tony Rosa. Despite its novicehood, the team has faced plenty of adversity over the years, but there is something that it still desires.

The taste of victory.

The Lady Coyotes will field another squad, chock full of fresh faces, in their second year in the Central Valley Conference. And while Rosa has some familiarity with the team and the process, he says that this season is when the building process begins.

With the inability to do heavy recruiting – he started his tenure with merely a month left until the beginning of the season last year – he’s taken advantage of the opportunity given to him and has gone up and down the highway to spread the message.

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“I’d like to surprise a couple teams. They’re thinking we’re like last year. They don’t know what I got. Probably, to most teams, I’m getting rejects. So, let’s see what we could do.”

HEAD COACH TONY ROSA ON THE LADY COYOTES’ STRENGTH IN THE CVC

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Essentially, he made himself Mr. Cerro Coso Soccer.

“It’s extremely hard, because no one knows about Cerro Coso,” Rosa admitted. “I’ve passed out at least 500 cards all over the desert trying to get players here. Altogether, maybe I got 30 out here. But, for one reason or another, they’re thinking of the cost of living or the town is too small for them, so it was really hard.”

By the time the recruiting trail finished, he had eight new faces for his summer conditioning class. Combined with three local players, that is bringing him closer to a full squad. And despite the Lady Coyotes scraping the pot for players, Rosa asserts that it’s quality over quantity.

“It’s a small team, but I’m going to have some real good players,” he said. “I think I have a couple here that can definitely play Division I. I think we’re going to surprise people here.”

Yessica Morales, a goalkeeper from Barstow High School, earlier visited Coso in March. Now a member of the team, she said that her primary reason for continuing to play is because it’s therapeutic.

“It’s a stress reliever, and it’s something I feel that I need, a part of me,” she said. “It helped me out with grades, definitely. It made me try harder.”

Center-midfielder Elena Gomez and forward Makaylee Garcia-Moore, both from Bakersfield, said that they came to Cerro Coso to continue to get soccer-playing experience while not having to travel too far from home.

“I heard about Cerro Coso from an old coach who said that (Rosa) was looking for players to start up the program,” Gomez said. “I just like how small the campus is, and I felt like it was a good option.”

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A NEW FRONTIER

Hi-Lo League to move to CIF Central Section beginning with the Fall 2017 season

The Hi-Lo League has a new home beginning with the Fall 2017 season.

The league, known for its small school size, consequently leading to ambiguity year by year, will transfer from the CIF Southern Section to the CIF Central Section, a move years in the making that will give the schools a more even playing field, says league president Kent Schmidt.

“We wanted a fair shake, and with the Hi-Lo League schools getting smaller, we felt that it was better for us,” he said.

For the most part, there were two big catalysts for the Hi-Lo League’s decision to proceed with the move: one, the CIF-SS implemented a new "competitive equity" format that placed schools in divisions based on win/loss records over a two-year stretch rather than enrollment size or geographic location. In the Hi-Lo schools, which vary in size year after year, that caused worry over winning.

“You just see a pattern, especially with the competitive equity, some of the volleyball powerhouses were legitimately worried about getting bumped up,” Schmidt said. “You need to look at enrollment, not just the record of the team.”

While the Central Section does take wins and losses into account when aligning divisions, it also factors in enrollment size. For instance, in 11-man football, to qualify for Division I, a school is recommended to have at least 1,750 students. The smallest division, Division V, has at least 550 students.

Two, the High Desert League, which is composed of nearby teams such as California City, Kern Valley, Bishop and Desert (Edwards Air Force Base), have enjoyed considerable success in the Central Section. For example, California City won the Division V boys basketball championship in 2017; Kern Valley won the title in 2016 and made it to the championship game in 2015. As Immanuel Christian and Trona routinely schedule games against HDL teams, Schmidt paid close attention to that league for a few years, taking note of the teams’ playoff success compared with the Hi-Lo’s.

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In the end, the Hi-Lo teams, while earning postseason spots, didn’t feel as competitive in the Southern Section.

“We had years in the distant past where they would pick Hi-Lo League teams in the first round against each other,” Schmidt said. “There was also the fact that the schools they seemed to be letting in our divisions had far more enrollment than what we had. You start scratching your head going if they claim they had 60, 70, 80 kids, how can you suit up 30 (for football)?”

The travel also became problematic. Lee Vining, located 30 minutes north of Mammoth Lakes, has had to travel as much as 400 miles to Santa Maria for a playoff game – a 6 1/2 hour travel by car. The farthest distance between a Hi-Lo school and any school in the Central Section, given any potential playoff chance, is 340 miles from Baker High School to Chowchilla High School.

An arduous effort

With enough research and backing from the member schools, the Hi-Lo League set sail for a move out of the Southern Section. The first attempt, however, was immediately futile: the league sent a letter to the Central Section, but without any representation at the board meeting, the notion was quietly struck down.

“The only ones who voted for us were the guys from the High Desert League,” Schmidt said.

The second time around, the Hi-Lo League sent representation: Garry Noel and Bill Folden from Immanuel Christian, Paul Bachman from Baker, and Roger Yost from Lee Vining made the trip to section headquarters in Porterville. There, they made their case for the move – including agreeing to a restriction on home playoff games – but the votes still went against their favor.

Then came the meeting Jan. 21. Folden and Noel went up, addressed the league’s concerns with travel and money, and reiterated that the Central Section immersion was strictly for the playoffs; what happens in the

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“We wanted a fair shake, and with the Hi-Lo League schools getting smaller, we felt that it was better for us.”

HI-LO LEAGUE PRESIDENT KENT SCHMIDT ON THE MOVE TO CENTRAL

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league is its own business. The votes were more decisive: the bigger schools voted to let the Hi-Lo in, while the smaller schools still denied.

At that point, the Hi-Lo League's excitement began to wane.

“At our basketball meeting, the coaches were feeling down about it,” Schmidt said. “We were really excited, thought we had our ducks in a row. We felt like we did everything we could.”

Schmidt tried going a little higher. He contacted the CIF State office to see if, by chance, the league could get an exemption to switch sides.

“If something is good for the kids, (the state office) should be stepping in,” was his argument.

While the state couldn’t legally force the Central Section to include the Hi-Lo League, they came back with a different idea: how about calling the member schools that voted no and make individual cases for expansion?

The lightbulb turned on.

“I took the suggestion, and told the guys at the basketball meeting that we’re not giving up,” Schmidt said. “Garry, Bill and I got a list of schools that didn’t vote and the ones that voted no. We made individual contacts with each of those members starting our case.”

The perceived problem was the small schools’ feelings that the Hi-Lo League was bloodthirsty. Being from the tougher Southern Section, the stereotype was that each school wanted a chance to rack up multiple championships, therefore by going to a smaller section, the league raises its chances of doing so.

Knowing those feelings, the league countered back with its reasoning:

“...we didn’t just talk to the small schools, we talked to the big boys,” Folden added. “Why? They didn’t have an interest in us. Our mindset was to attack the big schools and give them our reasoning. I think that told them, ‘These guys are serious about that, and this is the type of schools we want in our league.’ ”

With enough support, the Hi-Lo League was on the agenda for the April 4 meeting.

Finally in

Folden was the lone league representative to attend the April meeting. When the talks of expansion came up, he was unabashed. It was the Central Section’s final meeting of the season, something had to give this time around.

“I just remembered my gameplan, stuck to it, and never went away from it,” he said.

The small schools that had voted no were firm. By that point, the Hi-Lo League heard every argument in the book, so any con that the group brought up, Folden had an answer for. The main idea: they’re all alike.

“...As for travel, I asked for a show of hands: How many of you, when you go to the playoffs, go to Bishop? How many go to Edwards Air Force Base? How many go to Kernville? Lone Pine? When you go to those places, you drive right by our place,” Folden said. “We’re not here to satisfy your school, we’re here to satisfy the kids and give them a chance in athletic participation. ... We’re not building a powerhouse. We’re gonna..."
Fresno Christian's representative then spoke up. Adding onto Folden's point, the idea of how bringing in the Hi-Lo League was going to reflect on the section as a whole. If there is a league that wanted to go in that section that badly, there must be a benefit to it. In this case, there is a greater good: the student-athletes and their families.

Everything afterward was a snowball effect. The other schools began to voice their support for the Hi-Lo League. When the votes were cast, the league got the majority it needed to move forward.

“I was really, really excited for the league,” Schmidt said. “I felt like it was a milestone. We battle each other, but in the end, we're a family. We want the best for each other. This is cooperative athleticism. It all worked well for us.”

Folden echoed the same sentiment. “Uniquely, even though we’re competitive with each other, we support each other. We’re going to stand together, unify ourselves, and we did it.”
TRONA FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

Aug. 26 @ Alpaugh, 2 p.m.
Sept. 1 vs. Lutheran, 7 p.m.
Sept. 8 @ Lucerne Valley, 7 p.m.
Sept. 15 @ Mammoth, 7 p.m.
Sept. 22 @ Avalon, 5:05 p.m.
Sept. 29 vs. Desert Christian, 7 p.m.
Oct. 7 @ Lone Pine, 7 p.m.
Oct. 13 vs. Frazier Mountain, 5:30 p.m.
Oct. 20 vs. Mammoth, 7 p.m.
Oct. 27 vs. Maricopa, 5:30 p.m.

All home games at The Pit

Best Of Luck To All Of Our Youth Athletes
Have A Great Season
**TRONA VOLLEYBALL SCHEDULE**

Aug. 14 vs. Silver Valley, 4 p.m.
Aug. 25 vs. Victor Valley Christian, 4 p.m.
Sept. 2 @ Liberty Baptist Academy, 9 a.m.
Sept. 5 @ Silver Valley, 4 p.m.
Sept. 7 @ Lucerne Valley, 4 p.m.
Sept. 12 vs. Lucerne Valley, 4 p.m.
Sept. 14 @ Lone Pine, 5 p.m.
Sept. 22 vs. Immanuel Christian, 4 p.m.
Sept. 24 @ Immanuel Christian, 5 p.m.

All home games at Trona High School