

To: Jerry Kirrene
From: Dale Drozd
Date: February 1, 2010
Re: January 2010 Interview of Jill Bennett & Diane Heine
Subject: History of Girls Athletics @ CB and Manogue

I learned that Jill Bennett was the Athletic Director at Manogue H.S. during it's final two years of existence. When Manogue closed, Jill was hired as the Assistant Athletic Director at Christian Brothers and helped coach, including basketball and softball teams. Diane coached a variety of girls teams at CB, beginning with softball from 1991-96 and 1998 and moving on into the volleyball program as it developed in the late 1990's.

They described the early years of 1990-91 as being very challenging. They were starting a women's athletic program essentially from scratch. Some coaches came over to CB from Manogue but several others had to be hired. There were so many changes taking place and no experience to draw upon, so much was learned on the fly. Of course, there were many who were not happy to see CB becoming a coed school, making the formation of a girls athletic program more difficult. Another obstacle was that the population of CB when it made the transition was no more than 40% girls and thus the sharing of the female athletes among the various teams was an absolute necessity with many girls playing three sports. The competition was very tough, as almost all their opponents were much larger schools with then big-time athletic programs. Finally, there was the fact that athletics were not emphasized at Manogue and thus the girls that came to CB from there did not necessarily include a great number of athletes.

Nonetheless, every year saw progress being made. Diane came on board late in CB's first year as a coed-school. David Dacong came from Manogue and stayed as a consistent coaching contributor, primarily in the volleyball program, until 2002. John Daunch (phonetic) also moved over from Manogue and was instrumental in the early years to help develop the girls athletic program at CB, especially in the track and field area. He remained active in the girls athletic programs at CB until felled by a stroke several years ago. The girls program received a huge boost, according to Jill and Diane, when Joe Soto came on board in 1992-93 to take over the softball program. In 1993-94 Joe also took the helm of the girls basketball program as well. By the end of the 1990's he had the softball program firing on all cylinders and it became quite successful. There was a team in this era that became known as the "magnificent eight" or something to that effect because they were eight freshman all starting for the CB softball team and they were very competitive despite their youth. Apparently the Sacramento Bee did an article about them. A number of standout softball players, many of whom may have played in college after graduating from CB, were identified. These included: Monique Radman (now a M.D. doing her residency @ U.C. Davis) who graduated in 1996 and pitched at Lewis & Clark College; Aaron McFarland (1998) who may have pitched at U.C. Santa Barbara; Rene Rafetto;

and Sarah Davics. I received several leads in this area that I should follow-up on to identify players in that era who continued to play after they graduated from CB.¹

Of course volleyball has become probably the most successful girls athletic program at CB. It is believed they have made the playoffs every year (with perhaps the exception of one) since 1996 to the present. In 1999 they won CB's first section title in girls athletics. In 2005 they broke a section record by becoming the first team to ever come from a #13 seed out of 16 teams to win the section title. They have now won several consecutive section titles (under both Diane's direction and that of current head coach Jeff Dieter) and have advanced to the state title game at least twice in recent memory.

In the early 2000's the girls soccer program exploded under the direction of Sean Melendez, winning the Division II title in 2003, 2004 and 2006. Earlier years are still a little sketchy but some key players from the mid-1990's were identified as Marisse Sanche (phonetic) and Amy Stenbacher. More research is need here.

I also learned that Sally Sylva launched the girls golf program at CB sometime in the 2000's and won the SVC league title in that sport in the program's first 2 years of existence. I need to talk to Sally about that program. Of course, Debbie Henning and Diane Heine guided the girls golf team this past year to the section and Masters tournaments for the first time in the history of the program.

With respect to Manogue H.S., as noted above, it was described as a place where athletics was not emphasized. The strongest program by far was volleyball where they were very competitive. I was told that no story about Manogue would be complete without mention of the Girls' Drill Team led by Lois Curtis. The Drill Team was huge in the Sacramento area and even state-wide. It was Manogue H.S.'s shining jewel of a program and was a point of emphasis. In fact many athletes chose to participate in the Drill Team over sports. The importance of the Drill Team as a force continued for a number of years even after Manogue closed.

I have not yet been able to catch up to Joe Soto and must do so. In addition, I will assemble a list of the league and section titles the CB girls have captured this Friday when I'm at school and I'll include them in this memo. I'll also talk to Sally Sylva and follow some of the leads mentioned above. Please pass along your suggestions.

¹ One theme that continued throughout the interview were the number of standout players who were identified that started at CB but transferred out before graduation, sometimes apparently for purely economic reasons. That is a subject of concern for a different group but, in my opinion a very serious problem with athletics at CB that continues to this day.

To: Jerry Kirrene
From: Dale Drozd
Date: June 14, 2010
Subject: History of Girls Athletics @ CB and Manogue

I apologize for my absences from your committee meetings and my lack of progress. However, now that I have completed my Booster Club commitment and graduation has come and gone, I can turn my attention back to this project. I have spoken to Joe Soto several times in the last few months and he has let me know that he is happy to be interviewed for the project regarding Girls' athletics at CB. Unfortunately we've not yet been able to set up a time but hope to do so soon. I am in email communication with two CB softball alums and hope to have more to add in that regard by the next meeting willing to must do so. I also need to talk to Sally Sylva and follow some of the leads mentioned in my earlier report.

I have assembled a draft of the league, section and Norcal titles the CB girls have captured. A.D. Jill Bennet is reviewing the list and will be making additions if I have missed any. The draft list of titles is set out below. Of course, I will also follow up on suggestions by committee members about anyone I should try to track down and interview.

Basketball

2008 Division IV Section Champions

Cross Country

2007 Division IV Section Runner-up
1997 Michelle La Salle - Individual Champion

Golf

2000 Sierra Valley Conference Champions

Soccer

2006 Division II Section Champions
2004 Division II Section Champions

2010 Sierra Valley Conference Champions
2008 Sierra Valley Conference Champions
2006 Sierra Valley Conference Champions
2004 Sierra Valley Conference Champions
2003 Sierra Valley Conference Champions

Softball

2000 Metro League Champions
1997 Metro League Champions
1996 Metro League Champions

Tennis

2009 Sierra Valley Conference Champions

2006 Ashley Pane - Division II Section Individual Champion

2004 Torry Damiani-Paulk - Division II Section Individual Runner-up

Track

2002 Division IV Section Champions

Volleyball

2009 Division IV Norcal Champions

2008 Division IV Norcal Champions

2006 Division IV Norcal Champions

2009 Division IV Section Champions

2008 Division IV Section Champions

2007 Division IV Section Champions

2006 Division IV Section Champions

2005 Division IV Section Champions

1999 Division IV Section Champions

2009 Sierra Valley Conference Champions

2006 Sierra Valley Conference Champions

1983 Metro League Champions (girls?)