

Christian Brothers High School!
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1995-96

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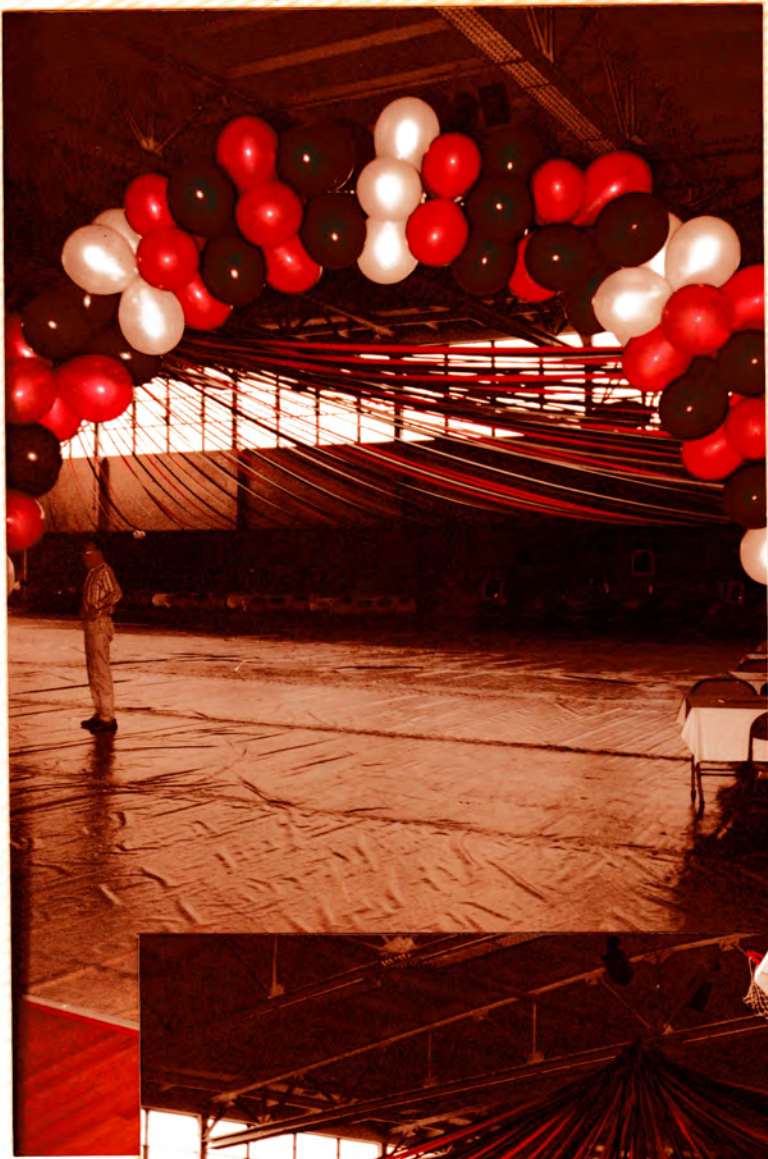
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Compiled by Debbie Obernesser









Captains see worst,

best of softball



CHRIS CREWELL / NEIGHBORS

Christian Brothers High School co-captains Gail Soto, left, and Michelle Hom cheer on their teammates. The Falcons have set a school record for wins this season.

Hom, Soto help CBS turnaround

BY JOE DAVIDSON
Neighbors sports writer

They're pals now but it wasn't always this harmonious.

To hear Michelle Hom explain it, there was almost war before there was peace. Hom and Gail Soto met as baby-faced, pony-tailed softball enthusiasts for Pocket Little League. They were 8 years old.

Yet before rounded the bases as a bashing tee-ball players under the direction of their fathers, they almost fought. At least that's how Hom remembers it.

"I love her to death now but when we were first starting out, I think I hated her," said Hom, who now fields grounders at third base for Christian Brothers High School while Soto plays right

field or pitches. "She scratched me once. I can't remember how, but I remember I didn't like it. I thought she was mean. Then we got to know each other."

Before long, they found out that they shared the same passion to succeed and have fun. After claiming several championships at the youth level, Hom and Soto started as varsity freshmen at CBS. They have become models of consistency as senior co-captains for one of the area's breakthrough programs.

In fact, softball has been their only athletic endeavor since entering high school.

Along with senior pitching ace Monique Radman and senior catcher Sarah Davis, Hom and Soto have endured many ups and downs. They played during the bleak period, when CBS came off of a 1-25 season in 1992. The Falcons have now risen to a No. 5 ranking in The Bee softball poll.

CBS is in the Sac-Joaquin Section playoffs for the first time.

There is no more talk of "next year" as the Falcons prepare for the postseason.

"It's kind of a do-or-die situation now," Soto said.

Hom said she likes the Falcons' chances. CBS has beaten formidable Elk Grove, El Camino, St. Francis and Johnson in posting a school-record 22 wins.

The six losses have been close, including to perennial powers Lincoln of Stockton and Del Oro.

Hom leads the team in batting at .322 — Melissa Hayre is second at .311 — and leads the club in RBI along with Davies.

Soto hasn't been as dominating as Radman or Erin McFarland on the mound, but she has won four games and owns a 0.68 ERA.

More important than the stats, however, is the pregame ritual Hom and Soto perform at each game.

Hom always carries the lineup card and hands it to Soto before they meet with umpires for

pregame instructions. They line up the same way and wear their clothes and jewelry the same.

"This is our last year, so we came up with some things to do," Hom said.

Joe Soto, Gail's father and coach, isn't about to mess with the ritual. He supports anything that helps the team win.

A fireman by trade, coach Soto took over the Falcons midway through the 1-25 season when the team was being beaten by football-like scores.

In the off-season, he and a group of friends rolled up their sleeves and cleared 5 acres on campus to put in a diamond. They planted everything from the sprinklers to the grass.

Most satisfying for Soto has been the opportunity to work with his daughter. A hall of fame infielder at Sacramento State, Soto coached Gail in youth softball and jumped at the opportunity to do it again in high school.

Still, the relationship hasn't come without a few raised eyebrows. It's common for other parents to question the coach's motives when his daughter is in the starting lineup.

"It's fun coaching your daughter but it can be difficult," coach Soto said. "When you coach your own, you tend to be a little harder on them sometimes. You either expect more, but if she doesn't produce, you have to explain why she's playing."

Young Soto understands the dilemma.

"He's my dad and my coach, but he can't always be both on the field," Gail said. "Sometimes it'll slip and I'll say, 'Dad,' out there. It feels weird. Once I called him, 'Joe.'"

Hom's father, Ed, coached his

daughter in youth softball and then became the JV coach at CBS. He has been offered a seat in the coaching dugout by coach Soto, but declined so he can continue to tutor younger players.

"He doesn't want to make her nervous," Coach Soto said. "I can understand that."

So can Michelle. She said the time away from her father actually strengthens their relationship. And no one can raise doubt as to why she gets to start at third.

"It'd makes me uncomfortable playing for him because of what

people might think," Hom said. "Who needs that? Gail handles it so well. I guess that's the important part."

After June graduation, Hom and Soto will go their separate ways. The only time they expect to see each other in softball garb is as opponents in the Bay Valley Conference. Hom will attend Cosumnes River and Soto will head for American River.

"It'll be weird not having her on my team," Soto said. "We've never gone against each other. I know it'll be fun facing her."



CHRIS CREWELL / NEIGHBORS

Michelle Hom tries unsuccessfully to snag a grounder down the third base line during a game against McClatchy.

SACRAMENTO

BEE • MAY 9, 1996

Room for improvement

By Maria LaPiana
Bee Staff Writer

Your child's room might be a mess if:

- a.) You've been impaled by a Lego left on the floor;
- b.) You're not sure what color carpet you put down;
- c.) A missing dinner plate turned up under the bed covered in greenish fuzz.

OK, OK, so the room's not *that* bad, but let's just say that you and your offspring have a difference of opinion as to how it ought to look.

You say pick it up.

You're told to lighten up.

And the battle rages — over books and bags, wrappers and papers, toys and clothes and CDs and crayons and critters and *stuff*.

The kids' room as battlefield. Who backs down? It depends who you talk to.

Putting things away makes no

sense to 17-year-old Shannon Frank of Sacramento.

"My mom says 'Hang everything up,'" says Frank. "But I usually will be wearing it soon, so I'd rather leave it on the floor." It's a practical matter: "To teenage girls, your life is clothes," says Frank, "and they need to be readily accessible."

Wouldn't things be easier to find if they were put away?

"I always can find stuff," says Frank. "That has never been a problem."

It's been this way as long as she can remember: "I've just never felt like cleaning," she says.

"Our kids are probably at the height of messy rooms," says her mom, Connie, who also has a son, Ryan, 14. She nags . . . er, reminds them to pick up after themselves regularly and admits: "I wig out about it a few times a year."

"The messy-room syndrome" can be a chronic problem that begins

early and lingers on and on, says family advice columnist Marguerite Kelly.

She has some first-hand knowledge of it.

Years ago, when one of her teenagers called the police to report a possible burglary, the officer took one look at the girl's room and was convinced it had been ransacked. It hadn't.

"By the time a child is 10 or 12, a lot of habits have been set," says Kelly, whose parenting column is syndicated in the Washington Post, The Bee and dozens of other newspapers. "So you want to start early.

"You hear it all the time: 'Go to your room and clean it!' but often they're too little (to know how). They've gone through it like a tornado," says Kelly, and they don't know where to begin.

She suggests you offer to help and dig in together.

Take it one mess at a time. "First,

make the bed so you have someplace to sit. Then say, 'Let's clean off the night table, then the top of the bureau, the bookcase.'

Please see ROOM, page G3



Shannon Frank, 17, says she organizes her clothes by leaving them on the floor: "They need to be readily accessible."

Bee/Bryan Patrick

Room: Keep a leaf rake for use under the bed

Continued from page G1

"And then — and it took me four children to learn this — keep a leaf rake in the closet. Use it under the bed, all over. Sort through the junk."

Working with a young child is effective, but Kelly advises parents to "back off a little each year."

"I don't think kids like to have a messy room. I think it upsets kids greatly," she says.

But even if your kid isn't fazed, don't worry.

Remember, says Kelly: "It isn't the biggest thing in the world if your child's room is messy."

Tory Carter hasn't a clue what the fuss is about.

The 12-year-old from Placerville is, in a word: neat. Very neat. Her closet is so uncluttered, in fact, that she won third prize in an organizing contest sponsored by The Bee last year.

Her room is always picked up, always neat.

Her bed is always made, of course (that was her New Year's resolution). She has two bookcases flanking her fish tank. On one, two shelves are designated for "school-oriented stuff." She keeps all her library books (or borrowed books of any kind) in a basket in the corner. On the bookcase by her bed she keeps books she's currently reading and notebook paper, a box for letters and a little calendar.

Not surprisingly, Carter hates being late, so she has "a lot of clocks" in her room: "A digital on my desk, a ticking clock on the wall and an old-fashioned alarm clock by my bed," she says. "Oh, and I always wear a watch."

She has a special box for papers she wants to save and at the end of every month, sorts through it, dates it and puts it in the attic.

The only article of clothing not in her closet is her robe, which hangs on a hook in the bathroom.

She says her organizing gene comes from her father: "He has a zillion things saved from the second I was born, and it rubbed off."

But the secret to her success could be cold, hard cash.

"At the end of every day, if everything in my room is spic 'n' span, then my mom gives me a

nickel," says Carter. "At the end of the month, you know, you have a chance to make a few bucks."

For Jan Cassinat of Laguna Creek, it pays to offer that all-important incentive.

Cassinat, 35, is the mother of five: Jill, 10; Jessica, 8; Jacob, 6; Jamie, 4; and Jenna, 2. She's also expecting a baby any day now. And she's in control.

She maintains a daily watch over the kids' rooms and insists

that they make their beds before school.

But the thing that helps her hold it together best is a simple pegboard that's divided by days of the week. Pegs chart each child's success at keeping rooms clean — plus other activities, such as practicing piano, feeding pets, brushing teeth and performing an act of kindness every day.

Here's the deal: The greater the

number of pegs, the higher the allowance.

"This system has really worked for us for more than a year," says Cassinat. "I'm not sure if I had just two children I would do it, though. With five of them, it's harder to keep hands on."

"And, of course, it helps to keep things to a minimum in their rooms!"

Believe it or not, parents of little ones, it's easier to exercise control over a room filled with Duplos than it is one inhabited by a teenager or preteen.

For one thing, you don't have the issue of privacy to contend with.

As kids grow up, their own "space" becomes more important to them, more personalized. And your presence in it becomes most unwelcome.

The privacy issue will surface more readily, says Kelly, especially "if you harass them all the time."

But if you've helped your children establish good habits — and you stick to your house rules — the damage will (may) be kept to a minimum. If not, insist on a weekly or monthly "mom or dad's health department investigation." The rest of the time, keep the door closed.

Most kids will come around in time.

As for all the old papers, the jewelry boxes and the "stuff" that Shannon Frank has saved since first and second grade, the stuff that's still cluttering her room 10 years later, she admits: "I'm a pack rat."

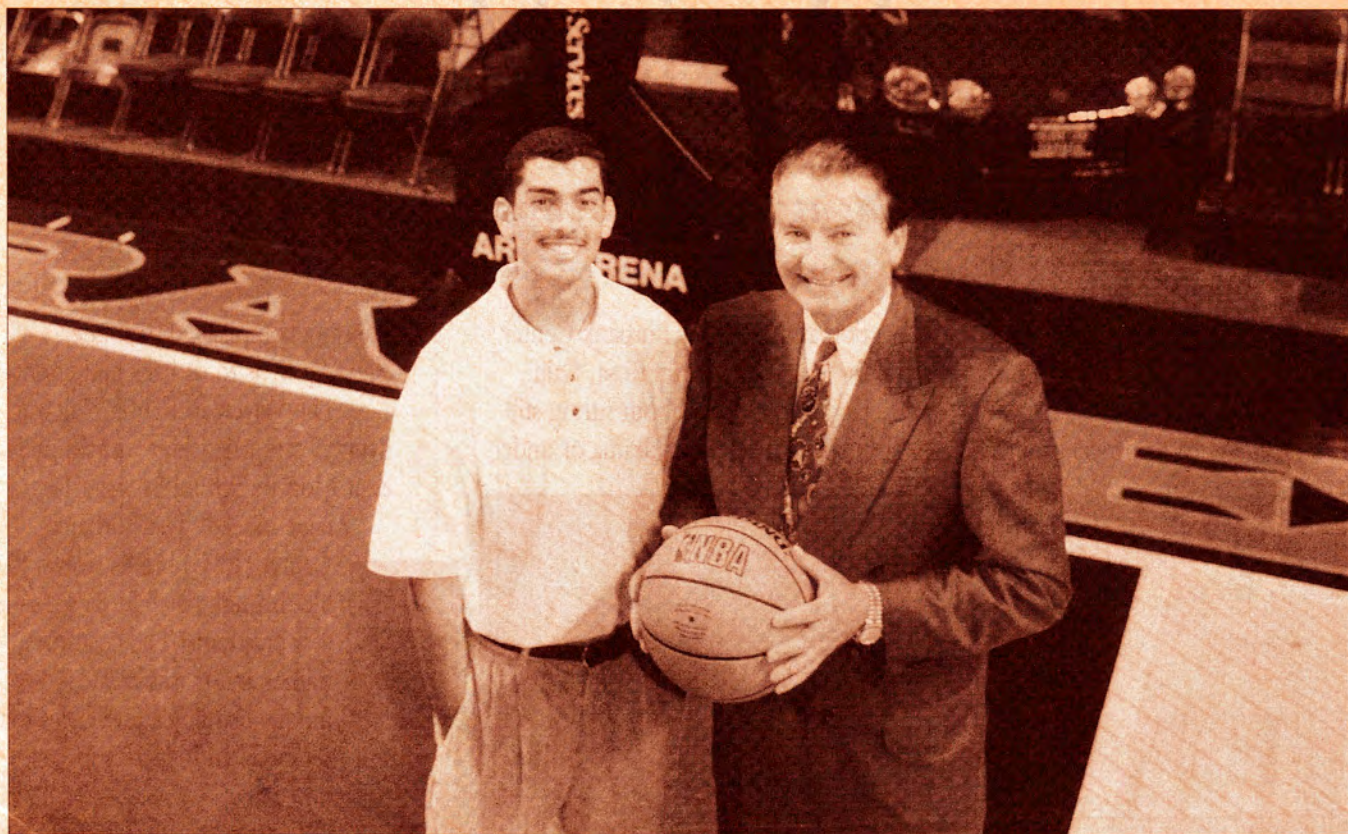
"It has to get to a certain point to bother me . . . like when I can't walk around anymore."

But that breaking point seems to be coming more readily as she gets older. And she says that's scary: "I hear myself saying something my mom would, like 'Oh, that's disgusting.'"

And when that happens, she gives in. In fact, she advises both sides to cave when the argument's "just not worth it."

"I think you have to realize that no one's going to get his way all of the time," she says.

SACRAMENTO BEE
JANUARY 27, 1996



Terrence Moore

Big Shots

Sacramento teens can score big if they play by the rules.



When high school senior Frank Sanger took possession of the basketball at

Arco Arena in Sacramento, Calif., he knew he had only one chance to win.

In front of a packed crowd, Frank bounced the ball, sprang up and scored with a one-handed toss!

But Frank's shot didn't just score a basket. It also scored him a brand-new car, courtesy of Folsom Lake Toyota.

"I was so stunned I hardly

remember what happened," laughs Frank.

Giving people a shot at winning is nothing new at Sacramento Kings' games, where a fan gets a chance to shoot in a half-court contest at every game.

The night Frank won, the odds were a bit different. Twenty-five students got to participate in a special half-court shoot-out. The teens were drawn from hundreds who promised to stay safe, sober and drug free during prom season.

For Chuck Peterson, president of Folsom Lake Toyota, the winning season runs year-round. The

dealership sponsors several sports events for the Kings Community Foundation.

Folsom Lake Toyota is a champion in its own right, winning the Toyota President's Award, which recognizes dealerships that make customer satisfaction a high priority and help meet community needs.

For Frank Sanger, giving it his best shot has meant big rewards, on and off the court.

Frank Sanger (left) with Chuck Peterson on the Arco Arena court



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