

Tough Loss for Acalanes Softball

By Kevin D. Shallat

The Acalanes Dons softball team had a lot of things going for them coming into a first round North Coast Section playoff game against the Las Lomas Knights on Tuesday, May 22.

With plenty of success against the Knights this year as they completed the regular season sweep against Las Lomas, the Dons had also scored 11 runs in the regular season against the same Las Lomas pitcher they faced Tuesday, Hannah Port, and had home field advantage in this year's NCS playoff game. But none of these factors helped the Dons in their NCS match-up against the Knights – they lost to Las Lomas 6 to 2.

It didn't take long for the Dons to put a run on the board when Acalanes standout player Yvette Dickson hit a fielder's choice to the short-stop in the bottom of the first to score a run and record an RBI. Dickson has filled in nicely since replacing injured catcher, Sara Stenson, who has since moved to the designated player and first base positions.

Las Lomas shortstop Lauren Desino hit the second of back to back doubles in the top of the third inning to score the Knights' first run of the game. Acalanes did their best to respond by hitting the ball hard. Dickson hit a hard shot to center that was caught. Ashley Borrelli also hit a hard liner to left field, but came up empty.

Starting pitcher Haley Ward showed her maturity and patience in the top of the fourth inning. She gave up an initial hit and walked the next bat-

ter. Ward persevered through this initial adversity by forcing the next three batters to ground out or pop out.

"Ward is essential to our game," said teammate Yvette Dickson, who said Ward did what she could to try to help the Dons win.

Ward pitched a tremendous game through four-plus innings. Soon after the top of the fifth had begun, head coaches Rory Ward and Victor Silva made the move to bring in number 10, Katie Gray, to pitch the rest of the way.

Las Lomas went on to score three runs in the fifth, and two runs in the sixth, and finish the day with six runs scored.

Two seniors did what they could for the team in their final game with Acalanes. Hannah Fraschieri went three for four, while recording a double and a run scored. Sara Stenson also contributed, going one for three at the plate on the day.

"Normally we're good hitters," Dickson explained. Although Acalanes needed more runs to win, but they nearly matched Las Lomas in hit production – the Knights with 10, the Dons with 8.

Coach Rory Ward said the team fought hard but just didn't have enough energy to produce as well as they could with runners in scoring position. "We haven't scored many runs lately, which makes it hard to win games," Ward said.

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