

# Baseball loses two in a row to LBCC

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Losing two games in a row against Long Beach City College, the Cerritos College baseball team lost its away game 1-5 on Saturday.

In the first two innings, neither of the teams were able to get any runs.

Outfielder Chris Esparza said, "I think we just put ourselves on a downhill. We didn't play as a team, we didn't have heart, and we pretty much gave up."

Esparza had two strikeouts and three put-outs throughout the game.

In the third inning, LBCC scored two runs with three hits and no errors.

It was in the sixth inning that the Falcons infielder Zach Johnson scored the only run that the team would score throughout the entire game.

LBCC scored two runs that inning and one more in the eighth, confirming its win.

Falcons pitcher Jake Bell said the previous game was probably the worst game it played in the series.

Cerritos had played LBCC in the previous game as well, losing 1-3.

Bell said that the team had improved on what it lacked in the first game.

"We were actually able to get bunts down in key situations and move runners over into scoring position. We just couldn't execute to get them home," he said.

Infielder Joshua Ancona said, "I think our key player was our starting pitcher [Jonathan Villapondo] because he started off strong and

kept us in the game."

With two hits, one RBI, and nine put-outs in the game, Ancona said that as far as improvement is concerned, he wants to be able to come up with a clutch hit.

Cerritos currently has a record of 3-12 in the season.

With a four in a row losing streak, Bell said, "We just can't put together a good game of baseball yet."

He added that with the record Cerritos currently has, when it comes to motivating the team, Head Coach Ken Gaylord has stepped back and is trying to let the team figure out what's going on so that it can improve on its own.

The Falcons' next game will be away against El Camino College Compton Center on Thursday at 2 p.m.

This will be Cerritos' first game against ECC Compton this season.

**Mobile News** 

Scan to listen to an interview with Cerritos pitcher Jake Bell



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# Men's and women's track place in the top 15 at the Benny Brown Invitational

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Cerritos College men's and women's track and field teams participated in Cal State Fullerton's Ben Brown invitational this past weekend.

The invitational took place on Friday and Saturday.

A variety of schools participated in the invitational, including UCLA, Pepperdine, Cal State Los Angeles, USC, Cal State Fullerton, UC Irvine and several junior colleges.

The event attracted around 1,400 to 1,500 entries in the invitational.

Tracy Bowling, who came in 15th place in the 5,000 meters race, set a new school record. Her time of 17:47.33 beat the old standard of 18:18.86, which was set in 2006 by Meryl Folloso. Bowling was one of three community college runners that participated.

Destini Poplar, a hammer thrower and shot putter, participated in two events.

"I participated in hammer and shot put, but I did not make it to finals.

"I think overall, we did pretty well," she continued. "We had some good strengths and weaknesses. We could always improve from what we do. Personally, I think I can improve in my shot put by working on my technique."

As a team, the Falcons fared well and will now host the California Relays on Wednesday and Thursday.

Miguel Villacan, a javelin thrower, discus thrower and shot putter, wasn't able to attend the invitational, but gave his thoughts on the teams' performances.

"I think they did pretty well," he said.

"We have a strong team and everyday we are working hard to get better as well as support each other to improve our form."

Carissa English, a hammer and discus thrower, commented on her performance.

"I competed in the hammer and discus throw, but I did not place in finals for any of the events.

"Overall, we did pretty good. I need to focus on myself and on my team to improve.

"My goal is to get to state and to at least place in the top. Our next competition is this Friday at Cerritos," she said.

The men and women's track team will be participating in the California Relays at the Cerritos track on Wednesday at 10 a.m.

**Mobile News** 

Scan to listen to an interview with shot putter Destini Poplar



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MICHAEL WESTERFIELD/TM

**Leaping for the goal:** Cerritos College women's track and field pole vaulter Jennifer Marroquin makes her approach to the pit as she trains for the season. In high school, Marroquin was involved in track and field, spent a season on the wrestling team and was also involved in soccer and gymnastics.

# Pole vaulters breaking records

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Two women from the Cerritos College women's track team have the chance to break records this year in the male-dominated sport of pole vaulting.

It's a sport that combines the speed of sprinting with the full body strength and perfect technique necessary to fly up and over a 12-foot bar.

Cerritos pole vaulter Jennifer Marroquin said, "It's a full body sports event.

"It's very mental too but you have to do it without really thinking about it."

More than most other track and field sports, pole vaulting engages all major muscle groups.

During the approach, a vaulter is running while using his upper body to control the pole and get a good plant.

During the swing up, the vaulter uses upper body and grip strength to ride the bend of the pole while using core muscles to lift the legs up and over the bar.

Cerritos College's other woman pole vaulter Mamie Stiger said, "You use every part of your body.

"You're attending to every detail in the process, doing every part of everything just right. Everything you do, it all goes into the vault."

The sport of pole vaulting focuses more on detailed execution of technique than many other field events.

A simplistic breakdown lists seven steps involved in each pole vault. More detailed studies list 30 or more factors that determine optimum success.

"It's just too much to think about," Marroquin said.

"If you focus on one part right it could mess everything else up. Coach breaks it down and we do drills to get each part down as muscle memory. Then when we vault, it's natural, it flows.

"We do it over and over to know what each part feels like when we do it right," Marroquin explained.

"Our body commits it to muscle memory so when we put it all together we know this is the way it's supposed to be."

Stiger said, "Eventually you get to the point where you really just do it kind of naturally.

"You don't think about it."

The mental aspects of pole vaulting is what separates the ancient sport from others, according to coach Nicholas Armstrong.

"It's a real mental challenge. It's a test of your mental fortitude as an athlete and as a person," Armstrong said.

"You're asking the question, can you do this? Do you have strong enough confidence that it will work for you."

A lot of people don't ever try it, according to Armstrong.

"A lot of people just can't believe they are going to run toward a box with a pole in their hand and that it's going to work.

"In pole vaulting you have to know I'm going to run down this runway. I'm going to stick this pole in the box," Armstrong said.

"It's going to bend for me and it's going to throw me over this bar.

Marroquin said, "If you have a good plant, and as long as you trust the pole, you should land in the pit. Just never let go of the pole."

Coming from a soccer and gymnastics background, she tried pole vaulting for the first time out of curiosity.

"I was working out one day and just tried it. It was fun, I wanted to do it more. It seems kind of weird at first."

Stiger said, "It is weird. You're going to feel silly at first. It's awkward. It feels wrong. You're going to feel stupid, but it's fun. Pole vaulters are a different breed."

Stiger, who had success in high school pole vaulting, first tried pole vaulting for a friend.

"Like one day you say, I'm going to do that! Yea right," Stiger laughed. "Then I came back to it and I don't know why but I stuck to it and it stuck to me."

The sport is gaining in popularity throughout the world. Pole vaulting became an Olympic sport in 1896, but only for men.

It wasn't part of the women's Olympic competition until 2000.

"Olympics is like a crazy dream," Stiger said.

"I want to see if I could compete at that level. Of course I would go for any Olympic opportunity it would be amazing. It's the Olympics. But I have to get there first."

For the last four years, women's pole vaulting has been dominated by Yelena Isinbayeva, of Russia.

The current outdoor world record is 5.06 meters (16 ft. 7 in).

Isinbayeva just set a new indoor record of 5.01 meters (16 ft. 5 in) on Feb. 23.

"Isinbayeva, even though she's currently the world record holder, is constantly trying to beat her self," Marroquin said.

"She's constantly, 'keep doing my best, keep doing my best.' That's why she's constantly breaking the world record.

"Her warm ups are pretty much our work outs. Like when you see her warm up you'll see her walking down the runway doing handstands for a while. I have to be able to last through her warm ups and then, see if I can last through her work out."

Stiger and Marroquin are hoping to break another record. First is the California state record. Karen Guravska, formerly of Cerritos College, has held the California state women's pole vault record of 12 feet and 4 inches for almost four years.

"My own goal is actually breaking the school record," said Stiger.

"I want to get as close as I can and then when I do, get as far away as possible even higher."

Both Cerritos women vaulters are in the running to break that mark this year before they transfer. They are breaking personal records along the way.

"When I do it, wow! I can't believe that just happened," said Stiger. "It's incredible to get ahead of your own personal best. At least in the falling part, it's just a woosh of excitement. You really just want to scream, it's pretty crazy. I'm speechless, like I can't articulate putting out all of my happiness."

Armstrong said, "The toughest part of being a coach sometimes is trying to get my point across to the ladies and communicate at a level they can understand. It's not like other sports. With the pole vault it's a physical strengthening and also a strong mental strengthening.

"It's not like running," Armstrong continued, "Everybody can lace some spikes up. You may be fast or slow. But not everyone has the courage and the heart to pole vault."