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Wrestling

First tournament of the year proves to be difficult despite strong scoring output

Led by sophomore Carlos Mendoza, the Cerritos Falcons were able to punch a ticket to the CCCAA State Championships with a 14th place finish in the Southern California Championships. The state championship is on Nov. 19 in Fresno.

Men's Cross Country

Falcons are the final team to qualify for state after SoCal Championships

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Women's Cross Country

Team advances to CCCAA State Championships after change to postseason field

The Cerritos College women's cross country team found themselves on the better end of circumstance after finishing 15th in the SoCal Championships. The team has clinched a birth to the state championship after not enough teams from Northern California had at least five runners.

Women's Basketball

First tournament of the year proves to be difficult despite strong scoring output

Sophomore guard Kaylyn James is averaging 25 points per game in just the first three games of the new season. She has done it all while shooting 47 percent from the field. Her scoring will be vital as the team will be playing this season without sophomore guard Allyson O'Brien due to injury.

Volleyball

Cerritos ends the season with a win over LA Harbor in straight sets

The first season for head coach Kari Pestolesi ended on a high note after her team was able to secure a win over Los Angeles Harbor College in straight sets (25-15, 25-19 and 26-14). The team ended with an overall record of 10-13.

Scan to see photo gallery of volleyball's last game



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BRIANA HICKS/TM

End of season: Head coach Frank Mazzotta addresses his team following a 56-35 loss to Ventura in the season finale. The team finished the season a disappointing 4-6 season and missed out on the a bowl game for the first time since 2012.

Loss to Ventura ends season

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For weeks head coach Frank Mazzotta kept asking what his players would do come Monday and there's no football? An answer will soon come.

Despite tying a season-high in points, the Falcons dropped the season finale against the Ventura Pirates, 56-35. The loss dropped the team's record to 4-6 missing out on a chance at a bowl game by one game.

Head coach Frank Mazzotta said, "All along, I thought we were as good as anybody we played, we're just undisciplined and young. We made some big mistakes and it killed us."

Since Oct. 22, Mazzotta had been trying to get his players to understand the severity of the remaining games of the season. His players understood the significance of the season.

"[Mazzotta] just told us to hold our heads up. We gave it our all this year. I still think we were better than every team we played, penalties killed us," Kishawn Holmes said.

After starting the season 2-2, the Falcons finished the season 2-4 including dropping the last two games of the season at Moorpark and at home against Ventura.

Holmes continued to build on his freshman season. He added for 1,120 yards on the ground while scoring 11 touchdowns, good for the No. 1 rusher in the state.

At the conclusion of the Ventura game, Holmes had also climbed up to second all-time in career rushing yards at Cerritos College.

In addition to Holmes, the Falcons were pleasantly surprised with

cons were pleasantly surprised with the outstanding play of quarterback Nick Mitchell.

Mazzotta felt like this season finale could have been the best showing for Mitchell this season.

"I thought [Mitchell] had a great game. Tonight he played the best he has all year. The guys at LA Valley would've got canned, but he got better every week," Mazzotta said.

Mitchell has been criticized heavily this season after coming to Cerritos as a bounce back from Oregon State. Despite the talk, he was not going to let anything slow him down.

"It all comes back to faith. At the end of the day, football is just a game. When you look at life, you can't let stuff like that divide you and tear you up," Mitchell said.

Center Daniel Alanouf said, "I saw that he never gave up and that was one thing I really admired. Even though there were a lot of doubts, he wanted to win so he kept getting up and that's what it's about."

In a disappointing effort, the defense allowed the most points it

has all season long in the 56-point effort by the Pirates. Furthermore, it was the most points the team had allowed since 41 points last season at Moorpark.

"There were a lot of penalties, we put the defense in some pretty bad spots out there," Mazzotta said.

One major change in defense was safety Elijah Walker was not in uniform. During the Moorpark contest, he left the game with a knee injury and did not return.

Toward the end of the game, Walker and Mazzotta had words. After the game Mazzotta was still visibly upset.

"I go over there and tell him to move away from [Dillon Faamatu] because he didn't need to be coddled. And he disrespected me. He's already been offered a scholarship, they don't get it; the coaches ask me [about them]."

"I told him right to his face, 'You might not play football ever again.' Simple as that, you disrespect me; you walk up to me I'll do anything for you, I ask you to do something

and you disrespect me? I'm done, I've never treated him that way, ever," Mazzotta said.

The situation occurred late in the fourth quarter with defensive end Faamatu getting two consecutive unsportsmanlike conduct penalties. Walker went to console Faamatu but Mazzotta felt he didn't need to be coddled.

Mazzotta also added he hoped he'd cool down.

The situation has since died down with Walker saying, "We talked about it and everything was taken care of."

With so much riding on this game for the Falcons, there was obviously a lot of tension and emotions left on the field.

Holmes said, "It's harder to say, 'How do you control your emotions?' Emotions are flying all over the place and you know this is your last game, especially for sophomores. I can't blame anybody for spazzing out but it's all about character."

Mazzotta understood the added emotion for the team but still felt it needed to be controlled better.

"It's society today, the [players] see that and react. Like [Faamatu] I told him you can't react. You have to hope somebody sees that if you get up and hit the guy and you get thrown out of the game. You don't understand what you're doing to yourself," Mazzotta said

After the game Mitchell, Alanouf and Holmes all expressed their intention to finish school strong before turning their attention back to football.

2016 Season in Review

Date	Opponent	Result
3-Sep	at LA Valley	L, 23-7
10-Sep	vs. Fullerton	L, 31-19
17-Sep	vs. Palomar	W, 21-17
24-Sep	at Golden West	W, 7-3
1-Oct	at Riverside	L, 31-16

Date	Opponent	Result
15-Oct	vs. Santa Monica	W, 35-13
22-Oct	at Bakersfield	L, 28-21
29-Oct	vs. College of the Canyons	W, 24-21
5-Nov	at Moorpark	L, 35-28
12-Nov	vs. Ventura	L, 56-35

Water polo teams fall just days apart from each other

Familiar foe knocks women's water polo out of postseason

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After being invited to the Southern California regional playoffs and a 10th seed, the Falcons suffered an early exit after losing to Ventura College 10-7.

Attacker Isabella Sierra felt it didn't matter that Ventura put the team out.

"That day the team was in good spirits and [it] played really well together even if the outcome wasn't what we had hoped for," she said.

Despite the early exit the Falcons concluded the team's most productive season since its last playoff berth in 2012.

Cerritos was able to improve their overall record by six wins from last season to finish with a 16-11 and a conference record of 8-2 which was good for second in the

conference.

Head coach Sergio Macias said that his two goals for the season were to, "Compete for a conference championship and to qualify for the SoCal Regional Playoffs."

The team did accomplish its goal of attending the regional playoffs for the first time since 2012 and although it did not win the conference championship they still took third at the tournament.

Even with the once promising season just ended for the Falcons, Macias is not focused on records.

"I don't pay attention to the overall record, I am more concerned how we improve throughout the season," he said.

The improvement of the team from last season was an impressive feat and had a lot to do with hard work and motivation.

The team was almost an exact opposite from last year. The team had a 10-16 record last season and this season compiled a 16-11 record.

Macias said, "The incoming

freshman class complimented the returners with experience and the drive to compete."

Macias added, "It was a great group to work with this year."

The team featured great team play and strong individual season performances from multiple players.

As a team they combined for 420 steals throughout the season which was good for fifth in the entire state.

With multiple players reaching double digits in both goals, assists and steals, the team proved to be well rounded.

Sierra led the team with 87 steals, there were five other players on the team with over 30.

"It was a focused around the fact that my teammates are selfless and would rather try to gain opportunities for teammates rather than only focusing on self glory."

"We definitely shared the responsibility of carrying the team evenly," Sierra said.

Men's water polo team stunned after early playoff elimination

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After a fantastic season in and out of the conference, the Cerritos men's water polo team fell short in the SoCal Regional Playoffs by one goal to what head coach Joe Abing described as "a very good Cuesta team."

The Falcons attended the playoffs hosted at Golden West College Friday after being awarded the second seed.

The match against Cuesta was a rematch of the Golden West Tournament finals where Cerritos was victorious.

Cerritos fell early and was down by as many as four points, although it did claw back into the game, their comeback effort was too little too late as Cuesta was able to win by a score of 12-11 effectively ending

the Falcons' season.

"Anytime the season comes to an end and you were hoping to go further it can be pretty difficult," Abing said.

After the game coach described the mood as "very somber."

Even though the season was cut short Abing was very proud and happy for his team.

"I still feel like we had a very successful season," he said. "One game does not define a season."

Although the season ended before the team could reach their goal of a state championship, Cerritos was still able to capture its first conference championship since 2012 after beating rival Long Beach City College in the conference finals.

Driver Angel Rojas was able to finish third in goals in the entire state, while his brother Jesus and him were able to hold the top two spots in assists.

Jesus said, "It has been a pleasure to play with [Angel] [...] We play on the Venezuelan National Team together

The freshman goalie tandem of

Matthew Contreras and Jason Curriel were able to accumulate over 100 saves each and combine for over 300.

Albeit the early exit, Abing was adamant in how proud he was of his team and their season.

"It goes beyond winning and losing. Winning the conference felt really good, but at the end of the day its the experience I had with the guys on the team," he said.

Abing has a strong sense of pride for his teams chemistry and their bonding throughout the season.

"I'm proud that we became a team, that we supported one another," he said.

He also recalled a moment the team had when they met after their last game where he felt extremely proud of his team.

"When we met as a team after the game a lot of guys spoke up and talked about how appreciative they were of each other and thankful for the opportunity to have been a part of the team and that it meant a lot to them."