

Morgen Defies Constant Injuries

How continuous injuries don't bring her down.

by Gaby Quintero

Staff writer

Despite her constant injuries, senior Morgen Lakpour continues to participate in multiple sports such as cheer and gymnastics due to her commitment.

She started doing gymnastics at the age of four, and her first injury was a broken arm doing round offs at age eight. Her greatest accomplishments as a gymnast are getting a score of 9.0 or higher at competitions and earning a Team Supporter Award, an award given to the most supportive team member.

Since starting cheer and gymnastics, Lakpour has broken her arm, dislocated her collarbone, hyperextended her elbow, sprained her ankle several times, and has had to have double knee surgery.

The longest recovery time Lakpour has taken due to an injury was a year. It was due to her double knee surgery. "It was a hard comeback because I couldn't walk. It make it really hard for me to recover," explained Lakpour. She was doing some tumbling on tile floor for cheer. At the time of her injury, cheer was not considered a sport so mats were not provided, resulting in Lakpour

breaking both knee growth plates.

This injury was the most emotional for Lakpour. She had to get used to laying in bed and not being active for a couple of months. She turned to her gymnastics

"The doctor was impressed that she recovered better than most of his other patients. She came out stronger. She came out more flexible," explained Olesiuk.

Despite her injuries, Lakpour continues to do gymnastics because she has a strong passion for the sport. "It's a hobby I enjoy

biggest impact on her because she had to stop doing gymnastics. As the injuries increased, she became more motivated to recover.

Lakpour is recovering from a recent injury due to gymnastics. She sprained her ankle in late September when she landed wrong doing a roundoff back tuck. Due

have Lakpour back on the team. Since it was her first day back, Olesiuk first had to secure Lakpour's ankle to prevent any further injury. After that, Lakpour was able to join the rest of her team and warm up for practice.

Olesiuk said that every time Lakpour has gotten injured, she comes back trying harder than before she was injured. Olesiuk excitedly remarked, "Morgen's great; she's got determination and she wants to do it." Coach Olesiuk has seen the dedication and determination that Lakpour has for gymnastics.

Lakpour was able to rejoin her team right before competition in January next year. By working her skill levels back up, Lakpour will help her team at competition next month. Olesiuk will continue to help Lakpour by giving her exercises that strengthen the lower legs and that keep her body in shape for stunts.

Some examples of these exercises are toes curls, heel touches, toe points, and writing her name in cursive with her ankles. These exercises also help Lakpour improve her weak ankles, which happens to be her hardest challenge to overcome. She has managed to overcome this challenge before, and she will continue to do it if necessary for her love of gymnastics.



Lakpour on her first day back after one month rest from ankle sprain with gymnastic coach, Bambi Olesiuk

coach, Bambi Olesiuk, for help with her recovery. Olesiuk decided that the best option was to put her through physical therapy.

doing," cheered Lakpour. Getting an injury doesn't have a big impact on her mental state anymore. Her first injuries had the

to her injury, Lakpour was out all of October; she went back to doing gymnastics on November 8.

Coach Olesiuk was ecstatic to

Lessening the Power in Powderpuff

Aggressive tactics will be limited this year

by Gurpreet Grewal

Sports Editor

The tackling, aggressive plays, and drama will be kept to a minimum at this year's Kennedy powderpuff game in order to keep the game clean and safe. Following tryouts held on the week of November 6th, the girls had two months to train and learn fundamentals of basic football.

Due to the remodeling of the track and field during winter, and recent wildfires the powderpuff game is to be held on Thursday, January 18, 2018. Coaches for the junior powderpuff team are Franklin Murphy, Ruben Araujo, Luis Palomino, and Caleb Arriola. Coaching the senior powderpuff team are returnee coaches Chris Parks, Gio Maffei, Adam Lopez, and Ruben Anguiano.

The same flag football rules apply to powderpuff. It is designed to be a game of skill, speed, and ability. With a maximum roster size of 25, numerous girls were cut this time.

"Powderpuff is basically like flag football. It's a contact sport, and aggression is necessary to a certain extent. A lot of the plays we will focus on will be defensive to keep it safe. However, the girls will be told to keep the drama out and will be benched if they're caught being aggressive on purpose," remarked Parks.

There have been no rule changes to the game, however in order to keep the game safe, rules regarding aggress-

sive tactics will be enforced.

In attempt to avoid plays such as unclear tackling this year, the senior coaches have decided to keep their main focus on defensive tactics such as keeping on top of the receiver, correct hand placement when tackling, and understanding the other team's moves.

"I'm looking forward to the game this year. Aggressive moves will be limited, which I think is just an attempt to keep it safe. Last year, there were injuries when I was watching the game. But I'm looking forward to the experience and memories since this is my first time," claimed senior Hazel Garcia.

The junior coaches have all new players and with limited

for fewer fumbles, and leading the receiver towards the ball to score as much as possible.

Different positions come with different skill sets. The coaches for both seniors and juniors will be focusing on basic drills to help prepare newcomers, but also making sure aggressive tactics are limited and not overused in order to keep safety their main priority.

"There isn't much time to prepare the girls; the seniors are at an advantage since most of them are returnees. The juniors are doing this for the time, so they will have to make sure they don't play dirty and end up getting benched because they feel like they're under a lot of pressure," declared Parks.

Last year, the roster consisted of 14 girls for the seniors and 13 for the juniors. There were a couple injuries in the previ-



Dally Johnson trying out for a quarterback for the 2017-2018 team

time will strive to fit in both offensive and defensive approaches such as spins and juking to improve speed, quick handoffs

ous game and that was due to harsh offensive tactics. In the last game the juniors beat the seniors for the first time in awhile and

Girls Volleyball Season Wrap-up

How well the lady cougars performed during the season

by Enrique Ormeno

News Editor

The first round of playoffs for the Division II Volleyball Championship ended in a loss when the Lady Cougars went up against University High School. The girls lost in three sets, but they fought hard putting up double-digit points throughout the three sets.

The lack of communication and practice had a negative effect on the final outcome. The girls could not gain any sort of momentum throughout the three sets. This is largely due to the fact various team members didn't attend practice leading up to the game because they were preoccupied with other extracurricular activities. Varsity setter Joy Abo explained, "We were given a difficult seed in playoffs after performing not too well in the Van Nuys Invitational Tournament." If they would have skipped the tournament or have won a good number of games throughout the tournament, the Lady Cougars would've faced higher seed schools, had more time to practice, and possibly have gotten further into playoffs.

Throughout the season, the Lady Cougars had a good season record of seven wins with five losses. According to Maxpreps and the Valley Mission standings, the girls earned a spot right behind top-tier schools like Sylmar, Van Nuys, and San Fernando. The Lady Tigers from San Fernando were also a part of the Division II playoffs, made it to the championship game,

but lost against Verdugo Hills.

With regards to the future of the volleyball program at Kennedy, the senior girls and coach Donald Morales believe the program will flourish due to the strong

"We were given a difficult seed in playoffs after performing not too well in the Van Nuys Invitational Tournament..."

JV team they currently have.

Morales commented, "Next year will definitely be a year where we rebuild the varsity team due to a large number of seniors leaving us this year. However, we do have some impressive players who have the potential of becoming great players. Our two most noticeable players are opposite hitter Diva Carton and Kayla Walters who plays as our middle blocker."

These two players can add firepower to the roster and a defensive aspect that will help them defeat teams with good hitters.

Although the girls have yet to earn a title, the girls have consistently been able to earn a spot in the CIF playoffs. Last year's season looked like the year the girls would bring home a title before ending with a disappointing five-set loss against Central City Value High School.