

Swimmers qualify for CIF state championship meet

by **Abbigale Berry**

Web Editor

The LGHS swim team had a great 2016 season filled with personal records, CCS medals, and state qualifying races. The varsity boys and girls teams placed fourth and third, respectively, at Leagues, and had many CCS qualifiers. Both JV teams placed fifth in the League.

To begin the season, the varsity girls were not sure how the team would match up after losing two CCS finalists, Alex Grimes and Sarah Jin. However, freshman **Megan Tao** showed promise in her races early on and later broke the LGHS 100 yard breaststroke record three times over the course of League Championships and CCS.

At League Championships in late April, the team placed third with several outstanding races. Freshman **Christina Kulick** took tenth in the 200 yard freestyle and sixth in the 100 yard breaststroke. Junior **Han Nguyen** won both the 200 yard Individual Medley and 100 yard butterfly, only a second off the school records in both races. Freshman **Alison Berg** led the girls to a third place finish in the 200 yard freestyle relay. Berg describes her experience by saying, "being a part of the League final relay was so incredible. It's really fun to swim the 50 [freestyle] alongside my teammates because everyone's there to just give it their all and you know you can count on them."

Varsity boys pulled through League Championships in fourth place,



CCS TEAM: CCS Finalists pose at the Santa Clara International Swim Center.

as well as new CCS qualifying times. Junior **Travis Camors** finaled and qualified for CCS in both the 200 yard and 500 yard freestyles. Junior **Tony Casaccia** anchored the 200 yard freestyle relay, bringing the boys to a second place finish next to Gunn High School. Senior **Joel Panchak** brought home a tenth place in the 100 yard breaststroke. Senior captain **Keith Kulick** describes his final league experience, "It was a bittersweet end to my swimming career, but I'm glad I had the opportunity to represent my team."

This last weekend, all CCS qualifiers headed to Santa Clara International Swim Center to compete. Nguyen placed fifth in the 200

Individual Medley and third in 100 butterfly. Senior captain **Koji Kusumi** swam personal bests all the way to finals where he placed 14th in the 200 Individual Medley and 12th in the 100 backstroke. Casaccia placed seventh in the 50 freestyle, among a heat a primarily seniors. The boys 200 yard freestyle relay placed fifth and qualified for states. Kusumi explains what it was like to have qualified for the CIF State Championships this weekend, "It's pretty sweet. I always thought of CCS as the end all be all, so making it to states is just the cherry on top of a great last season."

Make sure to congratulate your LGHS swimmers and wish the varsity boys and girls luck in their final races at State Championships in Clovis on May 20.



CHEER SQUAD: The LGHS swim team cheers on senior **Reid Barton** at leagues.

POY Lanovaz gets full ride

by **Dakota Rogers**

Editorial Editor

Senior girl **Caice Lanovaz** is a born athlete and has worked hard and developed to become one of the greatest track stars at the school and the entire country. She has competed both for the Wildcats and individually in meets in her high school career, setting school records and achieving success at the national and international level.

Lanovaz has shattered school records and has helped bring the girls track team at Los Gatos to the next level with her outstanding performance. Individually, she won CCS for the 100m Hurdle and set the school record at 14.44 seconds, and set the indoor triple jump school record at 38 feet, 9 inches. Furthermore, she was a key part of the girls 4x1 team in 2013 and 2014 when they won that event in CCS and set yet another school record. Lastly, she helped lead the girls team to win the 4x4 in the 2015 CCS finals, beating St. Francis by a half point and winning the CCS title for the Wildcats.

Outside of the school competition, Lanovaz competes against the nation's best in the heptathlon, a seven part event over two days comprising of 100m hurdle, high jump, shot put and 200m dash on day one, and long jump, javelin and the 800m run on the second day. Currently, Lanovaz is ranked the #1 high school heptathlete in the nation, and #22 in the world for high schoolers. Her talent in this event helped her set the Junior State Heptathlon Record at 5180 points in Junior Nationals at the University of Oregon in June 2015.

Track has taken her all across the country and the world, where she has competed in countless national and international events. At the national level, Lanovaz raced in the Junior Olympics in



LOOKIN' FRESH: Lanovaz poses after winning SCVALS.

Kansas in 2012, Maryland in 2013, Texas in 2014, as well as Junior Nationals in Oregon in 2015. Recently she was given the opportunity to take her talents to the international level and compete for Team USA. After competing in the heptathlon at a qualifier meet in Chicago, Lanovaz was added to the USA World Youth Team, which consists of only 16 and 17 year olds. She traveled along with the 48 other athletes to Cali, Colombia to compete with 100 other countries at the IAAF World Youth Championships. At this international meet she placed 22nd for the heptathlon, but overall Team USA won the meet. As part of the world youth team, Lanovaz met her idol Jackie Joyner-Kersey, an olympic gold medalist and world record holder in the heptathlon.

Sports have always been a quintessential part of Lanovaz's life. Whether she is running, kicking, or shooting, she has been an athlete all her life and has fallen in love with the competition. Growing up she played soccer, basketball, volleyball, and track, but once she reached high school, she let go of all other distractions in order to focus on her true passion: running. Realizing she would be able to compete in college for track, Lanovaz started intensely training, and her hard work has paid off.

Now in her final season at Los Gatos High School, Lanovaz recounts the influence track has had on her life and what the future holds for her talents. "[Track has] taken me all over the United States and beyond, and I can't wait for where else it will lead me. It's open more doors than I could have imagined." Lanovaz is committed to run track at Cal Poly on a full ride scholarship and hopes to continue to pursue her passion and talents in running.



FINISH LINE: Lanovaz sprints to the win for Team USA.

POY Pesic goes Division I

by **Jack Zukin**

World Editor

Standing at six feet seven inches, senior **Vladimir Pesic** towers over his opponents, as well as the freshmen he walks by on any given day at LGHS. With his strong work ethic, determination, competitive nature, and a little bit of height, Pesic has solidified himself as one of the most sought after high school volleyball players in the state. The middle blocker from Los Gatos is playing Division I volleyball next year at the University of California at San Diego where he tentatively plans on studying economics.

After being courted by many Division I programs, Pesic ultimately decided to choose UCSD for its superb academics, the beautiful campus, and the quality of the guys on the team whom he had the chance to practice and hang out with on his official visit during the fall semester.

Pesic immediately diverts the praise thrown his way towards his parents whom he has mentioned as being integral to his success. He notes how they were ultimately responsible for convincing him to go out for volleyball freshman year instead of baseball, which has clearly played off for the D1 bound senior. He is quick to pay tribute to his parents for driving him to and from club practices and supporting him at every one of his games.

Of course basketball seems like the obvious choice for someone with Pesic's build, and although he did play the sport, volleyball has been his first priority since it captivated him freshman year, with other sports quickly taking a back seat. Since his first year on the LGHS volleyball team, Pesic has developed into one of the most dangerous players in the area, excelling in his role as a middle blocker. Pesic ranked fourth in the league last season in both blocks and kills with 64 and 332, respectively.

Unfortunately, the school team did not do as well as Pesic had hoped this year, finishing off the year with a 15-19 record, ending up with a 4-10 record in league. Luckily, the team heated up at the end of the year, and Pesic helped lead the team to an impressive CCS showing, coming in as the last seed and ending up making it to the semifinals against a powerhouse St. Francis team. Sadly, the team lost a heartbreaker to the heavily favored St. Francis Lancers, but Pesic remains proud of his team, commending his team's intensity. He points to senior teammate **Teo Niemann** as one of his closest friends on the team. He formed a tight bond with Niemann

during his club volleyball commitment where they spent countless hours competing together. Pesic also names seniors **Cameron Sarnevesht**, **Aiden Drugge**, and **Kevin Closson** as being great leaders and players essential to the team's success by making "his last school season really fun and competitive."

Pesic's work ethic extends to the classroom where he thrives, especially during the season which he credits for increasing his productivity. While Pesic works hard in school and in his sport, he enjoys relaxing with his friends by playing sand volleyball to reset and refocus. One of the motivating factors Pesic cites for his hard work is his younger sister, who also plays volleyball and drives him to be a positive role model.

When asked what his favorite part of the game is, Pesic says "Getting a block is the best feeling because you just shut the other team down and gain so much momentum," but he's quick to add that "Getting kills is also great because it's just you versus their block and defenders and when you get a big bounce, it feels amazing." Pesic also has a strong serving game, with passing as the only aspect of the game that his position does not take part in.

For younger athletes Pesic imparted some final words of wisdom, encouraging them "to stay disciplined while having fun and making sure not to let rough losses upset you." Pesic's hard work on the court, positive impact on the community, and athletic success has earned him El Gato's male athlete of the year award.



DIVISION I QUALITY: Vlad spikes a shot during practice.

The Golden State Warriors take the Bay Area by storm

by **Cole Potter**

Web Editor-in-Chief

It is official; basketball has taken over the Bay, as the Golden State Warriors continue to roll through the NBA Playoffs. Now facing off against the Oklahoma City Thunder in the Western Conference Finals, the Warriors have played impressively throughout the postseason, and the legend of point guard Stephen Curry seems only to grow larger.

To get to their current position in the playoffs, the Warriors have had to beat two formidable opponents, the Houston Rockets and the Portland Trailblazers. The Warriors were able to shoot down the Rockets in five games, doing so without much assistance from their star Curry. Curry fought ankle pain throughout the first few games, and left the fourth with a severe knee injury. The injury kept Curry from playing for the next three weeks, and bench players such as Shaun Livingston, Andre Iguodala, and Ian Clark stepped up to fill the void left by their point guard's absence.

However, the Warriors bench has proven to be just as competitive as any other starting team in the playoffs. After closing out the series with Houston in Game 5, the team continued their postseason suc-

cess by winning the first two games of the series against Portland. In each game during the Curry hiatus, role players have contributed well offensively and defensively, leading to only one loss in four and a half games.

When Curry did return, he did so in historic fashion. Slotted to play 25 minutes in Game 4 of the series against Portland, Curry was tapped to play for longer when replacement point guard Livingston was ejected for a technical foul. Curry and the team logged through the game, shooting poorly and only emerging offensively in the fourth quarter. After a Harrison Barnes three-pointer forced overtime, the stage was set for Curry to make history. Curry exploded for 17 points, outscoring the entire Portland team in the five minute overtime period. This mark beat the record previously held by Gilbert Arenas by one for most points scored in a single NBA overtime period. Curry, who had sat the previous three weeks, turned to the crowd after hitting a deep three and shouted, "I'm back."

Curry confirmed this the next day, when it was announced that Curry had become the first unanimously voted NBA Most Valuable Player. Curry has now won two MVP awards in as many years, and hopes

to lead his team to their second championship in a row. The team now faces the Oklahoma City Thunder in the Western Conference Finals.



SUCCESSFUL SERIES: The Golden State Warriors' bench is starting-team caliber.