



**A.J. Girls  
Defeat Skyline  
In Summer  
Basketball,**  
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*Time Out*

**AJ Summer Baseball Rolling With New Coach**



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By **Chuck Baker**  
*The News*

The Prospector baseball team may have gotten a late start to the summer while the search for a new head coach was going on but they go things roll-

ing this past week with scrimmage games against teams from Chandler Hamilton and Gilbert Perry.

The new coach at AJHS, Preston English, was announced on June 6 in a press release issued by AJUSD and later that

same day, English was out on the baseball field conducting a team practice.

This past Tuesday, the AJHS baseball team played Hamilton and despite holding an early 3-2 lead, the Prospectors fell 10-7 as Hamilton came up with a six-run, fifth inning.

Nick Saathoff went 2-for-2 at the plate for Apache Junction and also reached base on a walk. Martin Fahey went 1-for-2 and drove in a pair of runs, Ryan Sparks went 1-for-4 and also knocked in two runs and David Sandoval added a single.

Facing Perry on Wednesday of last week, Apache Junction was up 5-0 after scoring two runs in the top half of the fifth inning but Perry came back to score twice in the last of the fifth and then added five runs in the bottom of the sixth to take a 7-5 lead.



Prospector pitcher **Nathan Higginbottom** delivers a pitch during a Summer game against Perry HS last Wednesday while teammate and shortstop **Nick Saathoff** is ready to make a play



Prospector baseball player **Luke Dexter** watches a RBI double he smashed this past Wednesday versus Perry High School in a Summer league game played in Gilbert. Dexter and the rest of the AJHS players played Perry to an 8-8 tie.

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**Lombardi Lives**

The late and great NFL coach Vincent Lombardi was once quoted as saying, "Winning isn't everything - It's the only thing." His spirit lives on at Mesa Southern Little League.

New this year in Arizona District 7 Little League was the Tournament of Champions mini-tournament intended for the regular season champions from little league programs at Mesa Southern, Apache Junction, Four Peaks, Mesa Eastern, Mesa North Central, Red Mountain National, Mesa American, Red Mountain American and Mesa Western.

The rules for this mini-tournament clearly stated that only the regular season champions from each of the nine District 7 programs are eligible to play. No All Stars teams. The District 7 All Star Tournament is something that comes up later.

Apparently, during the TOC, Mesa Southern was cruising through their side of the bracket with lopsided wins over Mesa Western, Apache Junction and Four Peaks to advance to the finals when it was discovered that Mesa Southern wasn't exactly following the rules. The team that they had entered into the TOC, I was told by a coach from Four Peaks, wasn't their regular season championship team but an All Star team and one that even included a player from Phoenix, clearly outside of District 7 boundaries.

Mesa Southern was booted from the TOC but Lombardi would have loved their efforts.

**Prospectors Play Two Close Games In Summer Hoops**

By **Chuck Baker**  
*The News*

The AJHS boys played two close games this past week in the Mesa Skyline Summer Basketball League with nearly identical results, losing to Tucson Pueblo 44-37 and falling to Tempe 44-38.

In the Pueblo game, the Prospectors held a 35-34 lead with 7:43 to go in the second half before Pueblo went on an 8-0 run to win the game down the stretch.

In the Tempe game, AJHS was trailing 36-34 with 6:16 to play before Tempe went on a 6-0 late run to secure the win.

Colt Grandstaff led Apache Junction in scoring in both games, netting 21 against Pueblo and 14 against Tempe. Grandstaff also nabbed four rebounds in each contest.

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Prospector basketball players (from left to right) **Ravvi Patel**, **Colt Grandstaff** and **Kyrel Parker** converge on a Tempe player during last week's Summer League at Skyline High School. Also pictured at far right is AJHS player **Paul Miles**.

**AJHS Vs. AJHS In Summer Softball And The Winner Is...**

By **Chuck Baker**  
*The News*

When the Lady Prospector softball players took the field for their Tempe Summer League game this past Thursday at Kiwanis Park in Tempe, it was an absolute guarantee that Apache Junction would win the game.

No, the fix wasn't in and both teams showed up to play. The guarantee came about because in the first of two games, Apache Junction was playing against Apache Junction.

Apache Junction's 18-and-under squad now known as "A.J. Gold" took on the 16-and-under squad from AJHS known as "A.J. Black" in the first of two games for each team this past Thursday. With the help of two big innings, Gold defeated Black 12-4 as dozens of AJHS softball fans cheered on both teams.

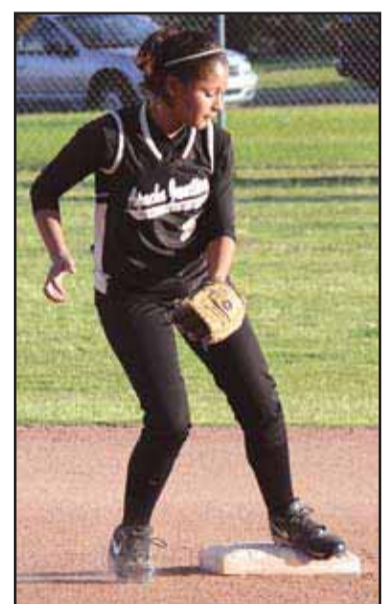
A.J. Black, made up mostly of current and incoming freshmen players, got off to a terrific start against their older counterparts. After holding A.J. Gold scoreless in the first inning, A.J. Black grabbed a 2-0 lead in the bottom of the first inning as Sara Cranmer scored from third base on a wild pitch and Jade Yost scored on a fielder's choice.

A.J. Gold came back to tie the game, 2-2, in the top of the second inning and then took the lead after scoring four runs in the third inning, getting big run-scoring singles from Chelsey Streibich, Lindsay Skinner and Autumn Rhodes.

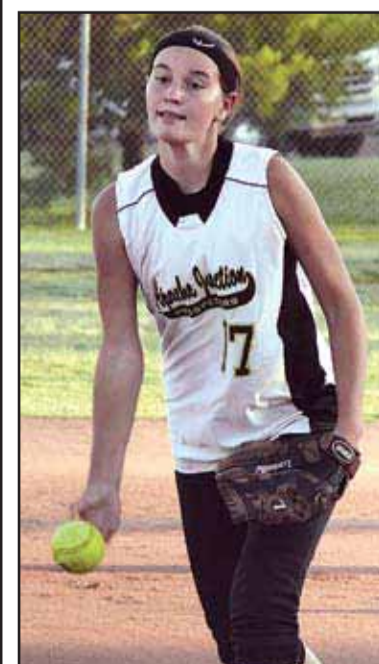
A.J. Black added a run in the bottom of the third when Ashley Gonzales scored on a wild pitch but A.J. Gold increased its lead with a run in the fourth inning and five runs in the sixth, the big hit being a triple from Skinner that scored two runs.

A.J. Black scored its last run in their final at-bats when Melissa Ochoa crushed an inside-the-park homerun.

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AJHS softball player **Melissa Ochoa** steps on second base for a force out during the "Black" team's game against the "Gold" played last Thursday at Kiwanis Park in Tempe

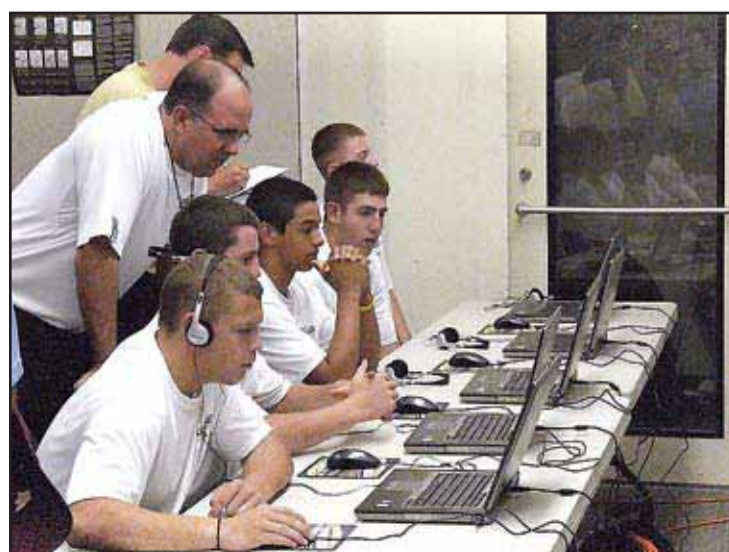


**Chelsey Streibich** pitches for A.J. Gold in their game last Thursday against A.J. Black at Kiwanis Park in Tempe

**Calling All Quarterbacks**



Current and future high school quarterback stars line up for a drill during last week's **Darin Slack Quarterback Academy** held at Davis Field and inside the AJHS band room



**Darin Slack** himself (left) watches over high school quarterbacks as they participate in computer simulation exercises and testing inside the AJHS band room while another **Darin Slack Quarterback Academy** coach goes over film analysis with camp participants (right). The Prospectors own quarterback **Nate Scola** is pictured above and left with the headset on.

By **Chuck Baker**  
*The News*

More than forty top area high school quarterbacks participated in the **Darin Slack Quarterback Academy** held this past Monday and Tuesday at Apache Junction High School. Among the gun-slingers was the Prospectors own **Nate Scola**, the junior-to-be who will head up the AJHS offense this coming Fall.

Coach Slack has been putting on his Quarterback Academy for years across the country for 7th through 12th grade QBs and among his former students is LSU's **Matt Flynn**, who led

the Tigers to the BCS National Championship this past college football season while being named the game's most valuable player. Coach Slack has coached several current professional quarterbacks in

see **Football**, page C-3

