

*Time Out*



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**One (Really) Good Week**

Checking the power rankings Saturday morning on the www.aiaonline.org Web site, it shows the Prospector varsity baseball team listed No. 17 and ahead of the defending 4A-I State Champions, Scottsdale Chaparral (No. 19). Let me say that again, Apache Junction is listed ahead of Chaparral. That's what one really good week can do for you.

Winners of just one game all of last season and off to a 0-9 start to this season, the Prospectors banged out 24 hits last week, got solid pitching performances from Ryan Howard and Tyler Tyson and won back-to-back games, 12-7 over (Flagstaff) Sinagua and 9-6 over (Buckeye) Verrado. And just like that, AJHS went from pretenders to contenders.

They may also have had a third win in three days. After three innings of a fun scrimmage against the Lady Prospector softball team on the baseball diamond on Thursday, the baseball team was leading. The teams then headed to the softball field for three additional innings, but I didn't stick around (Thursday was "golf day" and I needed a nap).

Congratulations to the AJHS baseball program and to first-year head coach Preston English, whose tenure hasn't exactly gotten off to a welcomed beginning (But that's another story).

Now the bad news. The final 12 games are all against Desert Sky Region foes and checking those same power rankings, it shows four of the region teams ranked No. 6 or better. And that doesn't include Chaparral, which has one of the best baseball programs in the state. Ouch!

# Prospectors Shine On Diamond

A.J. defeats Sinagua 12-7 for first win of the season, then makes it two in a row with 9-6 win over Verrado

By Chuck Baker  
*The News*

The Prospectors banged out 15 hits and got a gritty performance from starting pitcher Ryan Howard to knock off Flagstaff Sinagua 12-7 last Tuesday for the team's first win of the season. It was also the first win for head coach Preston

English in his first year at the helm.

Ryan Howard tossed six and a third tough innings, allowing seven runs on seven hits and although he walked six and hit three other Sinagua batters, he fanned seven to get the "W" and then went 2-for-3 at the plate with a double and two runs batted in.

Howard entered the seventh inning with a 12-3 lead but was tiring on the mound as the Mustangs loaded the bases and then scored four runs on three singles, a walk and two hit batsmen.

Coach English wanted Howard to finish the game he had started but chose to bring in relief pitcher Nick Saathoff, who got the final two outs.

"I'm a big believer in letting a pitcher who worked as hard as 'Howie' did finish the game," Coach English said.

Saathoff had quite a game as well at the plate, going 2-for-3 with a double and two runs batted in, scored four runs and swiped two stolen bases.

Outfielder Mike Davalos pitched in with his 3-for-4 performance at the plate, scored three times and then, following a Mustangs base hit to center field, tossed a perfect strike to catcher

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Prospector head coach Preston English greets Martin Fahey with a high five on his way to home plate after Fahey belted a two-run homerun in last Tuesday's 12-7 win over Flagstaff Sinagua, the team's first win of the season.

## Eleven AJHS Athletes Compete In Chandler Rotary Track Meet

By Chuck Baker  
*The News*

It is considered one of the premier high school track and field meets of the season and eleven athletes from Apache Junction were scheduled to compete in last weekend's Chandler Rotary Invitational, including ten AJHS boys.

The Prospectors are the defending 4A-I State Champions, winning the school's first ever title in track and field in 2008, and should make a strong showing in the team competition at the Chandler Rotary.

Although all events were scheduled for Saturday evening with the exception of girl's "open finals" in shot put, which was contested Friday with results not yet known, we can tell you which AJHS athletes were scheduled to compete at the



Bo Bankhead (left) and Harrison Pomeroy (right) make up one-half of the Prospector 4x100 meter relay team competing in the Chandler Rotary Invitational Meet.

Chandler Rotary.

The lone AJHS girl was Keisha McClincy, who participated in shot put on Friday evening and was scheduled to compete in discus on Saturday evening. Just three weeks ago, McClincy

set a personal record in shot put with a throw of 33-06.

The ten AJHS boys included Rusty Fernando in the 110 meter hurdles, the 300 meter intermediate hurdles

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Pitcher Ryan Howard gave a gritty performance in the 12-7 win over Flagstaff Sinagua, going six and a third innings while striking out seven to pick up the "W."

## AJHS Girls Bounce McClintock In Tennis

By Chuck Baker  
*The News*

The Lady Prospector tennis team earned a 7-2 victory over Desert Sky Region foe Tempe McClintock last Tuesday, the team's second region win of the season.

In singles play, Katie Karbo came up with a 7-5, 6-3 win at No. 2 singles, Nicoletta Carbone prevailed 6-0, 6-2 at number three singles, Anna Ramos won at No. 4 singles by the scores of 7-5,

6-0, and Kylie Bocskay picked up a 6-4, 6-4 win playing No. 5 singles.

Jessica Iniguez, playing number one singles, fell by the scores of 6-4, 6-2 and Catalina Ovalle dropped her No. 6 singles match by the scores of 7-6, 6-3.

The AJHS girls swept the doubles action with Iniguez and Karbo teaming up for an 8-4 victory, Carbone and Ramos winning 8-3 and Bocskay and Ovalle pre-

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AJHS varsity tennis player Catalina Ovalle hits a forehand in last Tuesday's 7-2 team win over McClintock.

## Catching Up With Katie

Former Lady Prospector softball star Katie Corbin leads South Mountain CC in batting

By Chuck Baker  
*The News*

Former Lady Prospector softball star Katie Corbin who is now a freshman at South Mountain Community College is enjoying quite a season playing for the Lady Cougars. Although South Mountain CC has struggled this softball season with a 5-25-1 overall record, Corbin continues to be one of the team's bright stars.

Corbin has posted the team's second highest batting average this season at .314. She is tied for second with 12 RBI, third on the team with 22 hits, third with six doubles, fourth with eight runs scored and fourth with her .423 on base percentage, and has drawn the praise of SMCC head coach Kristina Schmallen.

"Katie is starting at catcher for us and batting fifth. She is a great aspect for our team. She is a hard worker and does everything I ask and beyond. Katie is someone who pays attention to detail. She has matured a lot as a person and athlete this year and can't wait for who she'll become next year."



Former AJHS softball star Katie Corbin, now a freshman playing for South Mountain Community College.

In her four-year career at AJHS, Corbin posted a batting average of .353 with 75 runs scored and 49 RBI, was chosen defensive player of the year three times as a catcher, was selected 1st Team All Region once and 2nd Team All Region twice and was inducted into the AJHS Softball Hall of Fame.

South Mountain CC's next game is Tuesday, March 31, at Paradise Valley Community College. They will also host Gateway CC on April 4 with games at noon and 2 p.m. The complete schedule is available at the Web site athletics.southmountaincc.edu.

## Region Softball For Lady Prospectors Starts Today Against Cactus Shadows

By Chuck Baker  
*The News*

Last Thursday's 5-4 win over Flagstaff Sinagua wrapped up the non-region portion of the 2009 schedule for the Lady Prospector varsity softball team as the team's remaining twelve games will all come against Desert Sky Region foes, beginning with today's game (Monday, March 30) at Cave Creek Cactus Shadows. Apache Junction will also host the same Cactus Shadows squad this Thursday, April 2 and both games begin at 4 p.m.

In last week's one-run win over Sinagua, Rande Drennan went 3-for-3 at the plate with a run scored, Chelsey Streibich was 2-for-2 with a triple, two runs scored and a RBI, Autumn Rhodes



Lady Prospector southpaw Rande Drennan makes contact with this pitch in a March 20th Payson Tournament game against Bradshaw Mountain

had two hits in four trips to the plate, Lindsey Skinner knocked in a pair of runs with her one hit including the eventual game-winner in the sixth inning, Sierra Aulik went 1-for-3 and Shelby Olson had a RBI.

Olson also went the distance on the mound, scattering 13 hits by Sinagua, with one walk and two hit batters and four strikeouts to get the win.

The AJHS girls posted a 10-9 record in their non-re-

gion portion of the schedule, including two tournaments, one in Tempe and a recent one in Payson.

In an update for the varsity team from the Payson Tournament, AJHS went 1-3 in "pool play" games March 20 and 21, beating Benson 4-3 and losing to Bradshaw Mountain (1-0), Estrella Foothills (7-1) and Show Low (9-6). On day two, AJHS came back with a 2-1 win over Flagstaff, an 11-3 win over Camp Verde, and then lost a 10-0 decision to Show Low in the Consolation Championships.

In an update from a 15-0 win over Verrado played on March 19, Aulik had a triple, double and sacrifice and drove in five runs for AJHS. Sara Cranmer went 2-for-3

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