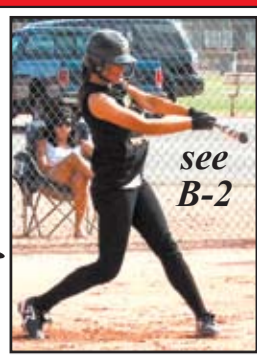




Stories By
J.J. Digos

Summer
Passing
League

Summer
Softball



see
B-2

Time Out



Chuck Baker
News Sports Editor
cbaker@ajnews.com

And The Envelope, Please ...

Sometimes picking a recipient of the Brake Master's Athlete-of-the-Week (see B-2) is an easy decision. And sometimes it is not. Take this week for example. I chose Ravi Patel, who was on fire in the opening half of last Wednesday's 63-54 upset over Mesa Skyline, giving the Prospectors their first win of the Summer League. Ravi knocked down four, three-pointers in the first half while scoring 14 points and then added a fifth, three-pointer in the second half, finishing the game with a career-high 21 points.

By choosing Ravi, that made it two weeks in a row for an AJHS boys basketball player. I try and spread the wealth around and after picking Corbin Ott the previous week, Ravi almost missed out this week.

But you should have seen the smile on Coach Dale Richardson's face after his team of a dozen guards pulled their amazing upset against the much taller Skyline squad. It was perhaps the best an AJHS team has played in four years, which, coincidentally, might have been the last time Coach 'R' was seen smiling after a game.

So, no offense (nor pun intended) to softball player Lindsey Skinner (6-for-9 this past week with a homerun, two triples and eight RBI), or AJHS quarterbacks Nate Scola and Roy Machuca (a combined six touchdown passes versus Mesa Desert Ridge last week), or A.J. Little League 10 & 11 All Star Connor Dry (single, double and triple in last week's District 7 Tournament game versus Mesa Eastern).
Worthy adversaries, all.

Prospectors End Summer Hoops League With 'Superhuman' Effort

By **Chuck Baker**
The News

Playing with what head coach Dale Richardson described as a "superhuman effort," the Prospector basketball team pulled off the shocker of the Mesa Skyline Summer League on its final night, upsetting the host school 63-54 this past Wednesday to earn their first victory.

Apache Junction, 0-7 in the Summer League heading

into last Wednesday's final two games, came out on fire against Skyline behind the inspired play of Ravi Patel and put up 27 points in the game's first ten minutes jumping out the early 27-20 lead.

Patel scored 11 points in that opening span, including knocking down a trio of three-point shots, finished the first half with 14 points and ended the game with a career high 21 points.

Patel added a fourth three-

pointer in the first half and made his fifth of the night in the second half as the Prospectors shot 9-for-16 as a team from behind the arc in pulling off the upset.

All-Region guard Colt Grandstaff also tossed in 21 points and added eight rebounds, three assists and three steals while Patel also chipped in with eight rebounds of his own and came up with a pair of steals.

Earlier this Summer, the Prospectors dropped a 62-41 decision to Skyline but on this night, they looked as good as any team competing in the Summer League.

"They really gave a superhuman effort tonight," an elated Coach Richardson said after the game. "I'm so happy right now, I don't even care what happens in our next game."

As it turned out, the Prospectors earned their second win of the Summer League in the nightcap with a 65-46 win over Florence as Grandstaff and Stephen Copeland each posted "double-doubles," combining for 36 points, 22 rebounds.

Back to the Skyline upset, Apache Junction led by as



Prospector Jake Abbatacola (far right) comes down with this rebound in last Wednesday's Summer League basketball game against Mesa Skyline.

many as sixteen points in the first half and eighteen points in the second half and some late three-pointers from the Coyotes cut the final margin of victory to nine.

Patel and Grandstaff had plenty of support from their teammates. Copeland and Corbin Ott, who both

see **Super**, page B-2



Apache Junction's Stephen Copeland tosses in two of his 11 points in last Wednesday's impressive 63-54 win over Skyline in the Summer Basketball League.

AJHS Girls Finish 2nd In Summer Basketball

By **Chuck Baker**
The News

The Lady Prospector varsity basketball team gave a valiant effort in their rematch with Phoenix Desert Vista last Tuesday on the final day of the Mesa Skyline Summer League but lost by six points, 48-42, to finish the league with an 8-2 record and a second place spot behind 10-0 Desert Vista.

Apache Junction's only losses in the Summer League came against Desert Vista, the first one by ten points and last week's six-point loss.

Apache Junction led Desert Vista 38-36 after Katie Karbo grabbed an offensive rebound and put in a basket with 6:45 to play in the second half. But Desert Vista, who missed their first five three-point shots of the second half, made three in a row in the closing five and



Lady Prospector Jessica Iniguez has perfect positioning to grab this rebound in last Tuesday's Summer League game against Mesa Skyline.

a half minutes and Apache Junction suddenly went cold from the court and held on for the win.

The Lady Prospectors missed the front end of a one-and-one free throw situation three times with less than two minutes to play, and during one sequence

in the final minute of play, missed three, three-point shots and a put-back attempt after grabbing four offensive rebounds.

Sierra Aulik poured in 20 points to pace the AJHS attack. Karbo finished with 6 points and seven rebounds, Sara Cranmer and Jade Yost

both netted 5 points, Kylie Bocskey contributed a bucket and seven rebounds, Diana Woodruff added a bucket and two assists, Melissa Ochoa scored a bucket and Jessica Iniguez had four rebounds.

Desert Vista ended up making 9-of-19 shots from three-point range while Apache Junction was 4-of-12 from long range.

In the nightcap last Tuesday, Apache Junction scored the game's first 23 points and cruised to an easy 32-17 victory over Skyline.

Iniguez led a balanced scoring attack with 6 points and also pulled down four rebounds. Bocskey netted 5 points, Aulik, Karbo, Yost and Ochoa all tallied 4 points, Cranmer sank a three-pointer, and Monica Geer hit a bucket.

Karbo also added three rebounds and three steals, Woodruff contributed three

rebounds and an assist, Cranmer had a pair of assists, and Aulik added three rebounds and three assists.

The AJHS girls also got the chance to play two games last Thursday at Skyline, replacing another team that wasn't able to make it. In those games, Apache Junction defeated Queen Creek 38-16 and downed Horizon Honors 28-18. Individual player stats were not available.

Basketball for the AJHS girls has come to a close now but several of the players are involved with the Lady Prospector volleyball program, which happens to be playing all this week in the Volleyball Festival Tournament.

J.V. Wraps Up Summer

The Lady Prospector junior varsity team, using a

see **B-Ball**, page B-6

A.J. Little League All Stars Continue

By **Chuck Baker**
The News

The Minor Boys Baseball 10 and 11 All Stars from the Apache Junction Little League competed in their District 7 Tournament this past week in Mesa and two other All Star teams, the Boys Major Baseball (11 & 12) and Boys Junior Baseball (13 & 14) will kick off their District 7 tournaments this Tuesday.

Playing "pool play" games this past week at Countryside Park in Mesa, the Minor Boys lost to Mesa Eastern 18-0, fell to Mesa Eastern 11-4 and dropped their final game to Four Peaks, although a score was not reported.

In the 11-4 loss to Mesa Eastern, the Apache Junction boys jumped out to a 2-0 lead in the first inning when Connor Dry ripped a triple to right field to score both Moises Rascon, who



Apache Junction Minor Boys Baseball All Star Hunter Fonseca makes solid contact with this pitch during last week's tournament game against Mesa Southern.

had reached base after being hit by a pitch, and Hunter Fonseca, who reached with an infield single.

Mesa Eastern came back to tie the game, 2-2, batting in the top half of the third inning but the A.J. All Stars regained the lead with

two runs in the bottom of the third. Dry led off with a double and Mario Romero followed with single and both ended up scoring runs on wild pitches to put Apache Junction back in front 4-2.

Mesa Eastern responded

through with four runs in the top of the fourth and five more in the fifth and went on to the seven-run victory.

Dry added a single in his third at-bat to finish the game a perfect 3-for-3, Matt

see **All-Stars**, page B-6

Prospectors Dominate Desert Ridge In Summer Football Passing League
QB's Scola and Machuca combine for six touchdown passes

By **J.J. Digos**
The News

The Apache Junction football team wrapped up their summer passing league season against Mesa Desert Ridge this past Thursday morning. Many questions are being asked about how well the Prospectors will perform next season after losing a dozen seniors including Arizona State University running back/safety Shane McCullen. Despite the team's losses, the Prospectors are looking to reload for the 2009 season and encountered a good test in the passing league against Desert Ridge.

On the offensive side of the football, the varsity squad, led by senior quarterback Nate Scola and junior signal caller Roy Machuca, methodically picked apart the Desert Ridge defensive secondary on nearly every play. Scola completed 11-of-16 passes and threw three touchdowns to one interception, that coming when the ball was knocked out of a Prospector receiver's hands. Machuca went 10-for-15 and three touchdowns and another deflected interception. Also seeing action with the junior varsity squad

see **Pass**, page B-6