



Time Out



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The Fix Is In

In just 17 days (Friday, August 28), both the Apache Junction Prospectors and the Apache Trail Wolfpack will kick off their 2009 football seasons at home, with AJHS hosting Prescott Valley Bradshaw Mountain at Davis Field, and ATHS hosting Yuma Harvest Prep at Prospector Park. Kickoff for both is at 7 p.m.

If you can't wait that long to get your football fix, the Prospector freshmen team plays two days earlier on Wednesday, August 26, hosting Gilbert Campo Verde at Davis Field where there is likely to be a Max Ragsdale sighting.

The former AJHS grad and head football coach Ragsdale is now the head coach at Campo Verde which is playing their inaugural season with just a class of freshmen and sophomore players.

The AJHS junior varsity team plays at Campo Verde on Thursday, August 27 but the Gilbert school won't play football at the varsity level until the 2010 season.

Football Is Back!

By **Chuck Baker**
The News

With their first games of the 2009 season just eighteen days away, two local high school football teams chose to tackle the scorching temperatures in different ways.

The Apache Junction Prospectors, who open their season hosting Prescott Valley Bradshaw Mountain on Friday, August 28, at Davis Field, opted to hold their team practices in the evenings.

The Apache Trail Wolfpack, who open their 2009 campaign hosting (Yuma) Harvest Prep on August 28 at Prospector Park, opted for early morning team practices.

Temperatures soaring above one hundred and ten degrees can and have taken its toll on high school foot-

ball players in past years. Coaches today are far more knowledgeable and conscience about heat-related issues and potentially dangerous, even deadly consequences.

The Prospectors, members of the 4A-I Desert Sky Region, began team practices at 7 p.m. on their practice field adjacent to Davis Field last week and then moved over to Davis Field under the lights and continued practicing until close to ten o'clock.

The Wolfpack, members of the Arizona Charter Athletic Association "B Division," started their team practices at 6:00 a.m. at Prospector Park and worked until around 9:00 a.m.

Following is an early season look at both the Apache Junction Prospectors and the Apache Trail

Wolfpack.

The Prospectors

Apache Junction is coming off of an 8-4 season a year ago that included a first round loss to Vail Cienega in the 4A-I State playoffs. Although All-State running back Shane McCullen and All-Region defensive end Rusty Fernando have graduated and moved on, McCullen to Arizona State University and Fernando to Glendale Community College, don't think for a second that the AJHS backfield or the defensive line is bare.

Seniors Nate Scola, Terry Eytcheson and Garret Johnson all return to the backfield in 2009 and last season these three players rushed for a combined 1,864 yards and 20 touchdowns, Scola as a quarterback, Eytcheson at tailback, and Johnson at fullback.

Prospector head coach Rich Milligan has hinted that Scola might not even play quarterback this season or may split time with junior Roy Machuca, instead lining up as a wide receiver or even fullback. That's how much confidence the AJHS coaching staff has in Machuca, who last year quarterbacked the Prospector junior varsity squad to a 7-2 record.

As the starting quarterback in Apache Junction's "spread offense" a year ago, Scola ran for 786 yards and 10 touchdowns. Eytcheson rushed for 605 yards and six touchdowns



First Game

Friday,
August 28, vs.
Bradshaw Mtn.
7 p.m.
(Davis Field)

AJHS
Pre-season
Scrimmage

Wednesday
August 19th
@ Sunrise Mountain
6:30 p.m. start



Sunrise Mtn. HS is located at 21200 N. 83rd Ave. in Peoria

while averaging a team high 8.07 yards-a-carry, and Johnson rushed for 473 yards and four scores from his fullback position. Eytcheson also added two receiving touchdowns a year ago, and with Scola lined up as a receiver or even a slot-back position, Machuca would have two viable options in the passing game if they decide to go to it.

In twelve games last season, the Prospectors only

threw the ball 56 times, completing 20, for 404 yards. That's less than five passes a game.

But as a team, Apache Junction ran for 3,458 yards and 43 TDs in 2009, averaged 6.22 yards-a-carry, and at one point, even led the entire nation in rushing offense.

Prospector coaches are very exciting about how much progress Machuca

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Apache
Trail
High
School

Member
Arizona
Charter
Athletic
Association
"Class B"

First
Game

Friday,
August 28, vs.
(Yuma) Harvest Prep
7 p.m.
(Prospector Park)

J.V. Cheerleaders Soar At Summer Camp

By **Chuck Baker**
The News

The junior varsity cheer squad from Apache Junction High School returned recently from the National Cheer Association Summer Camp held July 15-18 at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff with several awards and honors.

Despite having only one squad member who had previously attended a cheer camp, the AJHS junior varsity cheerleaders earned a Spirit Stick each day of the camp, picked up the Most Improved trophy out of more than fifteen cheer squads, were awarded the coveted "Spirit Award" as voted on by all of the cheer squads

in attendance, picked up three Superior Ribbons and one Excellent Ribbon for cheers and chants. In addition, three of the cheer squad members, Samantha Stepp, Amanda Pederson and Melissa Hernandez, were all nominated for All-American Cheerleader for jumps.

The squad is coached by Allisha Ross, formerly Allisha Eytcheson, who graduated from Apache Junction in 2007 and who was chosen 2006 Homecoming Queen.

"They did an awesome job," Coach Ross said of the junior varsity cheer squad. "Moreover, they were impressed and felt great about themselves.

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Back in October of 2006, AJHS varsity cheerleader Allisha Eytcheson was chosen Homecoming Queen and posed for this picture with the "King," Prospector football player Justin Higuera. Graduating in May of 2007, Allisha Ross, formerly Eytcheson, has returned to her alma mater as the coach of the junior varsity cheer squad, which received numerous awards at a recent cheer camp held at NAU.



Former AJHS Golfers Pritchard And DeBois Off To Adams State College

By **Chuck Baker**
The News

They were teammates on the 2005 4A-II State Championship golf team from Apache Junction High School. They were teammates on last year's Chandler-Gilbert Community College golf team that placed seventh overall in the NJCAA Division II National Championships. And now, former Prospector golfers James DeBois and Billy Pritchard will be teammates and roommates at Adams State College in Colorado, leaving town last Friday for the high country.

Both DeBois and Pritchard received partial scholarships to attend Adams State College after spending the last two years at Chandler-Gilbert. Chandler-Gilbert CC is only a two-year school while Adams State is a four-year school and a member of the NCAA Division II Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference that includes fourteen colleges.

Apache Junction High School and Adams State College have a history of association. Former Prospector football player A.J. Webb will be a starting

see **Golf**, page B-2



James DeBois (far left) and Billy Pritchard (far right) were teammates on the 2005 4A-II State Championship team from Apache Junction High School as shown here, were teammates last year on the Chandler-Gilbert Community College golf team, and will now be teammates and roommates at Adams State College in Colorado

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